

CORPORATE POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, 25th September, 2009

10.00 am

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**





AGENDA

CORPORATE POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Friday, 25 September 2009 at 10.00 am
Darent Room, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Denise Fitch**
Telephone: **01622 694269**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the meeting

Membership (12)

Conservative (11): Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman), Mr R W Bayford, Mr D L Brazier, Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Mr R B Burgess, Mr B R Cope, Mr R Frayne, Mrs J Law, Mr R J Parry, Mr J E Scholes and Mr M V Snelling

Liberal Democrat (1): Mrs T Dean (Vice-Chairman)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

Item No

A. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

- A1 Membership
To note that Mr R Parry has replaced Mr M Northey as a Member of this Committee
- A2 Substitutes
- A3 Declaration of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
- A4 Minutes - 8 July 2009 (Pages 1 - 6)

B. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

- B1 Financial Monitoring Report : Corporate Services 2008/09 (Pages 7 - 24)
- B2 Draft Towards 2010 Annual Report (Pages 25 - 48)
- B3 Draft Annual Performance Report 2008/09 (Pages 49 - 104)
- B4 Corporate Services Connecting with Communities - Annual Report to Policy Overview Committee. (Pages 105 - 124)
- B5 Chief Executives Department Annual Complaints, Comments And Compliments Report (Pages 125 - 134)

- B6 Kent Healthy Weight Strategy (Pages 135 - 156)
- B7 A Summary of progress in delivery of KCC's environmental commitments including climate change and the implementation of the KCC Environment Policy - 6 Monthly Update. (Pages 157 - 164)
- B8 Communicating with Kent Residents (Pages 165 - 174)
- B9 The Potential to Refocus and Restructure the Overview and Scrutiny Function (Pages 175 - 184)

C. SELECT COMMITTEE WORK

- C1 Select Committees - update (Pages 185 - 186)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
(01622) 694002

Thursday, 17 September 2009

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CORPORATE POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Policy Overview Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 8 July 2009.

PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman), Mr R W Bayford, Mr R B Burgess, Mr B R Cope, Mr R Frayne, Mr M J Northey, Mr M V Snelling, Mrs T Dean, Mr M C Dance (Substitute for Mrs J Law) and Mr R J Parry (Substitute for Mr J E Scholes)

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Cockburn (Executive Director, Strategy, Economic Development & ICT), Ms D Exall (Head of Performance & Planning), Mrs S Garton (Head of County Performance and Evaluation Manager), Mr R Hardy (Head of Performance, Improvement and Engagement), Ms J Hill (Performance Manager), Mrs D Mattingly (Corporate Risk & Insurance Manager), Mr G Wild (Director of Law and Governance), Mr A Wood (Head of Financial Management) and Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Service Manager (Policy Overview))

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

3. Election of Vice-Chairman
(Item A2)

RESOLVED that Mrs T Dean be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

4. Minutes of the meetings held on 26 March and 25 June 2009
(Item A4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 26 March and 25 June 2009 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

5. Dates of Meetings 2009 & 2010
(Item A5)

The Committee noted the dates of its future meetings as follows:-

Friday 25 September 2009
Friday 13 November 2009

Thursday 14 January 2010
Thursday 8 April 2010
Wednesday 7 July 2010
Friday 24 September 2010
Friday 12 November 2010

All meetings will start at 10.00 am and may continue into the afternoon.

6. 2008/09 Final Outturn report *(Item B1)*

(1) Mr Wood and Mrs Hill presented a report which summarised the 2008/09 financial outturn, together with annual operating plan outturn information, for each of the Service Units within the Chief Executive's Department. The report contained financial, key activity and performance outcome information.

(2) Members were invited to ask questions and the comments and responses included the following:-

- In relation to the overspend on roundabout advertising income, which was mainly due to difficulties with District planning rules, it was suggested that, as this income was unlikely to be delivered, it should be taken out of the budget and re-instated at a more appropriate time.
- In relation to income generated by Legal Services, Mr Wild explained that the unit had an annual income target. There was a balance to be achieved between the demands of income generation and impact on the wider market but he believed that there was room for everyone in the market place. He stated that they were looking to expand their areas of operation into other public sector organisations such as the health sector. He commended his staff and was glad that their work had been recognised. He confirmed that Legal Services' turnover was £6.5m, and there were 75 lawyers and 35 support staff.
- Mr Wild explained that a subsidised rate was charged for property transactions to internal clients, which was made possible by external income. Regarding the fees charged to District Councils Mr Wild stated that the fees charged by legal services to District Councils were very competitive. He confirmed that legal services carried out regular benchmarking and he believed that the service represented good value for money.
- Mr Wild confirmed that he had recently recruited new lawyers and specialists for their property law service.
- It was explained that the savings from the Gateways were contained within the Medium Term Plan. Savings had already been achieved in the current year and Mrs Oliver confirmed that in 6 months the "tell us once" service had saved at least £0.25m.
- It was suggested that Children's Centres could be re-badged as "family gateways" which could give an opportunity to share services.
- Regarding the Kent Commitment, it was requested that future reports on outturn include information on work with Districts to achieve savings for both.
- In response to a question Mr Cockburn gave two examples of joint working with District Councils, these were the shared services provision for Human Resources agreed with East Kent Districts and the second was the County Council, District Council and other public services joint network for IT, which

was a shared project that was making savings across the whole of the public sector.

(3) RESOLVED that the report and the comments made by Members be noted.

7. 2009/10 Budget Monitoring Exception report

(Item B2)

(1) Mr Wood introduced the initial budget monitoring exception report for 2009/10 which was to be considered by Cabinet on 13th July 2009.

(2) Members were invited to ask questions and the comments and responses included the following:-

- In relation to the overspend by Democratic Services due to the cost of Education Appeals, it was suggested that the figure in the budget should be increased to reflect the high demand for this service.
- It was noted that at the next meeting the Committee would be asked to establish an Informal Members Group (IMG) to look in detail at the Medium Term Plan. Mr Wood stated that last year this Committees IMG had made a very useful contribution to the budget process and about 50% of its suggestions were incorporated into the Budget.

(3) RESOLVED that the forecast budget variances for the Chief Executive's Department for 2009/10 based on the first exception monitoring report to Cabinet be noted.

8. Data Quality Audit 2007/08

(Item B3)

(1) Mrs Garton explained that Data Quality Audit and associated action plan were presented to the Governance and Audit Committee in March. It was recommended that all Policy Overview Committees also receive the report so that they could have an awareness of issues which had an impact on their areas of work.

(2) Mrs Dean asked that a report on the outcomes from the Informal Member Group on Member Information be submitted to this Committee.

(3) RESOLVED that

(a) the data quality action plan in Appendix 1 of the audit report be noted.

(b) a further report on Data Quality be submitted to the November meeting of the Committee.

9. CED Risk Register

(Item B4)

(1) Mrs Mattingly presented a report on the updated 2009 CED risk register.

(2) Members were invited to ask questions and the comments and responses included the following:-

- There was discussion on the effect of the current economic climate on developer contributions under 106 agreements and the impact on infrastructure works for new developments. It was suggested that the Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview Committee should be requested to look at the impact that the re-phasing of developer contributions has had on Local Development Frameworks.
- In relation to CED 18 (Mandated use of central government solutions less efficient than current systems), Mr Cockburn explained that certain technology in the NHS mandated by the Government was in the view of the Countywide Data Network more expensive than a solution that they could have used.
- Mr Burgess would contact Mr Harlock in relation to his question on commercially sensitive information and, if appropriate, share the response with the Members of the Committee.
- Regarding CED 11(a) (Property portfolio not 'fit for purpose'/does not provide adequate platform for KCC service delivery – budget on maintenance not consistent with need, leading to building failure) it was agreed that a note on setting out the additional action points would be circulated to all Members of the Committee. Reference was made to the recent accident at Minister College, which was a foundation school and therefore responsible for its own maintenance. It was stated that following this accident checks had been made on all similar systems.
- It was confirmed that 6 monthly update reports on the risk register would be submitted to this Committee.

(3) RESOLVED that the report and appendix be noted.

10. Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life

(Item B5)

(1) Mr Angell, KCC's Older People's Champion, set out the background to Kent's Policy Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life – '*Living Later Life to the Full*'. He emphasised that issues relating to older people cut across all Directors in the County Council. He highlighted the importance of inter-generational work and the mutual benefits that could come from this. Ms Exall stated that often the focus was on the challenges of an aging population, this document sought to redress the balance by considering the opportunities for older people to continue to make a contribution to their communities by using their expertise, experience and time.

(2) Members were invited to ask questions and the comments and responses included the following:-

- The importance of ensuring Broadband was available to older people to increase opportunities for them was mentioned. Although it was also stated

that, when asked, older people tended to express a preference for receiving written information delivered to their home.

- In relation to intergenerational links it was suggested that each Directorate should be asked to undertake five formal intergenerational projects which could be monitored.
- The importance of giving older people the opportunity to stay in employment was emphasised. Ms Exall stated that currently the emphasis was on getting young people into the work place but that would change over time and there would again need to be an increased focus on older people in the workplace. Another option was flexible working for older people for example mentoring for a few hours a week.
- Mr Burgess gave an example of an intergenerational project in Margate where young and older people shared time on allotments to their mutual benefit.
- The importance of the HandyVan and the “buy with confidence” schemes in making older people feel less vulnerable was mentioned.
- The issue of ensuring that voluntary sector vehicles supported by county council funds were available in evenings and weekends to enable older people to attend events was raised.
- It was important that older people got information about volunteering opportunities in their local area.
- Consideration should be given to new houses being adaptable, for use by the disabled and older people, which would require a change in building regulations.
- As the cost of music lessons for children was prohibitively expensive, it was suggested that older people could share their musical skills with younger people. There was also the issue of older people not being able to afford to learn to play an instrument.
- Crime or the perception of crime was a big issue for older people who did not go out though fear of being a victim of crime.

RESOLVED that the report and comments made by Members be noted and an update report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.

11. Comprehensive Area Assessment - Presentation

(Item B6)

(1) Ms Bryce-Smith, CAA Lead from the Audit Commission gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), which included underlying principles of CAA, the CAA framework, a summary of areas of focus for reporting this year and how Policy Overview Committees could contribute to the CAA process.

(2) Mr Hardy explained that officers had been working with all Inspectorates to make sure that they were aware of what KCC already had in place.

(3) Mr Carter stated that his main concern was the subjectivity of the assessment process and sought an assurance that there would be a rigorous moderation process and that before reports were published there was an opportunity to discuss the issues raised.

(4) Members were invited to ask questions and the comments and responses included the following:-

- In response to question on how a partner who was not performing well could impact on the overall score for KCC, Ms Bryce-Smith stated that it would be made clear in the report text if a particular partner was a barrier to success.
- Ms Bryce-Smith confirmed that it would be helpful if Policy Overview Committees looked at some of the CAA areas of focus as part of their work programme. Mr Hardy was asked to write to all Policy Overview Committee Chairmen to encourage them to integrate CAA themes within their Committee business.
- Ms Bryce-Smith confirmed that areas of deprivation were based on the national index of deprivation.
- It was emphasised that this was a good opportunity to raise the profile of partnerships with the residents of Kent to build an understanding to support the CAA.

(5) RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

12. Select Committees - update

(Item C1)

(1) The Committee received a report which set out the process for identifying a future Select Committee topic review work programme.

(2) RESOLVED That the following suggestions from Members be put forward to the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee for possible inclusion in the two year Select Committee work programme:-

- Section 106 contributions
- Employment workforce
- Inter-generational interaction.

TO: Corporate Policy Overview Committee – 25th September 2009

BY: Paul Carter, Leader
Alex King, Deputy Leader
John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance
Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services & Performance Management
Alan Marsh, Cabinet member for Public Health
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Financial Monitoring 2009/10

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

Members of the POC are asked to note the first quarter's budget monitoring report for 2009/10 which was reported to Cabinet on 14th September 2009.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is a regular report to this Committee on the forecast outturn for Chief Executives Department and Financing Items budgets within the Corporate Services portfolios.

2. Forecast Outturn

- 2.1 A detailed quarterly budget monitoring report is presented to Cabinet, usually in September, December and March, and a draft final outturn report in June. These reports outline the full financial position for each portfolio and are reported to POCs after they have been considered by Cabinet. In the intervening months an exception report is made to Cabinet outlining any significant variations from the quarterly report. The first quarter's monitoring report for 2009/10 was presented to Cabinet on 14th September and the annexes for the Chief Executives Department and Financing Items are attached to this report.

