

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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 Wednesday, 11 July 2012.

PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman), Mr J R Bullock, MBE (Vice-Chairman), Mr R W Bayford, Mr A H T Bowles, Ms S J Carey, Mr D S Daley (Substitute for Mrs T Dean), Mr M J Jarvis, Mr S C Manion, Mr R J Parry, Mr K H Pugh, Mr L B Ridings, MBE, Mr M V Snelling, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr J N Wedgbury

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P B Carter, Mr R W Gough, Mr A J King, MBE and Mr J D Simmonds

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Agyepong (Equalities and Diversity Manager), Mr N Brown (Asset Development and Commissioning Manager), Cheverton (Asset Management Surveyor), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director of Business Strategy and Support), Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Services Manager (Policy Overview)), Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Manager), Mr R Hallett (Head of Finance and Resources - EHW), Ms J Hansen (Finance Business Partner BSS), Ms A Harrison (Regeneration Manager - Growth Areas), Hyland, Mr T Micklewright (Contracts Manager - Pfi), Ms J Van Ruyckevelt (Interim Head of Citizen Engagement for Health), Mr D Shipton (Acting Head of Financial Strategy), Ms R Spore (Director of Property & Infrastructure Support) and Mr A Wood (Corporate Director of Finance and Procurement)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

3. Membership

(Item A2)

The Committee noted that Mr L B Ridings, MBE had replaced Mr M C Dance as a Member of the Committee

4. Election of Vice Chairman

(Item A4)

Ms S J Carey proposed and Mr M V Snelling seconded that Mr J R Bullock, MBE be elected Vice Chairman.

Carried

5. Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 March 2012

(Item A6)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2012 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. Meeting dates 2012 & 2013

(Item A7)

The Committee noted the dates of its meetings for 2012 & 2013 as follows:-

Thursday 27 September 2012

Thursday 22 November 2012

Tuesday 8 January 2013

Thursday 25 April 2013

Thursday 20 June 2013

Wednesday 25 September 2013

Thursday 21 November 2013

7. Facilities Management Review - Decision 12/01838

(Item B1)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Spore introduced a report on the review of Facilities Management provision which was part of the strategy to delivery of the £10 million of revenue saving allocated against the delivery of 'Total Place' over the next three years. The report outlined the present work taking place to develop a clear Facilities Management strategy across the Council's property portfolio.

(2) Mr Gough and Ms Spore answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- Members complimented officers on the clear and informative report.
- An assurance was given that the packaging of work into larger tenders would not exclude small local contractors. Ms Spore explained that it was not just about savings but also about achieving a consistent standard of service provision across the estate. Also the scale of the packages needed to be right and appropriate, even in larger packages it was possible to build in a requirement to use local labour. It was important that the packages were set up in the right way so that they did not exclude the local workforce.
- Ms Spore confirmed that a rigorous process had been undertaken to ensure that the right consultant had been secured for this project. The Consultant reported to the Steering Group but was not a member of it as the Steering Group needed to be able to challenge the Consultant.
- In relation to the strategic risks identified, Ms Spore explained that in some areas the margins were very tight and therefore it would be difficult to get the right provider unless the package was put together in the right way.
- Ms Spore confirmed that Finance colleagues attended the meetings of the Steering Group to provide input and were also involved in relation to procurement.

- Regarding Commercial Services, Ms Spore stated that there was a Service Level Agreement for Commercial Services to carry out work in certain buildings but this was small in comparison to the whole estate.
- Ms Spore confirmed that she was happy to share the core recommendations from the Consultant with Members of the Committee.

(3) RESOLVED that the Committee note the principles of the FM review as set out in the report and that before the decision is taken by the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to move forward into the implementation stage following the completion of Phase 1, the details on which the Cabinet Member will be taking the decision be circulated to Committee Members and their comments invited.

8. Kings Hill - MOD Boundary Rationalisation

(Item B2a)

(1) Mr Gough and Mr Hyland introduced a report on the transfer/swap of various small land parcels to facilitate the repositioned part of the south east boundary of Kings Hill, adjacent to the bridleway. The proposals would regularise already improved boundary arrangements and maintain the designated bridleway route which was essential to enhance public access around Kings Hill.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to authorise the transfer/disposal/swap of the respective land parcels necessary for the MOD boundary rationalisation at Kings Hill.

