

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 13 June 2019

PRESENT: Mr B J Sweetland (Chairman), Mr R A Marsh (Vice-Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour (Substitute for Mr N J D Chard), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr R H Bird, Mr T Bond, Mr D L Brazier (Substitute for Mr D Murphy), Mr I S Chittenden (Substitute for Mrs T Dean, MBE), Mr G Cooke, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr D Farrell, Mr P W A Lake, Mr M D Payne, Mr H Rayner and Mr I Thomas

ALSO PRESENT: Miss S J Carey, Mr E E C Hotson and Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Mr S Dodd (Investment and Development Consultant), Mrs T Gleeson (Communications Partner), Mr M Hyland (Project Co-ordinator – Kings Hill), Deborah Kapaj (Sustainable Estates Programme Manager), Ms E Sanderson (Strategic Business Adviser), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Miss E West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

166. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Chard, Mrs Dean and Mr Murphy.

Mr Balfour attended as a substitute for Mr Chard, Mr Chittenden attended as a substitute for Mrs Dean and Mr Brazier attended as a substitute for Mr Murphy.

167. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 3)

No declarations of interest were received.

168. Minutes from the meeting on 16 May 2019

(Item 4)

1. The Chairman reassured Members of the Committee that a detailed briefing for Members would be arranged over coming months in relation to the developments around the Holding Company.
2. RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held on 16 May 2019 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

169. Strategic Delivery Plan Review

(Item 5)

Mr Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Ms Sanderson (Strategic Business Adviser (Corporate)) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Whittle and Ms Sanderson introduced the report which set out information relating to the review of the Strategic Delivery Plan (SDP) which had been undertaken to examine the strengths and challenges of the SDP process, in order to inform recommended actions for the 2020-23 business planning round, as part of an annually refreshed rolling plan.
 - a) In response to a comment, Mr Whittle reassured Members that officers would work hard to ensure that future papers submitted to the Committee did not contain unexplained jargon and acronyms and considered providing an index for Members which would highlight commonly used acronyms and their meanings.
2. Members of the Committee thanked Mr Whittle and Ms Sanderson for the open and transparent Strategic Delivery Plan which brought together individual services.
3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

170. Developing the next Strategic Statement *(Item 6)*

Mr Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Ms Sanderson (Strategic Business Adviser (Corporate)) were in attendance for this item.

- b) Mr Whittle and Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communications and Performance) introduced the report which set out the need to begin the development of the next Strategic Statement, how this could support national and local policy objectives and stronger resident engagement.

Mr Whittle, Miss Carey and Mr Hotson (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services) then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Whittle clarified a typographical error within the report and stated that the final sentence of point 5.2 should read 'The consultation feedback would **be presented to** County Council **for** approval by March 2020.'
- b) Mr Whittle talked about the commissioning of the independent research company mentioned within the report and confirmed that Cabinet Members were engaged in the process. He reminded Members that the process had already been carried out successfully twice in previous years.
- c) Mr Whittle confirmed that the research undertaken by the independent research company was qualitative, not quantitative. He said that the independent research company managed the demographic in relation to the

quality of research and confirmed that the demographic across the East, West and North of Kent was adequate.

- d) Mr Whittle talked about Member's involvement and said that the independent research company had previously indicated that it would be difficult to undertake research exercises with elected Members present as it would change the dynamic of the relationship in the room. He added that whilst he could engage with the independent research companies in relation to Member's involvement, he understood the difficulties that could potentially arise.
- e) Mr Whittle talked about the current timetable in relation to the development of the next Strategic Statement and felt confident that Kent County Council's timetable was on track.
- f) Mr Hotson briefly talked about his involvement in chairing a group of voluntary organisations and confirmed that he would continue to chair the meetings in Autumn 2019.
- g) Mr Whittle reminded Members that whilst the Voluntary and Community Sector were representative bodies, many of them were also service providers.
- h) Mr Whittle confirmed that the report focused on the engagements that were taking place and said that the consultation stage would take place at a later date.
- i) Mr Whittle said that he was unsure as to whether Kent County Council's next Strategic Statement would accommodate the next five-year period, it could be shorter depending on the outcome of Brexit.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

171. Kent & Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy - Draft for Public Consultation

(Item 7)

Ms Kapaj (Sustainable Estates Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

- 1. Mr Payne (Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning, Highways, Transport and Waste) and Ms Kapaj introduced the report which set out the final draft of the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy for Public Consultation. Mr Payne pointed out that the Public Consultation was now expected to commence on 1st July 2019.