2.2 Revenue

Chief Executives Department

- 2.2.1 Since the last report to this POC in July (which identified an overspend in democratic services and additional income generated by legal services) we have identified the following variations from the approved budget:

- a) Further additional income generation within legal services resulting in a net under spend of £196k
- b) A pressure of £175k where savings from in year management action have been held in a central budget pro tem but eventually will be delivered within other budget headings and the budget vired once the savings/income generation have been agreed
- c) A pressure of £167k on staffing in central policy and performance, improvement & engagement

- 2.2.2 The overall impact is a net forecast overspend of £354k which will be considered by the CED management team in September and an action plan agreed to bring the budget back into balance.
- 2.2.3 The support element of Chief Executive's Department budgets has been delegated to service directorates. This means any over or under spends on the support elements will feature in directorate budget monitoring. At this stage none of the variations outlined above have any impact on delegated support service budgets.

Financing Items

2.2.4 A small net under spend of £160k has been reported on the Financing Items budget.

2.3 Capital

2.3.1 The under spends from 2008/09 have now been reflected in revised cash limits for the Corporate Support Services & Performance Management and Localism & Partnerships portfolios. We are reporting a £150k under spend in 2009/10 on the capital maintenance budget for the county office estate as part of a managed programme to deliver a saving on revenue contributions to capital. We have also identified rephasing of expenditure on the Kent Public Services Network (KPSN) of £1.491m from 2009/10 into 2010/11 and £106k to be brought forward on asset disposal costs from future years into 2011/11.

3 Recommendations

3.1 Members of the POC are asked to note the projected outturn for the Chief Executive's Department and Financing Items for 2009/10 based on the first quarter's monitoring report to Cabinet.

Background Documents:

- 1) Corporate Policy Overview Committee 8th July 2009 – Financial Monitoring 2009/10
- 2) Cabinet 14th September 2009 – Revenue and Capital budgets, Key Activity and risk Monitoring

Officer Contact:

Dave Shipton
Finance Strategy Manager
Ext. 4597

CHIEF EXECUTIVES DIRECTORATE SUMMARY JULY 2009-10 FULL MONITORING REPORT

1. FINANCE

1.1 REVENUE

1.1.1 All changes to cash limits are in accordance with the virement rules contained within the constitution, with the exception of those cash limit adjustments which are considered “technical adjustments” ie where there is no change in policy, including:

- Allocation of grants and previously unallocated budgets where further information regarding allocations and spending plans has become available since the budget setting process.
- Cash limits have been adjusted since the budget was set to reflect a number of technical adjustments to budget and the addition of £0.922m of roll forward from 2008-09, as approved by Cabinet on 13 July 2009.
- The inclusion of new 100% grants (ie grants which fully fund the additional costs) awarded since the budget was set. These are detailed in Appendix 2 of the executive summary.

1.1.2 **Table 1** below details the revenue position by Service Unit:

Budget Book Heading	Cash Limit			Variance			Comment
	G	I	N	G	I	N	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
Localism & Partnerships portfolio							
Democratic Services:						0	
- core service	4,354	-3	4,351	323	-135	188	Committee manager post & Members allowance
- support to directorates	160	-160	0			0	
TOTAL Democratic Services	4,514	-163	4,351	323	-135	188	
International Affairs Group	587	-35	552	-2	2	0	
Kent Partnerships	763	-321	442	-87	87	0	Reduced LSC income & third party payments
County Council Elections	255		255	0	0	0	
Public Consultation	100		100	0	0	0	
Provision for Member Community Grants	852		852	0	0	0	
Local Scheme Spending recommended by Local Boards	427		427	0	0	0	
District Grants for Local Priorities	625		625	0	0	0	
Budget Managed by this portfolio	8,123	-519	7,604	234	-46	188	
Less Support Costs delegated to Service Directorates	-160	160	0	0	0	0	
Total L&P portfolio	7,963	-359	7,604	234	-46	188	
Corporate Support & Performance Management portfolio							
Personnel & Development:						0	
- core service	6,149	-5,004	1,145	3	-25	-22	Additional Income to cover staff costs (see below)
- support to directorates	4,356	-4,356	0	26	-4	22	Additional staff costs for Support to CMY, EH&W & CED
TOTAL P&D	10,505	-9,360	1,145	29	-29	0	
Business Solutions & Policy:							
- core service	10,636	-8,889	1,747	249	-190	59	EIS trading activity with Schools
- support to directorates	14,410	-14,410	0	26	-85	-59	Pay as you go project activity & KPSN adj
TOTAL Business Solutions	25,046	-23,299	1,747	275	-275	0	

Budget Book Heading	Cash Limit			Variance			Comment
	G	I	N	G	I	N	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
Property Group:							
- core service	5,442	-4,080	1,362	0	0	0	
- support to directorates	4,687	-4,687	0	0	0	0	
TOTAL Property Group	10,129	-8,767	1,362	0	0	0	
Internal Audit & Procurement Support to Directorates						0	
- core service	286	-30	256	6	-6	0	
- support to directorates	754	-754	0	5	-5	0	Pay as you go activity
TOTAL Internal Audit & Procure	1,040	-784	256	11	-11	0	
Legal Services	6,189	-7,037	-848	220	-416	-196	Increased trading activity and related costs and -£20k premises saving
Corporate Communications	1,624	-94	1,530	-1	1	0	
Strategic Development Unit	3,853	-1,287	2,566	51	-51	0	Kent Graduate Prog recruitment funded by income from Directorates
Strategic Management	651		651	0	0	0	
Centrally Managed Budgets	1,843	-416	1,427	175	0	175	In year management action savings target
Contact Kent	5,048	-2,091	2,957	0	0	0	
Central Policy	709	-81	628	124	0	124	Strengthening of team
Performance, Improvement & Engagement	412		412	129	-86	43	Consultancy to develop plans for change
Kent Works	895	-895	0	0	0	0	
PFI Grant		-630	-630	0	0	0	
Dedicated Schools Grant		-4,289	-4,289	0	0	0	
Support Services purchased from CED	4,199		4,199	20	0	20	Saving generated in Legal re: Castle St offices
Budget Managed by this portfolio	72,143	-59,030	13,113	1,044	-878	166	
Less Support Costs delegated to Service Directorates	-24,207	24,207	0	28	-28	0	Adj for KPSN revised charges
Total CS&PM	47,936	-34,823	13,113	1,072	-906	166	
Finance Portfolio							
Finance Group:							
- core service	6,178	-4,199	1,979	-41	41	0	Insurance vacancies resulting in reduced drawdown from Insurance Fund
- support to directorates	1,749	-1,749	0			0	
TOTAL Finance Group	7,927	-5,948	1,979	-41	41	0	
Less Support Costs delegated to Service Directorates	-1,749	1,749	0	0	0	0	
Total Finance portfolio	6,178	-4,199	1,979	-41	41	0	
TOTAL CORPORATE POC	62,077	-39,381	22,696	1,265	-911	354	
Public Health & Innovation portfolio							
Kent Department of Public Health	1,410	-620	790	10	-10	0	
Total Directorate Controllable	63,487	-40,001	23,486	1,275	-921	354	

Budget Book Heading	Cash Limit			Variance			Comment
	G	I	N	G	I	N	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
Assumed Management Action:							
- L&P portfolio					-188	-188	
- CS&PM portfolio				-166		-166	
- Finance portfolio						0	
- PH&I portfolio						0	
Forecast after Mgmt Action				1,109	-1,109	0	

1.1.3 Major Reasons for Variance: *[provides an explanation of the 'headings' in table 2]*

Table 2, at the end of this section, details all forecast revenue variances over £100k. Each of these variances is explained further below:

Localism & Partnerships portfolio

1.1.3.1 Democratic Services: Primary variance on gross (+£117k) due to continuance of the Committee Manager post through to March 2010 plus other salary pressures which include three lots of maternity cover. A further (+£52k) variance is due to the part year effect of the restructuring of Members Allowances.

Corporate Support & Performance Management portfolio:

1.1.3.2 Information Systems (Business Solutions & Policy): Variances on gross spend (+£303k) and income (-£303k) reflect the increased demand for additional IT services, mainly trading activity with Schools and Pay-as-you-go projects, a demand which is difficult to predict during budget setting. This has been partially offset by reduced costs and income of -/+£28k relating to Kent Public Services Network (KPSN).

1.1.3.3 Legal Services: Variances on gross spend (+£240k) and income (-£416k) reflect the additional work that the function has taken on over and above that budgeted for, responding to both internal and external demand. In addition, there is a small saving on premises costs as a result of vacating Castle Street offices as part of the Better Workplaces Programme.

1.1.3.4 Centrally Managed Budgets (CMB): (+£175k) - In the 2009-10 approved budget there is an MTP saving for 'In year Management action'. The saving is to be met from savings and income generation opportunities which present themselves through the year. Although the savings target is held within CMB, the offsetting savings/income generation is being/will be achieved across the other budget lines.

1.1.3.5 Central Policy & Performance, Improvement & Engagement: Additional staff and consultants have been appointed within the Central Policy and Improvement & Engagement teams in order to strengthen these areas in preparation of developing plans to improve performance management and corporate assurance across KCC. These pressures will be highlighted in the MTP.

Table 2: REVENUE VARIANCES OVER £100K IN SIZE ORDER
(shading denotes that a pressure/saving has an offsetting entry which is directly related)

Pressures (+)			Underspends (-)		
portfolio		£000's	portfolio		£000's
CSPM	Information Systems costs of additional services/projects	+303	CSPM	Legal income resulting from additional work (partially offset by increased costs)	-416
CSPM	Legal services cost of additional work (offset by increased income)	+240	CSPM	Information Systems income from additional services/projects	-303
CSPM	MTP saving 'In year management action'	+175			
CSPM	Staffing & consultancy costs to strengthen performance management & corporate assurance across KCC	+167			
L&P	Committee Manager post to March 2010 plus maternity covers.	+117			
		+1,002			-719

1.1.4 Actions required to achieve this position:

N/A

1.1.5 Implications for MTP:

Localism & Partnerships portfolio

The restructuring of Members Allowances has resulted in a +£110k pressure which will be reflected in the 2010/11 MTP.

Corporate Support & Performance Management portfolio:

The strengthening of the Policy team and Improvement & Engagement area will be included as a pressure in the 2010/11 MTP.

1.1.6 Details of re-phasing of revenue projects:

N/A

1.1.7 Details of proposals for residual variance: [eg roll forward proposals; mgmt action outstanding]

The pressures highlighted will be discussed at CEDMT in September with the full expectation that the budget will be balanced by the year-end. Details of a Management Action Plan will be provided in a future report. Current assumptions are that this will include increased income generation and an in-depth review of contributions to and from CED specific reserves.

1.2 CAPITAL

1.2.1 All changes to cash limits are in accordance with the virement rules contained within the constitution and have received the appropriate approval via the Leader, or relevant delegated authority.

The capital cash limits have been adjusted since last reported to Cabinet on 13th July 2009, as detailed in section 4.1.

1.2.2 **Table 3** below provides a portfolio overview of the latest capital monitoring position excluding PFI projects.

	Prev Yrs Exp £000s	2009-10 £000s	2010-11 £000s	2011-12 £000s	Future Yrs £000s	TOTAL £000s
Corporate Support Services & Performance Management						
Budget	16,902	21,256	17,824	16,599	14,613	87,194
Additions:						
- roll forward	-2,752	2,680	72	0	0	0
- Outturn and pre-outturn changes	-3,231					-3,231
-						0
Revised Budget	10,919	23,936	17,896	16,599	14,613	83,963
Variance		-1,641	1,597	0	-106	-150
split:						
- real variance		-150	0	0	0	-150
- re-phasing		-1,491	+1,597	0	-106	0
Localism & Partnerships Portfolio						
Budget	512	500	500	500	1,000	3,012
Additions:						
- roll forward	-84	84				0
- Outturn and pre-outturn changes	-428					-428
-						0
Revised Budget	0	584	500	500	1,000	2,584
Variance		0	0	0	0	0
split:						
- real variance		0	0	0	0	0
- re-phasing		0	0	0	0	0
Real Variance	0	-150	0	0	0	-150
Re-phasing	0	-1,491	+1,597	0	-106	0

1.2.3 Main Reasons for Variance

Table 4 below, details all forecast capital variances over £250k in 2009-10 and identifies these between projects which are:

- part of our year on year rolling programmes e.g. maintenance and modernisation;
- projects which have received approval to spend and are underway;
- projects which are only at the approval to plan stage and
- projects at preliminary stage.