9. Kings Hill - Gas Governor Installation

(Item B2b)

(1) Mr Hyland introduced a report on the granting of a Lease for a peppercorn and the grant of an easement to facilitate essential Gas infrastructure installation. In response to a question from a Member Mr Hyland explained why this was a leasehold rather than a freehold agreement.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to authorise the lease/easement of the necessary land for the Gas Governor Installation at Kings Hill.

10. Kings Hill - Redevelopment of Toilet Block - Central Area

(Item B2c)

(1) Mr Hyland introduced a report setting out the transfer of land to facilitate the repositioning and redevelopment of the public toilets within the Central Area of Kings Hill. The proposal would facilitate improved circulation arrangements and facilities essential to the enhancement and future of Kings Hill's centre. In response to a question from a Member, Mr Hyland confirmed the costs payable by KCC but stated that these would be less than the enhanced value to KCC from the transfer.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to authorise the transfer/disposal of part of the Central Area land

and the footprint of the proposed new toilet building to McLagan Investments Ltd (Asda) at Kings Hill and lease land to Liberty Property Limited Partnership.

11. Kings Hill - Area 64 - boundary rationalisation

(Item B2d)

(1) Mr Hyland introduced a report on the transfer back to Kent County Council of various periphery parcels of land to facilitate the provision of landscaping and open space on the west/south boundary of Area 64 Beacon Avenue Kings Hill, adjacent to the co boundary of Village 2, Phase 2 Commercial Area and The Greenway. The proposals would regularise and improve boundary arrangements and make provisions for an attractive footpath route which was essential to enhance public access around Kings Hill.

(2) It was noted that in relation to the type of decisions on Kings Hill considered so far in the meeting further consideration would be given at the appropriate time as to which decisions were “significant” decisions which should come to this Committee prior to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.

(3) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to authorise the transfer and receipt of the respective land parcels in Area 64 of Kings Hill necessary for good design and estate management.

12. Business Strategy & Support performance dashboard

(Item C1)

(1) Mr Gough introduced the Business Strategy & Support performance dashboard which provided Members with progress against targets set in the current financial year’s business plans for key performance and activity indicators.

(2) Mr Gough, Mr Hallett and Mr Fitzgerald answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- It was suggested that a more detailed consideration of the dashboard was needed than was possible in this meeting.
- Mr Hallett referred to the Enterprise Resource Planning which had been demonstrated at the previous meeting, Phase 2 was being developed to automate Performance and Data information.
- A Member expressed a preference for hard figures rather than percentages.
- In response to a question Mr Simmonds explained that the grants from Europe were expressed in euro’s as the grant was awarded in this currency.
- It was suggested that in relation to the red areas the objective of the report should be to set out ways in which the area could be improved.
- In relation to a question on the level of rent collected, Ms Spore explained that this would improve as a result to the centralisation of property management. She confirmed that rents were being collected. The issue was the system behind the rent collection and how it fed into the Performance Indicator, work was being carried out to address this.
- It was suggested that there could be an indicator on rent reviews showing any that were behind.

- There was some discussion around the target relating to temporary/modular classrooms.
- It was suggested that the report should include the name of the accountable officer against each of the targets and in the case of those that were red the timeline for improvement.
- In relation to Freedom of Information enquiries, Mr Gough acknowledged the need to get popularly requested data onto the website.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted and that a few Members from this Committee meet with Officers and the relevant Cabinet Member(s) to review the appropriateness and relevance of the indicators currently included in the dashboard for this Committee.

13. Business Plan outturn monitoring 2011/12

(Item C2)

(1) Mr Gough introduced the 2011/12 Business Plan outturn monitoring which provided highlights of the achievements in the year 2011/12 for the Business Strategy and Support Directorate.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

14. Business Strategy & Support Directorate Financial Outturn 2011/12

(Item C3)

(1) Mr Simmonds introduced a report which summarised the 2011/12 financial outturn for each of the A-Z budget lines within the Business Strategy and Support Directorate.

