
CABINET

MINUTES of the Meeting held in Maidstone Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1TF on Monday, 4 July 2016 from 10.00 - 10.35 am.

PRESENT: Councillors Bowles (Chairman), Mike Cosgrove, Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Alan Horton, Gerry Lewin (Vice-Chairman), Ken Pugh and David Simmons.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Katherine Bescoby, Estelle Culligan, Abdool Kara, Donna Price and Mark Radford.

756 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

PART B MINUTES FOR INFORMATION

757 MID KENT SERVICES GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairman of Maidstone Borough Council's Policy and Resources Committee opened their Committee meeting, and welcomed Cabinet Members from Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils to the Co-located meeting.

The Leader opened the meeting of the Cabinet, as did the Chairman of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Cabinet.

The Deputy Head of Legal Partnership presented the report, which updated the governance arrangements for Mid Kent Services. In doing so, she referred to the revised Governance Arrangements and Shared Service Collaboration Agreement template, which were attached as Appendices to the report. The original agreement had been signed in 2008, and had been extended in 2012 for four years. The current draft had been updated to reflect how the partnership had developed and how the Board operated, and would form a permanent arrangement subject to certain termination conditions being included. The model Collaboration Agreement was intended as a template agreement for shared services, and set out standard requirements.

The Deputy Head of Legal Partnership then answered Members' questions. She agreed to look at the font size and numbering of the agreement at paragraphs 10.16 and 10.34, and confirmed that it was an annual rolling agreement. In response to questions regarding project methodology and accountability, and whether the board would further consider issues of income generation, the Deputy Head of Legal Partnership drew attention to the termination clauses in the Collaboration Agreement, and advised that as this was a partnership arrangement it was difficult to specify who would be accountable; however, the document did clarify points such as escalation and arbitration procedures, and also financial principles which had been discussed and agreed by the Section 151 officers.

In response to further questions, the Deputy Head of Legal Partnership clarified the position should a partner decide to 'pull out' of a shared service, and that the services remaining should not 'suffer' as a result of one party deciding to terminate its arrangement. In response to questions regarding Appendix D and the risk register, the Deputy Head of Legal Partnership undertook to raise this with the Head of Internal Audit, and clarified that the list of 10 questions at Appendix D had been generated by the Audit Partnership specifically for the development of shared services. The questions were a starting point, and did not prevent flexibility in how shared services might develop. The Chief Executive of Swale Borough Council drew attention to the section of the report headed 'Project Boards' which referred to the need for a project framework, and said that risks would also be considered as part of the yearly service planning process.

After being proposed and seconded, Maidstone Borough Council's Policy and Resources Committee put the recommendations to the vote.

The Leader moved, and the Deputy Leader seconded, the recommendations in the report, subject to the minor amendments to the font and numbering of the Collaboration Agreement.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Cabinet, after proposing and seconding the same recommendations, then put this to the vote.

At the end of the meeting, Officers were asked to look at options for teleconferencing of co-located meetings in the future.

Resolved:

- (1) That the revised Mid Kent Services (MKS) objectives and strategic priorities, as set out in paragraph 2.5 of the report, be agreed.***
- (2) That the revised MKS Governance Arrangements be agreed, and delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive to sign the document.***
- (3) That the MKS Shared Service Collaboration Agreement template be agreed, subject to minor amendments to the font and numbering as outlined in the above minute.***
- (4) That the Head of Legal Partnership, in consultation with the Leader as Cabinet Member for Shared Services and the Chief Executive, be authorised to make any further minor amendments as necessary to the documents described in 2 and 3 above.***

Chairman

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All Minutes are draft until agreed at the next meeting of the Committee/Panel