The variances are also identified as being either a real variance i.e. real under or overspending which has resourcing implications, or a phasing issue i.e. simply down to a difference in timing compared to the budget assumption.

Each of the variances in excess of £1m which is due to phasing of the project, excluding those projects identified as only being at the preliminary stage, is explained further in section 1.2.4 below.

All real variances are explained in section 1.2.5, together with the resourcing implications.

Table 4: CAPITAL VARIANCES OVER £250K IN SIZE ORDER

portfolio	Project	real/ phasing	Project Status			
			Rolling Programme	Approval to Spend	Approval to Plan	Preliminary Stage
			£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Overspends/Projects ahead of schedule						
			+0	+0	+0	+0
Underspends/Projects behind schedule						
CSS&FM	Kent Public Services Network	phasing		-1,491		
			0	-1,491	0	0
			0	-1,491	0	0

1.2.4 Projects re-phasing by over £1m:

1.2.4.1 Kent Public Services Network; -£1.5 million

KPSN is a communications infrastructure that spans the whole county of Kent, connecting the majority of KCC's sites into central services. It connects these KCC administrative sites, including Libraries, to services such as email, internet access and central business applications. The network is also being used by Kent's local and independently managed Schools, all Kent Connects Partner's including Police and Fire & Rescue for internet access and GCSx services as well as providing network connectivity for a number of local authority administrative sites. KPSN's aim was to replace the old KCC network and provide a minimum of 5 times more bandwidth into KCC's sites for the same money and to offer services to the wider public sector in the county. Both of these aims have been achieved.

Kent Schools are scheduled to transfer on to the new network as of 1st September 2009. Until then, it is very difficult to forecast total costs. Increased capacity has been held back until Schools transferred, thus saving costs by not paying for capacity until it was needed. It is likely that capacity and other increases will be necessary when all services are on the same network. As these costs will only have a part year effect in 09/10, there is re-phasing in to 10/11. Until steady state is reached, future year forecasts are difficult.

There are no overall financial implications as the total contract will be delivered within existing cash limits.

	Prior Years	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	future years	Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
BUDGET & FORECAST						
Budget	6,551	7,882	7,314	7,314	4,816	33,877
Forecast	6,551	6,391	8,805	7,314	4,816	33,877
Variance	0	-1,491	+1,491	0	0	0
FUNDING						
Budget:						
supported borrowing	311	200				511
prudential						0
prudential/revenue	2,765	1,491	0	0	0	4,256
grant		3,100	4,200	4,200	2,800	14,300
revenue	3,475	3,091	3,114	3,114	2,016	14,810
TOTAL	6,551	7,882	7,314	7,314	4,816	33,877
Forecast:						
supported borrowing	311	200				511
prudential		150				150
prudential/revenue	2,765	0	1,491			4,256
grant		3,100	4,200	4,200	2,800	14,300
revenue	3,475	2,941	3,114	3,114	2,016	14,660
TOTAL	6,551	6,391	8,805	7,314	4,816	33,877
Variance	0	-1,491	+1,491	0	0	0

1.2.5 Projects with real variances, including resourcing implications:

Corporate Support and Performance Management Portfolio

Modernisation of Assets; (£-150k) A decision was taken at Resource Directors Group in March 09 to generate an underspend against SHQ maintenance in order to address the gap in the revenue 0910 CSS&PM Portfolio budget.

After allowing for these issues the underlying variance is nil.

1.2.6 General Overview of capital programme:

- (a) Risks
N/A
- (b) Details of action being taken to alleviate risks
N/A

1.2.7 Project Re-Phasing

It is proposed that a cash limit change be recommended for the following projects that have re-phased by greater than £0.100m to reduce the reporting requirements during the year. Any subsequent re-phasing greater than £0.100m can be requested but the full extent of the rephasing will have to be shown. The possible re-phasing is detailed in the table below.

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	Future Years	Total
	£k	£k	£k	£k	
Disposal costs (CSS&PM)					
Amended total cash limits	+246	+144	+843	+1,687	+2,920
re-phasing		+106		-106	0
Revised project phasing	+246	+250	+843	+1,581	+2,920
Sustaining Kent - KPSN (CSS&PM)					
Amended total cash limits	+7,882	+7,314	+7,314	+4,816	+27,326
re-phasing	-1,491	+1,491			0
Revised project phasing	+6,391	+8,805	+7,314	+4,816	+27,326
Other re-phased Projects below £100k					
re-phasing	0	0			0
Revised phasing	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL RE-PHASING	-1,491	+1,597	0	-106	0

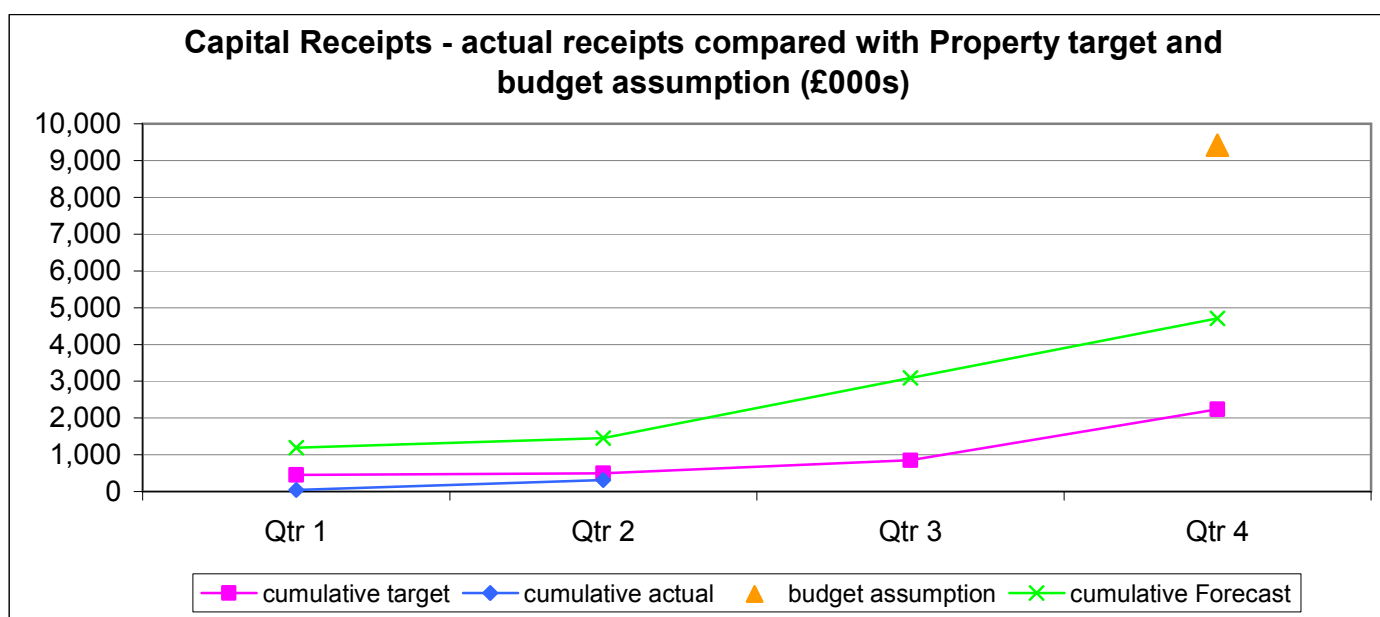
2. KEY ACTIVITY INDICATORS AND BUDGET RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING

2.1 Capital Receipts – actual receipts compared to budget profile:

	2009-10			
	Budget funding assumption £000s	Cumulative Target profile £000s	Cumulative Actual receipts £000s	Cumulative Forecast receipts £000s
April - June		447	47	1,200
July – September		492	*316	1,455
October - December		850		3,090
January - March		2,235		4,710
TOTAL	9,421	**2,235	316	4,710

* actuals to 31st July 09.

**The cumulative target profile shows the anticipated receipts at the start of the year totalled £2,235k. The difference between this and the budget funding assumption is mainly attributable to timing differences. For example one large receipt was actually received in 2008-09, but is not required to be used for funding until 2009-10.



Comments:

The table below compares the capital receipt funding required per the capital programme this year, with the expected receipts that will be available to fund this. Property group are actually forecasting a total of £4.71m to come in from capital receipts during this financial year. The table below only includes which of these are earmarked to fund spend in the current financial year. The rest is needed to be earmarked for spend in future years of the programme.

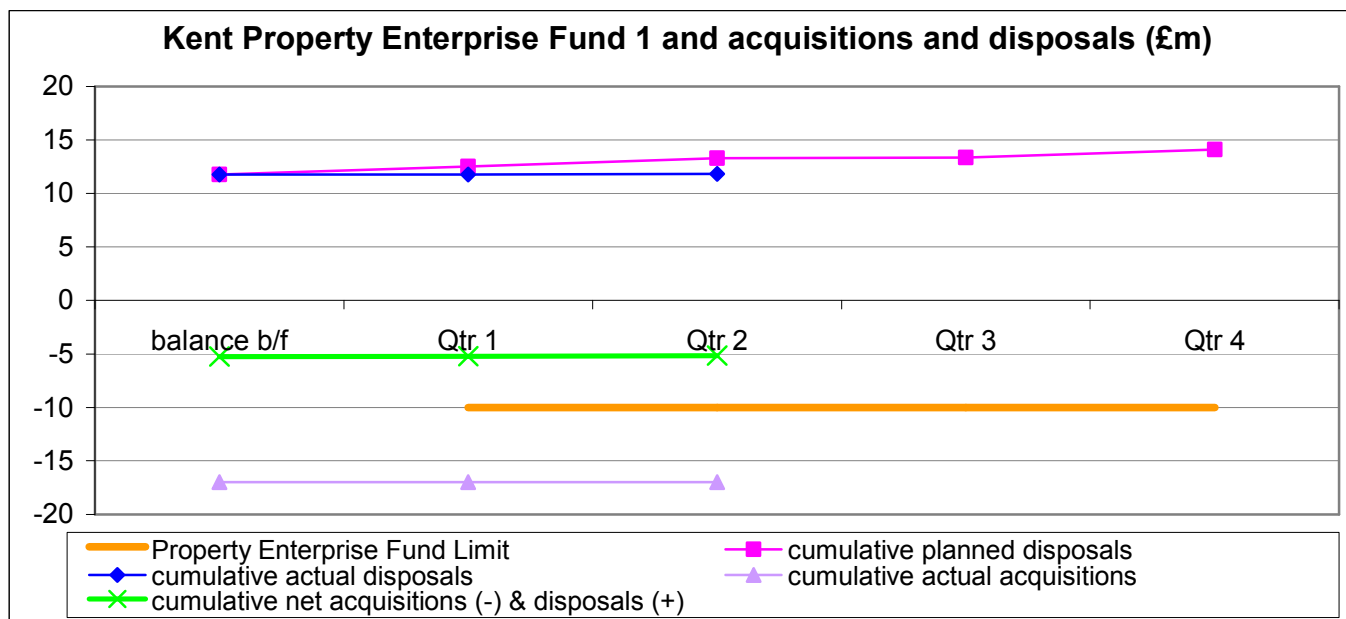
It is continuously challenging to provide realistic forecasts of receipts given the current economic climate. The potential deficit figure of almost £2m this year is due to some receipts which were originally earmarked, which have now been taken into PEF2. This is a real deficit position based on latest forecast receipts and is not due to timing issues. This position needs to be closely monitored throughout the year.

	2009-10 £'000
Capital receipt funding per revised 2009-12 MTP	11,724
Property Group's forecast receipts	2,501
Receipts banked in previous years for use	5,227
Capital receipts from other sources	2,000
Potential Deficit Receipts	(1,996)

2.2 Capital Receipts – Kent Property Enterprise Fund 1:

	<i>Kent Property Enterprise Fund Limit £m</i>	Cumulative Planned Disposals (+) £m	Cumulative Actual Disposals (+) £m	Cumulative Actual Acquisitions (-) £m	Cumulative Net Acquisitions (-) & Disposals (+) £m
Balance b/f		11.764	11.764	-16.999	-5.235
April - June	-10	12.529	11.771	-16.999	-5.228
July – September	-10	13.295	*11.830	*-16.999	*-5.169
October – December	-10	13.341			
January – March	-10	14.084			

* Actual to 31st July 09.



