

Ref:

Called in

Yes/No

**THE THANET DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**RECORD OF DECISION OF CABINET**

Cabinet Member

Councillor Whitehead

Relevant Portfolio:

Deputy Leader; Housing & Community Services Portfolio

Date of Decision:

29 April 2021

Subject:

The Future of East Kent HR (EKHR)

Key Decision

No

In Forward Plan

No

Brief summary of matter:

The report sets out proposals to disband the East Kent HR Service (EKHR) and take HR services in house with effect from 1 September 2021. It sets out the rationale for the decision, the proposed processes and relevant recommendations. If the decision is to disband EKHR, the report recommends delegating authority to the Interim Head of Shared Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader. It should be noted that the Leader and Deputy Leader, together with the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of Canterbury City Council and Dover District Council, sit as the East Kent Shared Services Committee.

Decision made:

That Cabinet agreed:

1. That EKHR should be disbanded and that the HR service returns in house;
2. That authority is delegated to the Interim Head of Shared Services, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Leader, to carry out all necessary processes to give effect to the decision;
3. That authority is given to the Interim Head of Shared Services to sign off and enter into any agreements necessary to give effect to the decision. This includes, but is not limited to, novation of contracts between any of the three Councils and any third parties.

Reasons for decision:

The three Councils have moved on in the last 11 years and much has changed. Each has felt the effects of reductions in local government finance. Each has, of necessity, restructured and reorganised its workforce in various ways and has also taken over or outsourced various services. In 2018, the three Councils took the decision to outsource its Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services to Civica; CCC has recently taken its waste management service back in house under its newly formed Canterbury Environment Company, Canenco; TDC employs its own waste management staff and owns and runs Ramsgate Port and DDC has recently expanded its workforce at the

Dover Port Authority. EKH was disbanded in October 2020 and each Council's housing team came back in house. CCC also provides an HR service through EKHR to The Marlowe Theatre.

These changes and others within each Council, mean that EKHR is no longer a shared service, but is more of a shared resource. That resource is now stretched across five different organisations (TDC, CCC, DDC, the Marlowe and Canenco) and could be provided in a more beneficial way.

Members agreed that they need an HR service more closely aligned to the requirements of the Council.

Members felt that a clear benefit of the proposal will be the closer alignment of the individual HR services with the Council's corporate priorities. Although the Chief Executive is the Head of Paid Service and has ultimate responsibility for staffing matters, members will have more involvement in issues such as setting HR policies and procedures which directly affect each Council's staff. Members will also be able to have a better understanding of issues which affect staff.

Alternatives considered and why rejected:

None

Details of any conflict of interest declared by any executive Member who has been consulted and of any dispensation granted by the Standards Committee:

None

Author of Officer report:

Background papers

TDC Cabinet report Future of EKHR 29 April 2021 - Google Docs  
Annex 1 - Future of EKHR Equality Impact Assessment - Google Docs

Statement if decision is an urgent one and therefore not subject to call-in:

None

Last date for call in: 11 May 2021