(2) RESOLVED that the report on the revenue and capital financial outturn for 2011/12 including rollovers for committed projects and changes to the capital programme due to re-phasing be noted.

15. Budget Consultation

(Item C4)

(1) Mr Simmonds and Mr Wood presented a paper which set out the proposed consultation and communication strategy for the 2013/14 Budget. It was proposed to carry out formal consultation much earlier than in previous years allowing longer to engage with Kent residents and more time for Cabinet and Cabinet Committees to consider the responses.

(2) Mr Simmonds, Mr Wood and Mr Shipton answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- Mr Shipton confirmed that the intention was to publish a formal document in September which restated the current budget in an understandable format along with budget proposals and to invite comments from the public. The

comments would then be taken to Cabinet in December for a formal response to the points made.

- Mr Simmonds confirmed that he was happy to receive Members thoughts on the consultation and documentation. He also referred to the role of Local Members making people in their area aware of the consultation and how the budget affected them. Locality Boards would also be involved in this process.
- Mr Wood pointed out that there would be a lot of information that would not be available when we went out to consultation such as the level of Government Grant which would not be known until December 2012, also the impact of the localisation of Council Tax benefit and the level of allocation of localised business rates. Therefore it was not possible for the consultation document to contain definite figures.
- The importance of asking people the right questions in relation to the budget in order to get the most helpful responses was emphasised.
- The use of independent focus groups was welcomed.
- It was suggested that Parish Councils were a good way of getting the message across about the consultation and seeking the widest response, but it was noted that the urban areas were not parished, so it was important that this was covered in area forums as well.
- Regarding the cost of the consultation, Mr Shipton confirmed that this would be an additional cost as the unit had taken a saving in 2011/12 for consultation and therefore this would need to be funded from other savings.
- It was suggested that when the budget was launched it was important that the public realised that this was not just about money but also about transformational change achieving savings.

(3) RESOLVED That (a) the Communication and Consultation strategy outlined in section 3 to the report and the comments made by Members on the formal response to the Cabinet in December be noted and (b) an IMG be established to assist with the development of the Budget, Membership of the IMG to be Mr Hotson, Mr Parry, Mrs Stockell, Mr Ridings, Mr Cowan and Mrs Dean.

16. Establishing Kent Local Healthwatch

(Item D1)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Van Ruyckevelt introduced a paper which outlined the progress to date of work being undertaken to ensure the successful establishment of Kent Local Healthwatch by April 2013.

(2) Mr Gough and Ms Van Ruyckevelt answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- In response to a question about the current volunteers view of Healthwatch, Ms Van Ruyckevelt stated that there had been a lot of interest from those involved in LINKs etc about the new model for Healthwatch. Mr Gough assured Members that it was intended to work closely with the LINK to ensure that the knowledge and skills of LINK members was not lost.
- In response to a question Mr Gough stated that at the moment there was a lot of data relating to services held in different areas, what would make a difference was if this was used effectively to shape commissioning decisions. He confirmed that Healthwatch was a statutory body and part of the decision making process.

- A Member expressed concern about the regular changes in the voluntary sector which supported the Health Service and the detrimental effect that this had on the work of Health Service volunteers. It would be good if at the national level the health service could be allowed to have a period of organisational stability in order for changes to bed down.
- Members referred to the good work that Community Health Councils (CHC's) had done and expressed a regret that these had been disbanded. CHC's were a good model for constructive voluntary input into the health service and if possible the way in which they worked should be used to inform the development of Healthwatch.

(3) RESOLVED that (a) the work currently underway and the proposed strategic direction be noted and (b) the proposal to submit the final strategic approach to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in September prior to the decision being taken by the Cabinet Member be noted.

17. Kent County Council - Equality Objectives

(Item D2)

(1) Mr Charman and Ms Agyepong introduced a report on the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 which came into force in April 2011, which set out the requirements for public bodies under this duty. The report also gave details of the guidance issued in October 2011 by the Government Equality on what public bodies are expected to publish in order to show how they meet the Duty.