Background:

- County Council approved the establishment of the Property Enterprise Fund 1 (PEF1), with a maximum permitted deficit of £10m, but self-financing over a period of 10 years. The cost of any temporary borrowing will be charged to the Fund to reflect the opportunity cost of the investment. The aim of this Fund is to maximise the value of the Council's land and property portfolio through:
 - the investment of capital receipts from the disposal of non operational property into assets with higher growth potential, and
 - the strategic acquisition of land and property to add value to the Council's portfolio, aid the achievement of economic and regeneration objectives and the generation of income to supplement the Council's resources.

Any temporary deficit will be offset as disposal income from assets is realised. It is anticipated that the Fund will be in surplus at the end of the 10 year period.

Comments:

The balance brought forward from 2008-09 on PEF1 was **-£5.235m**.

A value of **£1.351m** has been identified for disposal in 2009-10. This is the risk adjusted figure to take on board the potential difficulties in disposing some of the properties.

As at the 31 July 2009 disposals to date this year have been **£0.066m** from the disposal of 1 non-operational property.

The fund has been earmarked to provide **£1.380m** for Gateways in this financial year.

At present there are no committed acquisitions to report, however forecast outturn for costs of disposals (staff and fees) is currently estimated at **£0.444m**.

Forecast Outturn

Taking all the above into consideration, the Fund is expected to be in a deficit position of £5.708m at the end of 2009-10.

Opening Balance – 01-04-09	-£5.235m
Planned Receipts (Risk adjusted)	£1.351m
Costs	-£0.444m
Acquisitions	-
Other Funding: - Gateways	-£1.380m
Closing Balance – 31-03-10	-£5.708m

Revenue Implications

In 2009-10 the fund is currently forecasting £0.040m of low value revenue receipts but, with the need to fund both costs of borrowing (£0.367m) against the overdraft facility and the cost of managing properties held for disposal (net £0.190m), the PEF1 is forecasting a £0.960m deficit on revenue which will be rolled forward to be met from future income streams.

2.3 Capital Receipts – Kent Property Enterprise Fund 2 (PEF2):

County Council approved the establishment of PEF2 in September 2008 with a maximum permitted overdraft limit of £85m, but with the anticipation of the fund broadly breaking even over a rolling five year cycle. The purpose of PEF2 is to enable Directorates to continue with their capital programmes as far as possible, despite the downturn in the property market. The fund will provide a prudent amount of funding up front (prudential borrowing), in return for properties which will be held corporately until the property market recovers.

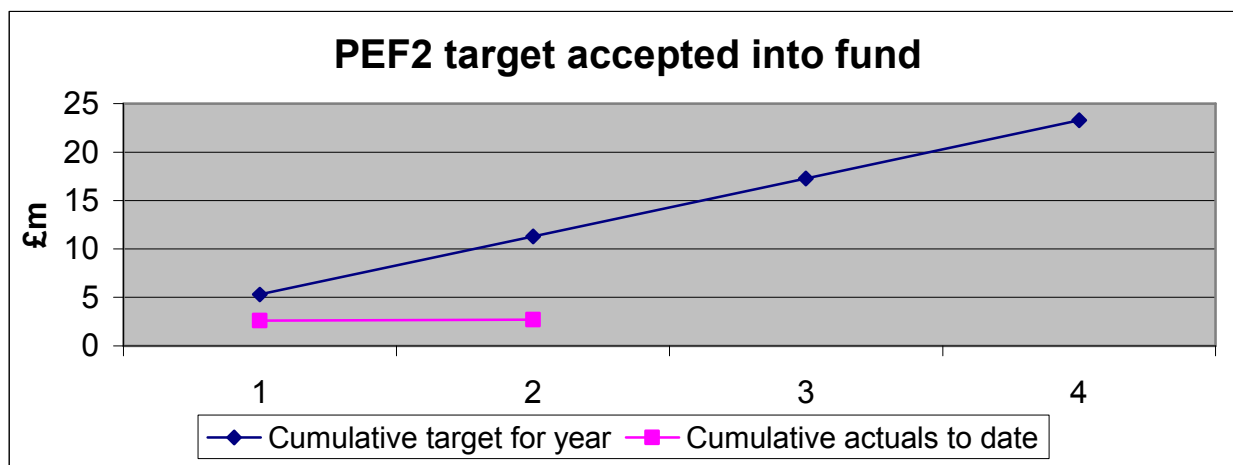
Overall forecast position on the fund

	2009/10 Forecast
	£m
Capital:	
Opening balance	-47.579
Potential receipts to be agreed into PEF2	-20.719
Sale of PEF2 properties	16.925
Disposal costs	-0.846
Closing balance	-52.219
Revenue:	
Opening balance	0.000
Interest on borrowing	-1.810
Holding costs	-1.426
Closing balance	-3.236
Overall closing balance	-55.455

The forecast closing balance for PEF2 is -£55.455m, this is within the overdraft limit of £85m.

The target receipts to be accepted into PEF2 during 2009-10 equate to the PEF2 funding requirement in the 2009-12 budget book, and achievement against this is shown below:

	Cumulative target for year	Cumulative actuals to date
	£m	£m
Balance b/fwd		2.6
Qtr 1	5.3	2.6
Qtr 2	11.3	2.7
Qtr 3	17.3	
Qtr 4	23.3	



PEF2 Disposals

To date one PEF2 property has been sold. The loss on this disposal amounted to -£0.017m. Large profits or losses are not anticipated over the lifetime of the fund.

Interest costs

At the start of the year interest costs on the borrowing of the fund for 2009-10 were expected to total £1.77m.

Latest forecasts show interest costs of £1.81m, an increase of £0.04m. This is because there has been a decrease in the forecast of properties being disposed during the year.

Interest costs on the fund are calculated at a rate of 4%.

FINANCING ITEMS SUMMARY JULY 2009-10 FULL MONITORING REPORT

1. FINANCE

1.1 REVENUE

1.1.1 All changes to cash limits are in accordance with the virement rules contained within the constitution, with the exception of those cash limit adjustments which are considered “technical adjustments” ie where there is no change in policy, including:

- Allocation of grants and previously unallocated budgets where further information regarding allocations and spending plans has become available since the budget setting process.
- Cash limits have been adjusted since the budget was set to reflect the revised portfolio structure, a number of technical adjustments to budget and the addition of £4.799m of roll forward from 2008-09, which represents the transfer to the Economic Downturn reserve, as agreed by Cabinet on 13 July 2009.
- The inclusion of new 100% grants (ie grants which fully fund the additional costs) awarded since the budget was set. These are detailed in Appendix 2 of the executive summary.

1.1.2 **Table 1** below details the revenue position by Service Unit:

Budget Book Heading	Cash Limit			Variance			Comment
	G	I	N	G	I	N	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
Corporate Support & Performance Management portfolio							
Contribution to IT Asset Maintenance Reserve	2,352		2,352			0	
Audit Fees & Subscriptions	764		764			0	
Contribution from Commercial Services		-6,460	-6,460			0	
Total Corporate Support & PM	3,116	-6,460	-3,344	0	0	0	
Finance Portfolio							
Insurance Fund	2,979		2,979			0	
Workforce Reduction	1,500		1,500			0	
Environment Agency Levy	359		359			0	
Joint Sea Fisheries	264		264			0	
Interest on Cash Balances / Debt Charges	117,921	-12,769	105,152	-3,209	-422	-3,631	Write down of discount saving from 2008-09 debt restructuring, no new borrowing & increased interest on balances
Transferred Services Pensions	22		22			0	
PRG	83	-2,100	-2,017			0	
Contribution to/from Reserves	-2,392		-2,392	3,471		3,471	transfer of 09-10 write down of discount saving from 08-09 debt restructuring to reserves; provision for recession
Drawdown from Kings Hill reserve	-1,000		-1,000			0	
ABG Safer Stronger Communities	1,277		1,277			0	
Total Finance	121,013	-14,869	106,144	262	-422	-160	
Total Controllable	124,129	-21,329	102,800	262	-422	-160	

1.1.3 **Major Reasons for Variance:** *[provides an explanation of the 'headings' in table 2]*

Table 2, at the end of this section, details all forecast revenue variances over £100k. Each of these variances is explained further below:

1.1.3.1 Interest on Cash Balances and Debt Charges:

- There is a saving of £1.971m which relates to the write-down in 2009-10 of the £4.024m discount saving on debt restructuring undertaken at the end of 2008-09. (£0.39m was written down into 2008-09, therefore leaving a further £1.663m to be written down over the period 2010-11 to 2012-13).
- There is a £1.660m saving as a result of lower debt charges and higher interest on cash balances. This is because we have not undertaken any new borrowing so far this year and we have some long term deposits unexpectedly still running which have bolstered our rate of return. Call options coming in the next few months have been allowed for in this forecast. In addition, our cash balances are higher than we assumed in our budgeted cash flow assumptions as a result of higher grant receipts than assumed and re-phasing on the capital programme.

1.1.3.2 Contributions to/from reserves:

As planned, the £1.971m write down of the discount saving earned from debt restructuring in 2008-09, will be transferred to the Economic Downturn reserve. There is also a forecast contribution to the reserve of £1.5m to provide a contingency against the impact of the recession on the Finance Portfolio budgets.

Table 2: REVENUE VARIANCES OVER £100K IN SIZE ORDER
(shading denotes that a pressure/saving has an offsetting entry which is directly related)

Pressures (+)			Underspends (-)		
portfolio		£000's	portfolio		£000's
FIN	Contribution to economic downturn reserve of 2009-10 write down of discount saving from 2008-09 debt restructuring; provision for recession	+3,471	FIN	2009-10 write down of discount saving from 2008-09 debt restructuring	-1,971
			FIN	Treasury savings - Increased interest on cash balances and lower debt charges	-1,660
		+3,471			-3,631

1.1.4 **Actions required to achieve this position:**

N/A

1.1.5 **Implications for MTP:**

N/A

1.1.6 **Details of re-phasing of revenue projects:**

N/A

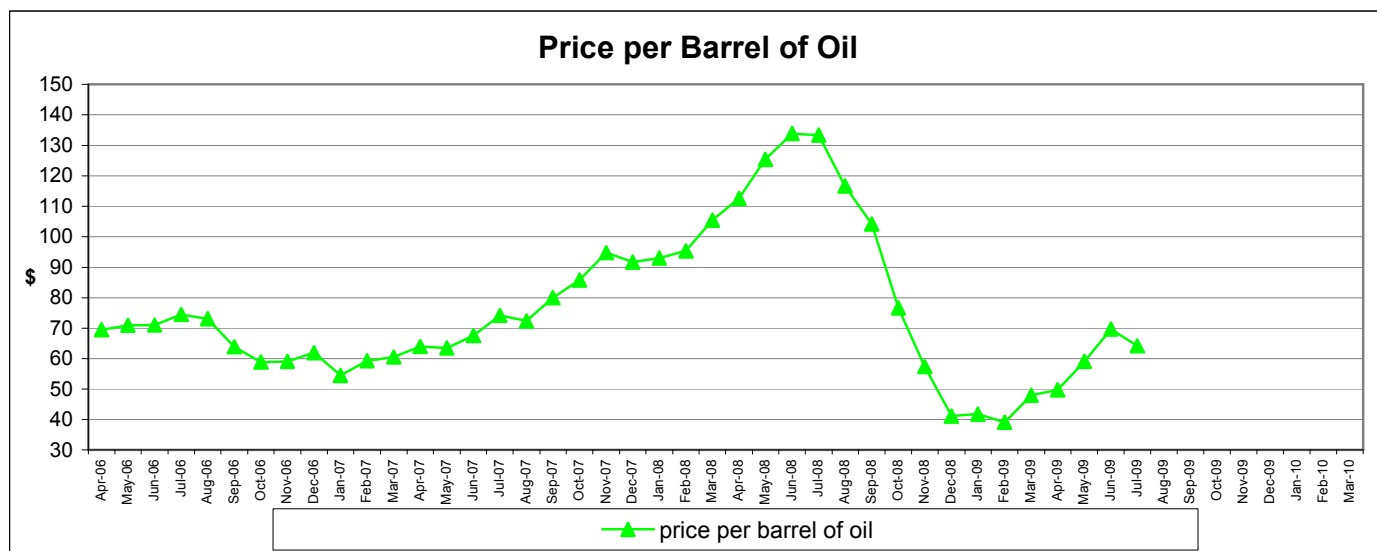
1.1.7 **Details of proposals for residual variance:** [eg roll forward proposals; mgmt action outstanding]

A virement is requested to transfer £0.1m of the underspending on the debt charges and interest budget within the Finance portfolio to Communities portfolio to cover the costs of our contribution to the construction programme at Maidstone Museum. **Cabinet is asked to approve this virement.**

2. KEY ACTIVITY INDICATORS AND BUDGET RISK ASSESSMENT MONITORING

2.1 **Price per Barrel of Oil – average monthly price in dollars since April 2006:**

	Price per Barrel of Oil			
	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
	\$	\$	\$	\$
April	69.44	63.98	112.58	49.65
May	70.84	63.45	125.40	59.03
June	70.95	67.49	133.88	69.64
July	74.41	74.12	133.37	64.15
August	73.04	72.36	116.67	
September	63.80	79.91	104.11	
October	58.89	85.80	76.61	
November	59.08	94.77	57.31	
December	61.96	91.69	41.12	
January	54.51	92.97	41.71	
February	59.28	95.39	39.09	
March	60.44	105.45	47.94	



Comments:

- The figures quoted are the West Texas Intermediate Spot Price in dollars per barrel, monthly average price.

