

EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting held on Wednesday, 30th November, 2016
at 11.30 am in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Westgate, Canterbury**

Present: Councillor S Cook (Chairman) (Canterbury)
Councillor M Conolly (Dover)
Councillor C Wells (Thanet)

Officers: Colin Carmichael Chief Executive (Canterbury)
Nadeem Aziz Chief Executive (Dover)
Madeline Homer Chief Executive (Thanet)
Harvey Rudd Solicitor to the Council (Dover)
Matthew Archer Head of Democratic Services (Canterbury)
Dominic Whelan Director of Shared Services (EK Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Watkins (Dover), Councillor Fairbrass (Thanet) and Councillor Todd (Canterbury).

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

By virtue of standing orders Councillor Cook was appointed Chairman for the year and Councillor Wells was elected Vice-Chairman

3. DECLARATION OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no interests declared at the meeting.

4. SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members present at the meeting.

5. EK SERVICES AND EK HUMAN RESOURCES COMBINED END OF YEAR REPORT 2015/16

The Director of Shared Services summarised the annual performance report for East Kent Services (EKS), who provide a shared service to the three councils that includes Revenues and Benefits, HR, ICT and customer services. A presentation of the key findings was provided, which covered customer satisfaction, key performance indicators, finance and an update on key projects.

The financial appraisal indicated that significant savings had been delivered over the last five years. Approximately £2m had been saved through reduction in the management fees paid for the services and a similar sum had been returned to the client councils as cash surplus over the period. A further £1m had been saved as EKS had absorbed all growth over the period. A reserve had been built up, which had been earmarked to a range of projects and work streams.

Functions had been audited on a regular basis and at the end of year, five awarded substantial or reasonable assurance, six were ongoing work in progress and two unscored.

At the end of the presentation Members asked a number of questions and the Director responded, as follows –

- i) In response to a question about the sickness absence figures, the Director said that the figures were intended to demonstrate HR workload. He offered to provide a written response with additional information after the meeting. It was noted that Thanet were actively managing this topic as one of their HR priorities.
- ii) It was clarified that ‘eye tracking’ software was being used to improve the format and clarity of documentation, which had the effect of improving customer response rates.
- iii) A review of the ICT architecture was currently underway as part of the long-term transition from a server based model to a cloud based environment, which would involve consequential changes to the financial modelling.

RESOLVED – that the report be NOTED.

6. ESTABLISHMENT OF EAST KENT SERVICES COMMITTEE AND ASSOCIATED ARRANGEMENTS - REVISIONS

The report was introduced by the Solicitor to the Council (Dover). It proposed minor amendments to the delegations to the Director of Collaborative Services and Director of EK Services in the light of changes made to the delegations to the East Kent Services Committee by the three authorities since the revised governance arrangements for EK Services (EKS) and EK Human Resources (EKHR) were established in late 2014/early 2015.

RESOLVED –

That the delegation to each of the Director of Collaborative Services and the Director of EK Services effected by the approval of paragraph 28 of Schedule 5 to the Original Report be amended to read as follows:-

“Acceptance of the lowest or most economically advantageous tender or bid for the carrying out of works for the committee, the purchase, leasing or hiring of goods, materials and equipment by the committee, or the supply of services to the committee, provided that budget provision is available.”

And that the delegation to each of the Director of Collaborative Services and the Director of EK Services effected by the approval of paragraph 31 of Schedule 5 to the Original Report be amended to read as follows:-

“The assignment or novation of a contract (subject to the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015).”

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

9. EK SERVICES AND EK HUMAN RESOURCES END OF YEAR REPORT 2015/16

None

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.04 pm