

EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday, 16th August, 2017 at 10.30 am in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Westgate, Canterbury

Present: Councillor C Wells (Chairman) (Thanet)

Councillor S Cook (Canterbury)
Councillor K Morris (Dover)
Councillor M Conolly (Dover)

Officers: Dominic Whelan - Director of Shared Services
Tricia Marshall - Director of Resources (Canterbury)
Harvey Rudd - Solicitor to the Council (Dover)
Mike Davis - Director of Finance (Dover)
Madeline Homer - Chief Executive (Thanet)
Nadeem Aziz - Chief Executive (Dover)
Graham Finch - Senior Democratic Services Officer
(Canterbury)

Others Rob Neil Temporary Projects Manager EKS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Todd (Canterbury) and Fairbrass (Thanet).

2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

In accordance with the operating arrangements, it was confirmed that Councillor Wells would be Chairman for the municipal year 2017/18 and Councillor Watkins would be Vice Chairman.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations for the meeting.

4 SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Morris attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Watkins.

5 MINUTES OF THE EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2016

The minutes of the above meeting were agreed as a true record.

6 DELEGATION TO THE EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BUSINESS CASE TO ENABLE CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL CHANGES TO EAST KENT SERVICES SERVICE DELIVERY

INCLUDING A POTENTIAL OPTION FOR CONTRACTING OUT OF SOME FUNCTIONS

The Director for Shared Services introduced the report which indicated that the three Councils had agreed to ask this Committee to commission work that will assess the options for the future delivery of services provided to the Councils by East Kent Services. The Director of Shared Services explained that the work will include an option to examine the merits of potentially contracting out the Councils' functions in relation to Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Functions. He indicated that when the individual reports, that went to each Council in July, had been considered through the governance process for the Councils, Canterbury City Council had amended the recommendation to make clear that it related to the consideration of the merits of potentially contracting out the functions. He mentioned that the report to Thanet District Council had included this amendment.

The report requested the onward delegation to the Director of EK Services of the arrangements for the commissioning of such a business case.

The Director took the Councillors through the recommendations in the report and he provided points of clarification about the way forward.

The following options were available:-

- (i) To approve the proposed delegation
- (ii) Not to approve the proposed delegation.

If the Committee supported the delegation, a detailed business case would be prepared with an appraisal of various options which would be brought back to each Council starting in October, prior to further consideration by the East Kent Services Committee.

The report set out the timetable for the decision-making process. The Chairman indicated that the meeting of Thanet District Council's Cabinet on 19 September had been moved to 3 October.

Having considered the report, the Committee –

RESOLVED –

- (1) To note that the report has been considered and approved by each of the Cabinets of Thanet District Council and Dover District Council, and the Policy and Resources Committee of Canterbury City Council.
- (2) To accept the requests of the above Cabinets and Committee that the East Kent Services Committee should discharge the powers and functions of the Council to develop a business case for the potential contracting out of the Council's functions in relation to the following:-
 - Council Tax Administration and Enforcement
 - National Non-Domestic Rates Administration and Enforcement
 - Housing Benefit and associated services
 - Council Tax Reduction Scheme and associated services
 - Debt Recovery
 - Customer Services

(together called 'the Revenues, Benefits, Debt Recovery and Customer Services Functions') and to determine the actions to be taken in connection therewith.

- (3) To delegate to each of the Director of Collaborative Services and the Director of EK Services responsibility for the commissioning and production of a business case examining the merits of the potential contracting out of the Councils' functions in relation to Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services Functions and request that such a business case be presented to each of the three Councils prior to further consideration by the East Kent Services Committee.

Reason for the decision

It allows the East Kent Services Committee to commission a business case considering the merits of potentially contracting out of elements of EK Services' operations for consideration by the three Councils.

7 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS TO BE DEALT WITH IN PUBLIC

None

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH FALLS UNDER THE EXEMPT PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 OR THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 OR BOTH

None

The meeting ended at 10.40 am.