This page is intentionally left blank

By: Paul Carter, Leader of the Council
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee – 25 September 2009

Subject: Draft Towards 2010 Annual Report

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY

This report sets out the process for finalising the third Towards 2010 Annual Report prior to approval by County Council on 15 October and attaches a draft of the report (for the eight corporate-related targets) for Members' comment.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

Towards 2010 was formally launched in September 2006. Annual reports on progress against all 63 targets are discussed and approved by County Council each autumn.

2. Format

The separate reports for each target include the following elements:

- Status of the target (either 'More progress needed', 'On course' or 'Done and ongoing')
- List of partners with whom we are delivering this target
- Outcomes delivered so far
- What more are we going to do to deliver the target
- Measurable indicators (where relevant – as agreed at County Council in December 2007).

3. Targets relevant to this Committee

Those Towards 2010 targets relevant to this committee are shown in the table below:

Towards 2010 Target	Accountable officer
Target 5: Ensure Kent County Council uses its significant purchasing power to allow fair and open competition	Nick Vickers
Target 8: Develop Kent as a major venue and location for film, television and creative industries to benefit the Kent economy	Tanya Oliver
Target 21: Launch and market a new website, "What's on in Kent?", that will list sports and leisure activities and local organisations for all age ranges in the county	Tanya Oliver

Target 24: Find new and innovative ways of communicating with the public, including trialling webcast TV	Tanya Oliver
Target 29: Continue to develop 'gateway' one stop shops that give easy access to services provided by county and district councils and other public service bodies	Tanya Oliver
Target 48: Increase opportunities for everyone to take regular physical exercise	Meradin Peachey
Target 49: Enter into practical partnerships with the NHS, sharing resources to combat obesity and encourage people of all ages to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing	Meradin Peachey
Target 50: Introduce a hard-hitting public health campaign targeted at young people to increase their awareness and so reduce the damaging effects of smoking, alcohol, drugs and early or unprotected sex	Meradin Peachey

Attached at Appendix 1 is a draft of the reports as set out in the above table.

4. Approval process

The draft Annual Report will be discussed at Cabinet on 12 October prior to approval at County Council on 15 October.

It will be discussed at the September meetings of all Policy Overview Committees (POCs) to enable Members to comment on the early draft prior to its finalisation for the Cabinet and County Council meetings. Each POC will receive the draft report for the targets relating to their committee's accountabilities. Please note that where targets are cross-directorate they will be reported to all relevant POCs.

5. Recommendation

Members are asked to COMMENT on the attached drafts.

Accountable officer:

Sue Garton, County Performance & Evaluation Manager, Chief Executive's Department
01622 22(1980).

Corporate-related targets

Draft

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 5: Ensure KCC uses its significant purchasing power to allow fair and open competition		
Lead Cabinet Member: Roger Gough	Lead Managing Director: Lynda McMullan	Lead Officer: Nick Vickers

Status: On course

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

'Backing Kent Business' campaign group incorporating the Chamber of Commerce, Institute of Directors, SEEDA, Business Link, Federation of Small Businesses and University of Kent. We are also working across the whole of KCC and thus engaging with our supplier base.

Outcomes delivered so far:

KCC Commercial Services procures high levels of goods and services from Kent-based companies, for example: Kent Fleet (vehicles, supply and hire, maintenance and repair), County Workshop (spare parts, tyres, windscreens and batteries), bus operators and taxi firms, Landscape Services (grounds maintenance machinery, materials and equipment), and facilities management.

A number of specific outcomes have been delivered as part of this Towards 2010 target as follows:

Undertaken a review of the effectiveness of our approach - KCC spends £890m per annum on goods and services with 90% of this spend in seven categories: adult social care, property, highways, waste, IT, buses and taxis. Each of these categories has been subject to an external review to look at the effectiveness of the overall approach taken to procurement and this has identified many examples of best practice and highly effective procurement. Given how much our service provision depends upon procurement this is a very positive affirmation of the quality of the procurement work in the council.

Our procurement processes lead us in two main directions to achieve this Towards 2010 target:

- Procurement focused on SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) - Large parts of our procurement spend are already focused on SMEs, and by their nature with local companies. The main areas where this applies are social care procurement, taxis for home to school transport and the large property framework contracts which have recently been reopened
- Major procurements with supply chain issues - Buildings Schools for the Future (BSF) is an excellent example of where because of its particular procurement processes, CFE have been able to build in requirements for the use of local companies and the provision of apprentice placements. Even in more conventional procurements such as the Highways contract with Ringway and Jacobs there are significant supply chain issues, although these cannot be stipulated in the contract, so Ringway use 55 small local sub-contractors and 16 local suppliers putting an estimated £7m into the local economy. The contract with Jacobs requires that 95% of the service is provided from Maidstone HQ and KCC co-located offices to ensure local employment is supported.

Advertising tender opportunities - All KCC contracts valued at over £50k and not covered by a framework contracting arrangement are advertised on the South East business portal. There are now 1,452 Kent suppliers registered and as at June 2009 there were 12,848 visits by suppliers.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Paying suppliers in 20 days not 30 days - This is a tangible step to help suppliers' cashflow.

Delivery of the capital programme - The programme of £400m in 2008/09 and £450m in 2009/10 will provide employment opportunities for local firms in areas such as school buildings, waste facilities, new road programmes, libraries and social care facilities.

Establish Property Enterprise Fund 2 - This ensures that the fall in commercial property and land values does not reduce capital receipts and hold up the programme.

Expand the approved list of contractors - This is being done in the re-let managed by the Property Group.

Establish Kent Business Support Centre - This is aimed at making it easier for local businesses to get information. KCC already uses the Business Portal to advertise contracts over £50k and KCC managers have been instructed to seek to use Kent companies for all sub £50k procurements.

What more are we going to do?

The further achievement of this Towards 2010 target is now encompassed within the 'Backing Kent Business' campaign. This is a multi-faceted programme aimed at supporting Kent businesses through the recession. The main areas of activity which will now be delivered in relation to this target are as follows:

- Increase the amount of our total spend spent locally - The spend data is being reanalysed and we expect the proportion to have increased from 40% in 2007/08
- Monitor spend - We will be establishing monitoring arrangements to ensure that the instruction to give a priority to local companies for small contracts, below EU tendering levels, is being enforced
- Encourage suppliers to operate apprentice schemes - As far as we can within EU public procurement legislation we want to encourage local suppliers to operate apprentice schemes in our tender documentation
- Streamline electronic tendering - Tendering arrangements can be onerous so we want to streamline this for all suppliers through an eTendering module of the South East Business Portal. It is small primarily local suppliers who find it the most difficult. This should be live by late summer 2009
- Maintain dialogue with suppliers - The Backing Kent Business campaign has been a very public declaration of KCC's commitment to work with local businesses. This has meant that we have had much more feedback from local businesses about what works and what doesn't in how we procure and we want to encourage this in the future
- Continue collaborative working with the Federation of Small Businesses - This is particularly intended to help small businesses become part of the supply chain for larger contracts with an initial piece of work being undertaken with Kent Highway Services
- Raise awareness of tendering opportunities - This relates to opportunities wider than KCC and how Kent companies can be helped to win this business
- Continue to refine our data on procurement to give us better information on spend and in particular local spend and we are working with the Federation of Small Businesses to support their work on small and micro enterprises.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Measurable indicators:

None – This Towards 2010 target has been formally agreed as having an ‘aspirational’ status and progress is measured via qualitative means.

Monitoring completed by: Nick Vickers

Date: July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 8: Develop Kent as a major venue and location for film, television and creative industries to benefit the Kent economy		
--	--	--

Lead Cabinet Member:	Lead Managing Director:	Lead Officer:
-----------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------

Roger Gough

Peter Gilroy

Tanya Oliver

Status: On course

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

Kent Film and Television Board, Mediatree, Screen South, Visit Kent, Locate in Kent, District and Borough Councils, Police, Highways, Maidstone Studios, National Trust, English Heritage, Maeve Films, Courtyard Studios and the BBC.

Outcomes delivered so far:

- Since the launch of the Kent Film Office in 2006 it has brought £13 million (a conservative estimate based on current information) into the Kent economy by attracting film and television productions to the county and stimulating film tourism. It has also facilitated 24 work experience places on productions such as 'Little Dorrit', 'The Calling' and the new Lynda La Plante drama, and has hosted eight work experience placements in the office
- The Kent Development Fund has been launched to invest in film and television productions choosing to locate in Kent with the view of attracting more money into the region. We invested in a local production company to produce a film entitled 'The Calling'. Our £75,000 investment made a £500,000 return into the local economy. The film was premiered at the Edinburgh Festival this summer and has help raise the profile of Kent as a premier filming location
- We successfully ran a tourism campaign in conjunction with Visit Kent to celebrate the release of 'The Other Boleyn Girl'. Visitor spend and PR generated around £1million for Kent in one year
- 'Film friendly' documents have been written and are currently being signed by major attractions, authorities and other relevant bodies to demonstrate to production companies that Kent is a film friendly county
- We launched a prize draw, called 'Close Encounters', to encourage people to share their stories and photos of when filming came to their town in Kent. The information collated will be put together to form a movie map to attract film tourism to the county.

What more are we going to do?

- Begin initial investment in film and television productions
- Secure more training opportunities for Kent residents on the set of visiting and local productions
- Continue to deliver the Kent Film and Television Strategy
- Kent Film Office together with KCC's Arts Development Unit, Aim Higher and the University of the Creative Arts will be producing a booklet which will inform students what routes they can take to find work in Film and Broadcast media
- Create a Kent Movie Map following the completion of the Close Encounters prize draw.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Measurable Indicator (s)	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target
Direct spend into Kent via the Film Office (cumulative since 2006/07) *	£1.2m	£2.7m	£4.5m	£4.9m	£6.0m

*Data revised following an audit to narrow the data down to confirmed known direct expenditure. It is estimated that total economic benefits including knock-on benefits to the wider economy may be double the above quoted direct spend figures, although wider benefits are not precisely quantifiable. This PI does not include spend by crew on per diems (daily allowance).

Monitoring completed by: Tanya Oliver

Date: 30 July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 21: Launch and market a new website, “<i>What’s on in Kent?</i>”, that will list sports and leisure activities and local organisations for all age ranges in the county.		
Lead Cabinet Member: Alex King	Lead Managing Director: Peter Gilroy	Lead Officer: Tanya Oliver

Status: Done and ongoing

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

Ten Alps, KCC Communities directorate, Visit Kent, district and borough councils, local community groups, voluntary groups, public sector partners and Kent residents.