Mr Payne and Ms Kapaj then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Kapaj talked about the positive work that had been undertaken within Kent schools in relation to the energy and low emissions projects and said that schools had benefited greatly from the Salix funding scheme referred to within the report. She added that Steve Baggs, Kent County Council's

Energy Manager, worked very closely with Kent schools to encourage the delivery of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

- b) Mr Payne said he would ensure that Member's feedback on the provision of a school-friendly document relating to the Kent & Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy would be fed into the consultation.
 - c) Mr Payne talked about the Kent Design Guide refresh mentioned within the strategy and the different topics that were emerging as part of the refresh.
 - d) Ms Spore said that in terms of the schools in Kent which were commissioned by Kent County Council, guidelines had been set by the Department for Education which set out specific requirements in terms of the environmental standards that Kent County Council were required to meet. She added that work would continue with Kent schools in relation to the Kent Design Guide and highlighted the current discrepancies between ambitions for schemes and projects and the funding that Kent County Council received from central government which were being addressed.
 - e) Ms Kapaj referred to the positive existing and upcoming projects relating to environmental changes within Kent such as the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and improving resource efficiency.
2. Members of the Committee welcomed the Kent & Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy and thanked officers for their involvement in ensuring that the strategy was put in place.
 3. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

172. Review of face-to-face customer contact provision *(Item 8)*

Mrs Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications) and Mrs Gleeson (Communications Partner) were in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey (Cabinet Member for Customers, Communications and Performance), Mrs Beer and Mrs Gleeson introduced the report which set out the role of Kent County Council's corporate face-to-face contact channel in supporting its strategic purpose and preventative strategies. It set out the next steps to explore opportunities and future delivery options, working collaboratively with district councils to ensure joined up access to services for Kent's residents.
 - a) Mrs Beer said that current face-to-face contact was provided through Gateways and the environment had changed significantly since they were established, the majority of people now wanted to access public services through the internet or by phone. Whilst face-to-face contact with customers was often a relatively expensive form of contact, it was valuable for those who needed it.
 - b) Mrs Beer referred to the core principles of the customer contact strategy that would be presented back to Members, and how Kent County Council's objectives around face-to-face contact aligned closely to those of district

councils. Mrs Beer emphasised the importance of looking at public contact provision in libraries, children's centres and through community outreach, to ensure that Kent County Council delivered face-to-face services in the most effective and cost-effective way.

- c) Mrs Gleeson said that the face-to-face services that Kent County Council provided were for people that typically did not have digital skills or were potentially leading chaotic lives and did not know that there was support available. Gateway staff could direct them to appropriate Kent County Council services, or to services that Kent County Council commissioned or were provided by other partners, such as the voluntary sector.
- d) Mrs Beer explained that Gateway staff were trained to spot where a customer might have more complex needs than their initial enquiry suggested and emphasised the importance of staff training in providing this level of service.
- e) Mrs Beer acknowledged that the ten Gateways across the county did not cover all districts and that this was something that would be looked into further once Gateway contracts came to an end.

2. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

173. Work Programme 2019/20

(Item 9)

RESOLVED that the work programme for 2019-20 be noted.

174. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Exempt Items

(open access to minutes)

175. Maidstone East Project Update

(Item 10)

Mr Dodd (Investment and Development Consultant) and Ms Spore (Director of Infrastructure) were in attendance for this item.

- 1. Mr Dodd introduced the report which provided an overview and update in respect of the joint strategic acquisition of the former Royal Mail Sorting Warehouse & Offices, Sandling Road, Maidstone (the former Royal Mail Site).
- 2. Mrs Spore talked about the financial implications highlighted within the report and the need to deliver the best possible outcome.

3. Mrs Spore talked about the range of options that were available and confirmed that a decision paper would be submitted to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in due course.
4. Mr Hotson (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services) highlighted the potential risks in relation to the options set out within the report.
5. Mr Hotson commended the report and said that it provided a clear and concise update for Members of the Committee on the subject matter.
6. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

176. Turner Contemporary Update

(Item 11)

1. Mrs Spore introduced the report which set out information relating to the contractual dispute with David Chipperfield Architects (DCA) regarding Turner Contemporary.
2. Mr Watts responded to a comment relating to acquisition costs.
3. Mrs Spore confirmed that Kent County Council were not engaging directly with DCA.
4. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

177. 19/00044 - Kings Hill: Joint Venture Development Agreement between Kent County Council and Liberty Property Trust UK

(Item 12)

Mr Hyland (Project Co-ordinator – Kings Hill) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hotson (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services) introduced the report which set out information relating to the decision to finalise terms and enter into all the necessary documentation to complete the disposal of all identified land parcels required for the calibrated land disposal programme within the Kings Hill development partnership scheme.
2. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to:
 - a) delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, to finalise terms and enter into all the necessary documentation to complete the disposal of all identified land parcels required for the calibrated land disposal programme within the Kings Hill development partnership scheme, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and the Head of Paid Service and General Counsel; and
 - b) delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, to finalise terms and enter into all the necessary documentation to complete all land and property transactions associated with community, infrastructure service

provisions for both existing and proposed residential and commercial development,

be endorsed.

178. 19/00045 - Strategic Acquisition, Maidstone
(Item 13)

1. Mr Hotson (Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services) provided a further update to the contents of the exempt report which were noted by the committee.
2. RESOLVED that the proposed decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services to:
 - a) proceed with the strategic purchase; and
 - b) agree that the Director of Infrastructure be delegated agreement of final terms and is authorised to enter into any necessary legal documents to complete the acquisition,

be endorsed.