(2) Mr Charman and Ms Agyepong answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- Ms Agyepong stated that the biggest challenge for an organisation was to establish where equalities fitted into their work. Every decision that the County Council makes must have regard to their duty under the Equalities Act. If the County Council was challenged on its decision making we must be able to demonstrate that we have complied with our Equalities duties.
- In response to question Mr Charman stated that in relation to how we consult and engage there were always areas where we could improve.
- Ms Agyepong explained that in preparation for the report to the September meeting work would be carried out to analyse the results from the consultation over the summer.

(3) RESOLVED that (a) the comments made by Members on the proposed equality policy statement and objectives be noted; and (b) the consultation process, in order to meet the legislative requirements and to mitigate the risk of not meeting the requirement of the specific duties, be noted and the Committee receive at their September meeting the objectives following consultation.

18. Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it

involves the likely disclosure of Exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

19. Sittingbourne Community facility - Decision 11/01794

(Item E1)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Spore introduced a report which set out a number of large scale regeneration schemes which were currently proposed for Sittingbourne town centre. The report updated the Committee on the current proposals.

(2) Mr Gough and Ms Spore answered questions and noted comments from Members.

(3) RESOLVED That the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to enter into the necessary agreements for the Sittingbourne Community Facility.

(Mr A H T Bowles declared an interest as Leader of Swale Borough Council which was co-sponsor of the project).

20. Finalising the Procurement of External Services in the Day to Day Management of Oakwood House -Decision 12/1836

(Item E2)

(1) Mr Pugh and Ms Spore introduced a report and answered questions from Members on the arrangements for the procurement of external services for the day to day management of Oakwood House.

(2) RESOLVED that when available the details of the scheme be considered by a small group of Members from this Committee and they make recommendations or endorse, on behalf of the Committee, the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to appoint the successful contractor of external services in the day to day management and service delivery of Oakwood House.

21. Margate Housing Initiative - Decision 12/01910

(Item E3)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Spore presented and answered questions from Members on a report which outlined the programme for delivery of the Margate Housing Intervention programme at Cliftonville West and Margate Central.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Members for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Customer and Communities to enter into a collaboration agreement with Thanet District Council to enable the progression of the KCC Margate Housing Initiative pilot project and at a future meeting of the Committee there be an update report on this Initiative, including Hotel Leslie.

22. Kent County Council / Kier Initiative - Decision 12/01911

(Item E4)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Spore introduced a report which set out the detailed proposal to develop housing schemes upon latent KCC sites to realise capital and generate income for KCC, stimulate the housing market and promote growth of the Kent economy. They answered questions from Members and noted comments made.

(2) RESOLVED that the Policy and Resources Committee endorse the decision to be taken by Cabinet Member of Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to enter into the necessary contractual documentation for the KCC/Kier housing initiative project.

23. Kings Hill - Ransom Strip Serving Area F1

(Item E5)

(1) Mr Gough and Ms Harrison introduced a report which set out proposals for the sale of access over land adjacent to Area F1.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member to authorise the sale of access over land adjacent to Area F1 (subject to contract) which was necessary to progress planned development at Kings Hill.

24. To agree to the disposal of a miscellanea of premises known as Wrens Cross, Maidstone

(Item E6)

(1) Mr Gough submitted a report on the disposal of various premises known as Wrens Cross Maidstone.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee endorse the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to agree the terms of a sale of the site known as Wrens Cross, Maidstone on the terms recommended in section 4 of the report.

(Mr D Daley, Mr E E C Hotson and Mrs P V A Stockell declared an interest as Members of Maidstone Borough Council and took part in the discussion and decision)

25. District approach to re-provision of capital projects linked to disposals - Decision 12/01837

(Item F1)

(1) Mr Gough and Mr Cheverton introduced a report which outlined the opportunities to pool vacant and disused surplus assets in a locality to support the delivery of capital projects and answered questions from Members.

(2) RESOLVED that the proposed direction of travel in relation to the District approach to re-provision of capital projects linked to disposals be noted.