Outcomes delivered so far:

- ‘What’s On’ was launched in November 2008 as part of Kent TV. It is an interactive site where individuals or groups can upload information on their own events across the county and the technology supporting this ensures out of date information is removed. From its launch until June 2009 the service has had over 10,000 events displayed on the website
- Quality assurance is crucial on this part of the site and Ten Alps, which runs Kent TV, is responsible for ensuring this is delivered at a high standard through the contractual arrangements. (See Towards 2010 target 24)
- A new system has been developed to make it easier for attractions to upload and edit their own events
- 73 films have been made and attached to various attractions and events to give viewers a flavour of what is available in Kent.

What more are we going to do?

- Continue to raise awareness of the service
- Increase the number of page views and events uploaded
- Increase the number of events with video footage attached.

Measurable Indicator (s)	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target
Number of website hits on ‘What’s On’	*	*	83,631	200,000

* Launched in November 2008

Monitoring completed by: Tanya Oliver

Date: 30 July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 24: Find new and innovative ways of communicating with the public, including trialling webcast TV

Lead Cabinet Member:

Roger Gough

Lead Managing Director:

Peter Gilroy

Lead Officer:

Tanya Oliver

Status: Done and ongoing

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

Ten Alps, district and borough councils, NHS, Police, Fire, Maidstone Studios, Visit Kent, Locate in Kent, business community, media community, community groups, voluntary groups, Kent residents.

Outcomes delivered so far:

There are a number of different strands to help deliver this Towards 2010 target – Kent TV, Pic ‘n’ Mix, Kent and Medway Citizens’ Panel, Web jam and localism.

Kent TV

Kent TV was launched in September 2007 and so far the site has received just over two million visits (as at the end of August 2009). It is an internet TV channel for everyone living and working in Kent and is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Viewers are able to watch video programmes on their computer about local issues, the arts, business, education, health, leisure, local government, tourism and travel. Kent TV is operated by an independent media company, Ten Alps Digital.

Specific achievements include the following:

- There are now over 2,000 videos available on the site, encompassing a wide range of topics from business, education, history, and sport to tourism
- A number of competitions have been run to highlight and showcase Kent talent, including Sound Clash which attracted 84 entrants and 12,000 registrations to vote and take part
- Kent TV launched KentTV.mobi at the request of its viewers to enable to watch Kent TV on their mobiles
- It has created training opportunities for young people in Kent including involving Canterbury Christchurch University in a debate in which 20 students were given the opportunity to work on set or make films for the project. Kent TV has also provided work experience opportunities in the office on a monthly basis
- The site has undergone a refresh to enhance usability. A new channel was also added entitled ‘How to’, giving viewers information on how to become a police officer to how to write a will
- Our successful policy of enabling viewers to embed our films on other sites ensures that videos are placed on other relevant sites, widening Kent’s reach
- The ‘What’s On’ channel has been launched (see Towards 2010 target 21) detailing events happening in Kent from boot sales to jousting tournaments
- It located to new offices in Maidstone Studios in April 2008 and has used its new location to forge new links with other creative businesses in Kent. Kent TV is working with Maidstone Studios to offer young people, studying for a creative and media diploma, an insight in to the creative industries. The diploma is in its early stages but students, as part

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

of their studies, will partake in a range of activities which could cover filming and researching for Kent TV.

Pic 'n' Mix

Pic 'n' Mix aims to revolutionise the way in which the public are able to access, re-use and share publicly available information. The project uses IBM software and free applications that are readily available on the web. Citizens can use these tools to 'mash up' information from a variety of sources, to create information that is truly relevant and customised to their needs. They are encouraged to share their 'mashups' so others in the community can benefit.

The pilot has been running for two months and has received positive feedback from the 20 SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) involved in the project. From September, a planned programme of work with schools will engage students and young people. Other community groups and voluntary organisations are also contributing to the project.

The Cabinet Office, DWP, DCSF, LEGSB and IDeA have all shown an interest in Pic 'n' Mix. 'Mashup' technology has the potential to enable data to be shared between directorates, agencies and partners, and this exciting opportunity will be explored more fully.

The Kent and Medway Citizens' Panel

The Kent and Medway Citizens' Panel (KMCP) is a joint initiative between the Kent Messenger (KM) and KCC, giving residents of Kent the opportunity to give feedback on ideas, services and products, by responding to three or four questionnaire based surveys each year. The panel marks a first in that it is the only citizens' panel in the country to be run jointly by a local newspaper and a local authority.

The surveys are conducted by Ipsos MORI and can be carried out online, by telephone or face to face. To date three surveys have been conducted:

- The original survey carried out between February and April 2008
- A snapshot survey carried out in November 2008
- A follow up survey carried out in July 2009.

The KMCP has its own website www.kmcp.co.uk where new panelists can join and existing panelists can see the results from the surveys they responded to.

There has been a recruitment drive taking place across the county to encourage more people to become panelists, the KM are advertising both through their papers and on their radio stations to encourage more sign ups and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) has also agreed to help recruit new panelists. There are currently 705 residents signed up to the panel.

Web jam

In February 2010, the KCC is proposing to hold a public 'web jam' session. This will enable residents of Kent to ask questions or write comments on a particular subject within an on-line 'real time' environment. The sessions are interactive allowing moderators and KCC/partners' staff to respond to the questions asked.

KCC will be hosting the web jamming session on behalf of the Kent Partnership which is due to last between two/three days and we will be procuring appropriate technology assistance shortly. KCC previously held an internal web jam between senior managers, however this will be the first time that the format has been used by KCC or any Kent Partnership partners to engage with members of the public. It will have a target participation rate of up to 20,000 people and residents will be asked to post comments and questions regarding a key area of policy, such as

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

health. This will link directly into the review of the Vision for Kent, Kent's sustainable community strategy, and its core priorities.

The web jam presents a new way in which citizens can get involved in shaping public policy and informing KCC and partners what they feel is important. The comments and questions raised during the web jam will be used to inform the Kent Partnership's strategic priorities beyond 2010.

Localism

Working with our partners KCC has been piloting a range of models of community engagement bringing together the three tiers of local government - county, district and parish councils - and in some of the models the police, PCTs and voluntary sector.

Neighbourhood Forums - In Dover and Gravesham there are neighbourhood forums embracing all three tiers of local government. Although joint neighbourhood forums and KCC local boards have existed for a number of years now, the Gravesham neighbourhood forums are looking at new ways to engage with local residents. The forums currently meet 12 times a year, in various parts of the borough, at which members from KCC, Gravesham BC and the parish councillors attend to discuss with local residents issues that are affecting them.

KCC and Gravesham BC are exploring the possibility of webcasting forums to enable local residents who are unable to attend the meetings to be involved. A bid was submitted to the government for funding to pilot innovative ways of communicating with the public, including the possibility for viewers of a webcast having the facility to email questions they would like to be addressed by the meeting. Unfortunately the bid was unsuccessful. However, our webcasting contract is currently being re-negotiated and Public-i, our current webcast provider, is about to provide us with a quote to lease equipment so that we can webcast some of our forums.

Arrangements are being made to establish neighbourhood forums in Maidstone and discussions are taking place with our partners across the county.

Other forums and ways of engaging - In Swale, local engagement forums have been established which include the PCT and Police. Canterbury City Council has area member panels and Tonbridge and Malling BC has a Tonbridge Forum and Parish Partnership Panel in which County Council members are participating.

KCC is exploring a range of other initiatives which will enhance KCC's community engagement strategy. For example:

- A number of elected KCC members are piloting events where the community make bids for a contribution from the members community grant
- A scheme for e-petitions is also being established which will allow the on-line community to petition KCC on issues of concern
- New technology is being explored including blogs, video uploads, social networking and the creation of a 'virtual county hall' where communities of interest can contact KCC
- KCC is exploring the idea of webcasting some of the meetings for engaging communities e.g. neighbourhood forums etc, as explained earlier
- KCC is also exploring a project whereby county councillors promote democracy in some of the schools within their electoral divisions.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

What more are we going to do?

We will deliver the following actions:

Kent TV

- Submit an Interreg bid with a European partner to create video content about both Kent and Belgium which should encourage tourism to the region
- Continue to raise awareness of Kent TV
- Continue to create opportunities for Kent to showcase their talents and opinions.

Pic 'n' Mix

- Engage new groups in Pic 'n' Mix and respond to feedback
- Continue to secure accurate and relevant data from KCC and partners
- Raise awareness of Pic 'n' Mix via networks, forums and social media

The Kent and Medway Citizen's Panel

- Continue to raise awareness of the panel and market it through the KM and the Kent PCTs
- Increase the number of citizens signed up to the panel to a challenging target of 8,000 in total.

Web jam

- The web jam will be held in February 2010
- The project will enable KCC to engage directly with up to 20,000 residents of Kent and get their views on what matters to them
- The comments will be collated to help inform KCC's strategic priorities beyond 2010.

Localism

- The Gravesham neighbourhood forums will pilot the interactive meetings and report back on its successes
- The community liaison manager will explore whether this can be expanded to other forums and local boards in Kent.

Measurable Indicator (s)	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target
Visit numbers for Kent TV (cumulative since Sept 2007)	198,210*	250,000	1,349,231	2,000,000**

* Kent TV started on 20 Sept 2007

**Based on original April 2007 Cabinet paper estimate of 50,000 visits per month

Monitoring completed by: Tanya Oliver, Robert Hardy, Paul Wickenden

Date: 30 July 2009 (updated 3 September 2009)

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 29: Continue to develop 'gateway' one stop shops that give easy access to services provided by county and district councils and other public service bodies

Lead Cabinet Member:

Roger Gough

Lead Managing Director:

Peter Gilroy

Lead Officer:

Tanya Oliver

Status: On course

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

District and borough councils, NHS, Police, Fire, voluntary sector, central government, community groups, private sector, and KCC internal business units, Further Education and training organisations, Business Link.

Outcomes delivered so far:

Gateway offers a single, convenient public service point sited in retail-based locations, using the latest innovative technologies and working with district and borough councils and a range of other partners including the NHS, Police, Fire, Job-Centre Plus etc. The focus is on shaping services to fit around customer need, maximising efficiency both for the clients and service providers, and delivering effective, measurable outcomes for people.

The Gateways opened to date are as follows:

- The original pilot, Ashford Gateway, opened in October 2005 prior to this Towards 2010 target. It was complemented by the first Mobile Gateway (Mobile I), launched in July 2007, with a target area of rural Mid Kent (Ashford to Dover), and is currently being used to raise awareness and understanding of Gateways amongst staff from the statutory and partner organisations involved. It is also supporting regular services in Dover district and various projects and initiatives, such as Adult Learners' Week, Fostering and Adoption Recruitment. A combined Dover district and Adult Social Care program was launched in March 2009, taking services out to urban and rural locations across the district. It has also been used for the 'Backing Kent People' Summer Roadshow, with representatives from KCC, local district/borough councils, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Kent Benefits Partnership and the Stop Loan Shark team on board offering advice to members of the public
- Thanet's Gateway Plus (including a library) opened on 7 January 2008. With weekly footfall reaching 9,000 people on average, the anticipated footfall is 450,000 a year. The opening has seen library membership increases amongst teens and adults, provision of new services for minority groups, new health clinics as well as the opening of the new Kent Contact and Assessment Service (KCAS) service
- Tunbridge Wells Gateway opened on 3 November 2008. Situated adjacent to the main pedestrian entrance to Royal Victoria Place, the primary shopping destination in the town. CAB, Kent Adult Social Care, Voluntary Action West Kent (VAWK), Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI), and a range of statutory and voluntary sector partners have made a very positive impact. The number of customers served averages 5,000 per month and an anticipated 60,000 per annum
- Tenterden Gateway opened on 8 December 2008. This Gateway is the first to have a rural post office within it and is also the site for the local library, Tourist Information, borough and county services. Volunteering Ashford is in situ and has experienced a significant upturn in the numbers of people applying for volunteering projects to date
- Maidstone Gateway opened on 5 January 2009. Situated on Kings Street forming an extension to The Mall, and adjacent to the bus terminus for Maidstone. There are

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

approximately 4,800 customers per month with an annual expectation of 58,000. CAB, Age Concern, Registrars, Adult Social Care, and many other key service partners have reported very positive customer satisfaction and activity levels

- Dover Gateway brings Phase 1 to a close and opened to the public on 15 July 2009. This is a very positive development, building on Dover DC's previous town centre presence. The arrival of Gateway complements Dover Discovery Centre and is the first tangible step in the delivery of the regeneration of Dover town, along with the Olympic screen on Market Square
- Tonbridge Gateway (within Phase 2) is on the site at Tonbridge Castle and opened in July 2009. The new space has brought together 'old and new' and has been received very well by customers. A full complement of services began during July
- A PR Mobile has been added to the fleet. Launched in June 2009, this will be used for PR, forward promotion and brand awareness.

Other specific Gateway related outcomes are listed below:

- In a detailed audit commissioned by the Cabinet Office, conducted by the IDeA and LGA, Gateway presented the progress made on this initiative at the FOSS (Front Office Shared Services) event in 2009. A number of other authorities want to learn from the examples of best practice
- Gateway achieved top 10 ranking from 600 entries in the Innovation category for the IDeA and Audit Commission awards in March 2008 and is showcased on their website
- Thanet's Gateway Plus was short-listed for the LGC awards for Innovation and Efficiency in 2008
- Gateway is working in strong partnership with KCC Libraries. Two Gateways have been developed with libraries in Phase 1, with the potential for two future Gateway/library developments planned for Phase 2. This combination is proving very successful in terms of expanding the service offer with increasing appeal to the wider community, and maximizing the full potential of existing estate
- Kent is one of only two two-tier authorities to gain Pathfinder status for an important Department of Work & Pensions' led service innovation –TUO (Tell Us Once). This is the first government-led service improvement initiative directly influenced by the Varney report. The aim is to vastly improve the process of informing statutory organisations in the event of the death of a loved one. The highly innovative and effective approach the Gateway service team and Registrars have taken has resulted in a very effective service being redesigned enabling Districts staff to fully engage in TUO. This cost effective implementation in Kent has been openly acknowledged, and representatives have been invited to join a national reference group looking at the longer term governance arrangements for this service. The original unitary and London borough pilots have also been to visit Kent to learn from our approach
- Interreg Funding for 'Customer Insight' - 4.3 m Euros has been secured by KCC, Medway and all 12 district and borough councils to work in partnership with Pas de Calais. This joint funding will develop the means to understand more about the people of Kent their service requirements and service delivery gaps. A Kent and Medway specific segmentation has been produced and a Service Delivery framework is available for the five pilot districts (Swale, Gravesham, Tunbridge Wells, Thanet and Canterbury) leading to action plans to enhance customer service practice. The next tranche of development begins in September.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

What more are we going to do?

- A second mobile (Mobile II) Gateway is planned for 2010
- The planned modernisation of Ashford library (Ashford Gateway Plus) provides natural development opportunities for the original pilot Gateway in the town. Subject to planning, the new iconic development for Ashford could be ready for 2011. Located on the current library site the new three storey building will bring together key services - Library, Registrars, Adult Social Care, Adult Education, and the existing full Gateway service partnership. The building will function as one service.

Planning for roll out of the rest of phase two of Gateway (April 2009 to March 2012) has begun with committed interest in:

- Canterbury – options around Herne Bay regeneration
- Swanley – options around the Swanley Information Point
- Swale – Sittingbourne and Sheppey
- Dartford – planned redevelopment of Dartford town centre and the new community hubs in Thames Gateway present strong opportunities
- Mobile III
- Shepway
- Gravesend (Gravesham)
- Bluewater

Measurable Indicator (s)	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Target	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target
Number of Gateways operating in Kent (cumulative since 2006/07)	1	3*	6**	6	9***

* Ashford, Mobile I and Thanet

** Tunbridge Wells, Tenterden, Maidstone

*** Tonbridge, Dover, Mobile II, (also PR mobile launched June 2009 - additional to planned roll-out)

Monitoring completed by: Tanya Oliver

Date: July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 48: Increase opportunities for everyone to take regular physical exercise		
Lead Cabinet Member: Alan Marsh	Lead Managing Director: Peter Gilroy	Lead Officer: Meradin Peachey

Status: On course

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

Many partners have enthusiastically joined together to promote opportunities for exercise across the public services including the private and voluntary sector. The key partners are:

‘Activmobs’, Charlton Athletic FC, Kent Sport Development Unit (KSDU), Environment & Regeneration, Eastern Coastal Kent PCT, West Kent PCT, KCC Adult Education, Private Sector Leisure Industry, District Councils, Kent Adult Social Services (KASS) Older Persons Strategy, CFE (School Sports Partnership, Healthy Schools, Extended School Hours programmes).

Outcomes delivered so far:

Healthy travel through walking and cycling programmes, and more physical activity in everyday life are key messages for all organisations of the Kent Healthy Weight Strategy and we have been working in a number of ways to help deliver this. In addition, the Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan emphasises the health benefits from use of our natural areas (see also Towards 2010 target 45).

KCC Environment and Regeneration directorate has had a particular impact on helping to deliver this Towards 2010 target through its work on projects including the following:

- Cycling and walking to school is being actively encouraged with enthusiastic take up by pupils. ‘Walk on Wednesdays’ and ‘Walking Bug’ saved 26,635 car journeys across eight districts in three months
- ‘Naturally Active’ and ‘Walking for Health’ programmes delivering hundreds of country walks within Kent’s country parks attracting well over 400 people in Dartford and Gravesham
- Nordic walking through ‘Activmobs’, extending the fitness of people with a number of groups now operating. 30 mobs of varied activities including singing, dancing, gardening and dog training are operating across Kent
- Maidstone Borough Council has initiated well-attended ‘Outdoor’ programmes and new outdoor skills are being taught through ‘Branching Out’ programmes.

KCC Sport, Leisure & Olympics Service is also critical to delivering this target and they have numerous new approaches across Kent including:

- The highly successful Kent School Games (see Towards 2010 target 22) had 529 schools participating and we also organised the Kent Disability Youth Games which included 21 schools and 564 individual participants
- ‘Adult Education sports delivering increased participation to users of their centres
- Active support for adults with mental health problems through a part-time officer to help and assist people

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

- The Kent Outdoor Pursuits Disability Project brings access for sporting opportunities to people with disabilities with over 7,000 participants so far
- Return to Sport' including sport specific and community sport with Active Kent promoting sport and active recreation across the county

In addition, there are other partnerships with the Kent Department of Public Health including:

- Developing a social enterprise to expand the Activmobs programme to 2,000 participants next year. This programme is aimed at those who want less formal types of activities (e.g. walking) on a more flexible basis or those who find formal groups and leisure environments intimidating and off-putting
- Initiatives to promote physical activity among groups currently identified as undertaking either no or low levels of physical activity e.g. physical activity for adults with Charlton Athletic (192 people over six months) and exercise for those with mental health needs at Curves, Gravesend (50+ people for six months)
- Making new partnerships involving the private sector and others to help provide local activity for local people, especially those who do not use current facilities
- Plans to establish physical activity in workplace strategies across the public and private sectors including the KCC 'Welfare at Work' programme
- Implementation of the Kent Healthy Weight Strategy and new partnerships schemes to tackle obesity (such as Don't Sit-Get fit, MEND, Bus Club etc.)
- The development of new opportunities for older people to remain active and independent through the Kent strategy for later life, 'Living Later Life to the Full' together with free swimming for the over 60's in east Kent.

District councils are very proactive in promoting opportunities for exercise. In east Kent Active Ashford, Active Canterbury and Active Dover provide information and activities for people in their area. Much of this is about easy to access exercise such as walking and cycling as well as community sporting events. In west Kent Get Sorted gives lifestyle advice to people including exercise. The Exercise Referral scheme from the NHS professionals also operates across the county.

Towards 2010 target 45 is also linked to delivery of this target. In addition, the Kent Thameside Green Grid, Greening of the Gateway Kent and Medway, Swale Green Grid, Ashford Blue and Green Grid, and Natural East Kent, are strategic programmes to help improve access to and enjoyment of the countryside and open space.

What more are we going to do?

Delivery of the Kent Agreement includes a target to increase the amount of physical exercise taken by people aged over 16 yrs from 20.3% of the population to 22.5% by March 2011.

All those actions described above will continue into 2010 and some beyond. In addition, other developments are planned:

- The 'Fit2Gether' programme is popular with the private sector leisure industry and further work will develop more activity where we have shown the need such as encouraging more females aged 16-24 to participate in physical activity
- Charlton Athletic FC partnerships, particularly through 'Physical Activity for Adults' (for adults aged 50+), will run for 26 weeks in the areas which have the lowest levels of physical activity

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

- In north Kent, a cycling activity centre is planned
- In east Kent the 'Natural East Kent' programme will have area plans to improve exercise, in particular around the urban fringes of the coastal towns
- Work is continuing to support the development of activities around healthy living, cycling and outdoor recreation in Betteshanger. New activities instigated through ActivMobs have over 100 members.
- In conjunction with the Kent PCTs a single point of information for people wanting access to services and advice about physical activity and other healthy lifestyle issues will be developed for Kent
- Work is well underway with the KCC Environment and Regeneration directorate to make the provision of Health Walks more accessible to the more deprived communities in Kent.
- We are working with the universities and other academic institutions in Kent to find new ways of evaluating and benchmarking the activity we undertake.

Measurable indicators:

None – This Towards 2010 target has been formally agreed as having an 'aspirational' status and progress is measured via qualitative means.

Monitoring completed by: Mark Lemon

Date: July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 49: Enter into practical partnerships with the NHS, sharing resources to combat obesity and encourage people of all ages to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing		
Lead Cabinet Member: Alan Marsh	Lead Managing Director: Peter Gilroy	Lead Officer: Meradin Peachey

Status: On course

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

This target requires action from a range of organisations. The main partners are:

Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), 12 District Councils, 'Activmobs', Private sector leisure industry, Voluntary organisations.

Outcomes delivered so far:

We are using new ways of communicating with the public to ensure health messages are received more effectively. Social marketing techniques now enable us to reach people in ways they understand better and are able to act upon more easily and the 'House' campaign and Activmobs also demonstrate this approach. We have also renamed the Kent Obesity Strategy as the Kent Healthy Weight Strategy which is considered less judgmental. The strategy has been based on the outcomes of the KCC Select Committee report and was produced by Eastern and Coastal PCT in partnership with KCC.

Many organisations across the county are making huge efforts and devoting considerable resources to help their communities live healthier lifestyles. This includes the following outcomes:

- All school children are now measured in their reception year and year 6 to determine obesity levels in children
- Teenage life-checks, funded by the Department of Health are being rolled out across the county
- PCT Health Promotion Teams educate and support people trying to reduce their weight and be more active (see also Towards 2010 target 48) with health trainers now in all parts of the county
- A Big Lottery partnership bid of nearly £1 million was secured by KCC and partners for projects across Kent including £50k on the 'Whole School Meals' project.

Resources are being shared much more widely between organisations especially with Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT and both Kent PCTs are contributing large budgets to joint programmes designed to improve people's health above and beyond the Department of Health (DH) allocated 'Choosing Health' funding that now amounts to over £4 million in East Kent and £3.3 million in West Kent. The two PCTs have committed all their 'Choosing Health' funding allocation to public health priorities and have made local application for this funding for projects and programmes much clearer and easier. This funding has supported numerous initiatives, for example:

- Exercise and diet programmes in the workplace and childhood obesity programmes are being established by the Health and Wellbeing Partnerships across the county
- Health Action Gravesham (Gravesham Borough Council, KCC and WK PCT) is offering food production and community cooking sessions with dietary/nutritional advice, a

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

physical activity instructor for those in sheltered accommodation and residential homes and a young people's programme (Don't Sit – Get Fit!) that works in schools, after school and out of school times running weekly swimming lessons

- KCC, Canterbury City Council, and Eastern and Coastal PCT are working together to increase participation by children and young people in youth and community activities that tackle obesity
- 'Active Canterbury', the Community Sports Partnership brings sports sectors together to increase participation in physical activity
- Sports and leisure partnership schemes in Swale are in place to tackle obesity such as Don't Sit – Get Fit!, MEND and Bus Club
- Big increases in physical activity programmes delivered in partnership (as identified in Target 48)
- East Kent Health Walks, exercise "on prescription", and Green Gyms are now being expanded across the whole county
- Weight Management Clinics are now established in Maidstone
- In Sevenoaks Get Sorted and the Why Weight Plan offer people lifestyle advice with an emphasis on managing their weight
- Tunbridge Wells offers Food 4You workshops, Grow it Cook it Eat it courses and Looking 4Ward with Food to increase people's familiarity with healthy eating
- Veg Bag schemes operate in East Kent which also has a Weight Management Scheme run by the PCT
- Healthy Living Centres (HLCs) have been established in deprived areas of the county and give advice and practical help including programmes on good diet and nutrition and cookery skills including Community Chefs
- Adult Education Centres often offer similar support to HLCs in other parts of the county
- Kent Healthy Schools Programme has had a 100% sign up in Thanet, which is our most deprived area, and is on target to reach 100% of all Kent schools by December 2009. Further work is helping children with healthy eating and nutritional lunches and community healthy eating pilots have been launched to increase the uptake of healthier school meals including free school meals
- The School Sports Partnership promotes sports with young people.

A range of other activity has also been developed:

- KCC has two food and health co-ordinators training cooks in its school kitchens and delivering Healthy Eating training to over 600 primary staff. Catering contractors are providing development and tasting sessions for pupils and parents. We are ensuring that all schools within the KCC school meals contract (61% of all schools) provide meals compliant with legislative requirements. Progress towards improving the action focusing on other food consumed in schools (not just lunches provided) is on course
- A new smoking policy for KCC aimed at promoting giving up smoking and assisting those that want to has been adopted
- KCC has launched a major initiative to combat misuse of alcohol following the publication of the Select Committee report. This includes a new cross-agency approach called 'Kent Action on Alcohol' and a new alcohol strategy currently being consulted upon

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

- KCC has a major workplace initiative designed to improve the health of the 45,000 workforce called Wellbeing at Work. This includes annual health checks, on-line access to information and healthy activities such as The Virtual Gym
- Kent Adult Social Services are expanding their preventative programmes including reducing falls in older people and increasing physical activity levels. The Brighter Futures Group helps people aged over 75 with volunteer support to give advice and assistance including health and wellbeing
- NHS “Life Checks” offering screening services for heart disease have been rolled out across the county.
- Kent Health Watch has been established to ensure that people’s views on the health and social care services they receive are properly recorded and addressed.
- The KCC House Campaign (see also Towards 2010 target 50) delivers House shops in each of the 12 District Council town centres and houses multi-agency partnerships between the PCTs, KCC directorates and the private and voluntary sector to work in innovative ways to deliver health and lifestyle messages to young people. This is an exciting and effective way of engaging young people who may otherwise not access the range of existing services offered in traditional settings.

What more are we going to do?

Delivery of Towards 2010 targets 48 and 50 is also key to the delivery of this target. In addition, implementation of the Kent Healthy Weight Strategy is a key priority of all partner organizations as well as implementation of the Health Inequalities Action Plan across KCC, districts and other partners.

All the programmes above will continue. In addition, the following actions are planned:

- Working with the community in Betteshanger ward to improve lifestyles and health
- Extending the Health Trainers programme is being extended across the county
- Rolling out the Expert Patient Programme to support people with long-term health conditions
- Increasing the number of pharmacies offering weight management programmes.

Measurable indicators:

None – This Towards 2010 target has been formally agreed as having an ‘aspirational’ status and progress is measured via qualitative means.

Monitoring completed by: Mark Lemon

Date: July 2009

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Target 50: Introduce a hard-hitting public health campaign targeted at young people to increase their awareness and so reduce the damaging effects of smoking, alcohol, drugs and early or unprotected sex		
Lead Cabinet Members: Alan Marsh	Lead Managing Director: Peter Gilroy	Lead Officer: Meradin Peachey

Status: Done and ongoing

List the partners with whom we are working to deliver this target:

Teenage Pregnancy Partnership, Kent Drug & Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT), East & Kent Coastal Kent PCT, West Kent PCT, Kent Police, 12 District Councils, Connexions, M&C Saatchi, Local Town Centre Management, KCC's Youth Service, Children, Families and Education Directorate, Youth Offending Service and Communication & Media Centre

Outcomes delivered so far:

The purpose of this campaign for young people is to reduce the risk of:

- Drug and alcohol misuse
- Smoking
- Poor sexual health
- Teenage pregnancy.

The campaign targets those who are most vulnerable to such risky behaviours and was launched in Gravesend in November 2008. It is overseen by a steering group of stakeholders who have an interest and/or expertise in delivering campaign messages to young people.

M&C Saatchi were awarded the contract to design the campaign aimed at young people working with a wide range of agencies to deliver the 'Kent Campaign' message. Saatchi engaged young people in the design and marketing of the campaign and campaign materials in order to ensure that there is the maximum potential for behaviour change and that services and resources are accessible to all young people.

The 'House' campaign runs for a short-term period (1 month) in town centre shops located in each of the 12 Kent districts throughout the year up to December 2009. The shops serve as a popular place for young people to congregate and share down time with their peers. The environment and settings of the 'House' shops have attracted very large numbers of young people (many of whom are currently unknown to and do not access existing services) where agencies then provide information and advice on lifestyle issues in an informal and unstructured way to young people. House campaign posters portraying hard-hitting imagery have been produced.

Agencies are able to access otherwise 'hard to reach' young people. Six town centres were visited up until June of this year with six more to follow in 2009. Across the first six sites over 8,000 attendances were recorded (almost certainly an underestimate). Over 50 Chlamydia tests were completed in the first two months.

Quantitative and qualitative evaluation is demonstrating that the House campaign is proving a tremendous success with young people and agencies alike, with young people regarding the House as great and wanting the shop to continue on a long term basis.

TOWARDS 2010 - ANNUAL REPORT 2009

Other local campaigns relevant to this 'Kent Campaign' are also being identified. Youthbytes (creative pop-up links accessed through College Personal Computers) has been commissioned as a pilot in West Kent College (Tonbridge) and South Kent College (Ashford, Shepway and Dover) to support alcohol messages to young people as part of the Kent Alcohol Strategy. The creative pop-up links will also be used to promote the Towards 2010 Campaign for Young People within these colleges. Youthbytes will now be rolled out to all interested secondary schools in east Kent.

What more are we going to do?

Funding has been secured from Eastern and Coastal PCT and KDAAT to extend the operation of House through a mobile facility that will be able to reach into local communities themselves, rather than town centres. The design process for this is currently being undertaken with young people across Kent and the facility will be ready for launch in November 2009.

Further work is progressing to systematically monitor and evaluate the success of the campaign to ensure that it can continue to be delivered up to and beyond April 2010 in a variety of flexible and sustainable ways. These may be through the Kent Gateways, Internet cafes, drop-in centres, youth centres etc.

Measurable indicators:

None – Measurement of this Towards 2010 target has been formally agreed as being via task-based assessment. However, footfall and profile of young peoples' visits are being monitored and evaluation questionnaires are being issued to invite user feedback which will in turn, be used as a learning process for each of the House shops.

Monitoring completed by: Debbie Smith

Date: July 2009

By: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services
and Performance Management
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: Corporate POC – 25th September 2009

Subject: Draft Annual Performance Report 2008/09

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the draft Annual Performance Report 2008/09 (APR) and attaches a draft of the report for Members' information.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

Up until this year, KCC was required by central government to produce a Best Value Performance Plan (the "KCC Annual Plan"), reflecting on the previous year's performance and setting out priorities and targets for the following year. This requirement has now been abolished.

In its place, this year KCC is publishing an Annual Performance Report, which summaries key activities and outcomes for 2008/09, in an easily accessible format.

2. Summary

The APR is a short document, built around the themes of *Towards 2010*. It provides highlights of KCC's key activities and outcomes from 2008/09. Detailed performance information is reported elsewhere. Each section of the report outlines KCC's proposed achievements for each T2010 theme, the activity that has taken place during the year towards this and outcome-based case studies that demonstrate what we are achieving on the ground.

The latter marks a departure from the standard format of performance reporting and helps to illustrate where we have made a difference to the lives of people in Kent.

This is a dynamic document and drafts are being continuously updated. You will be provided with the most up-to-date version on the day.

3. Approval process

The draft Report will be taken to each September Policy Overview Committee for information.

The draft Report will be discussed at Cabinet on 12 October prior to being taken to County Council for approval on 15 October.

4. Recommendation

Members are asked to NOTE the attached draft.

Accountable officer:

Robert Hardy, Director of Improvement & Engagement, Chief Executive's Department
01622 221343.

KCC ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2008/09

DRAFT

This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please call (*insert contact*) on (01622 XXXXXX) for details.

About this document

This Annual Performance Report provides highlights of Kent County Council's (KCC's) key activities and outcomes during 2008/09. It sets out:

- KCC's long-term goals
- The key activities of 2008/09
- The difference these have made to people's lives in 2008/09

It is one of a suite of performance reporting documents produced by KCC this year.

Detailed information on KCC's performance during 2008/09 can be found in the *Business Plan Outturn Monitoring for 2008/09*.

Detailed information on performance against the *Towards 2010* targets can be found in the *Towards 2010 Annual Report*.

Detailed performance information on the work of the *Kent Partnership* is reported to the Kent Public Service Board.

DRAFT

Contents

1. Local and National Priorities
2. Customers Satisfaction
3. Connecting with Communities
4. Economic Success – Opportunities for All
5. Learning for Everyone
6. Preparing for Employment
7. Enjoying Life
8. Keeping Kent Moving
9. Environmental Excellence & High Quality Homes
10. Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Staying Healthy
11. Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Maintaining Independence
12. Stronger & Safer Communities
13. The Finances of Kent County Council

Section 1: Local and National Priorities

1.1 The strategic direction

Kent County Council (KCC) continues to work towards the county's clearly stated objectives as set out in the *Vision for Kent*. This document, agreed between Kent's public, private and voluntary sectors, sets out how KCC and its partners will work together to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of the county over the next 20 years.

Towards 2010, a vital document designed and developed in 2006, defines KCC's priorities in terms of the *Vision* and gives the business strategic direction.

At the heart of *Towards 2010* are KCC's agreed aims. These are designed to achieve:

- Increased prosperity for Kent through business growth and job creation
- Transformation in education
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Improved health and quality of life
- Quality homes in a well-managed environment
- A safer Kent
- Continued improvements in services while keeping council tax down.

The *Kent Agreement 2* is the county's Local Area Agreement and Public Service Agreement with the Government, signed by KCC and its major partners in Kent.

The *Kent Supporting Independence Programme* continues to play an important role in achieving the *Vision for Kent*, *Towards 2010* and *Kent Agreement 2* targets. Of particular importance is its focus on key groups such as young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and its multi-agency approach to helping people move from dependency into employment and more fulfilling lives.

To make sure KCC's resources line up with its priorities, it has a *Medium Term Financial Plan* that looks ahead to the next three financial years. Its main purpose is to identify and estimate resources available over this period.

1.2 National priorities

One of the key tasks of every council is to achieve a balance between national and local priorities. There has been a government drive over the past few years to help councils deliver improvements in services to local people. Initiatives aimed at delivering these improvements have included:

- The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime, which was introduced in 2009 as a replacement for the old Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) system. CAA takes an area-based approach to assessment, looking at how well councils are working together with other public bodies in their local area to meet the needs of local people
- The Gershon Review, which required councils to improve efficiency and reduce bureaucracy

- The Varney report on service transformation, which included recommendations for a cross-government identity management system. This would enable greater personalisation of services and reduce duplication across government by, for instance, only requiring people to make one notification when their circumstances changed instead of notifying each public body separately
- *Every Child Matters*, a radical reform of children's services prompted by the Children Act 2004 aimed at bringing together the work of the health sector and local government and improving the delivery of health and social care for children and young people
- The *Children's Plan* a ten-year strategy to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up, which places families at the heart of Government policy. The Plan aims to improve educational outcomes for children, improve children's health, reduce offending rates among young people and eradicate child poverty by 2020
- *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*, a White Paper that sets out a radical agenda focussed on the following four overarching goals for health and social care:
 - Providing better prevention services and earlier intervention
 - Giving people more choice and a louder voice
 - Tackling inequalities and improving access to community services
 - Providing support for people with long-term conditions.
- *Putting People First*, the national vision for adult social care, which supports the Government's commitment to independent living for adults and aims to ensure every local area has a single community based support system focussed on the health and wellbeing of the local population
- *Sustainable Communities - People, Places and Prosperity*, a five-year strategy setting out the Government's vision for sustainable communities, with a focus on vibrant local leadership, resident engagement and participation and improved service delivery and performance
- Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are non statutory, multi-agency partnerships, which match local authority boundaries. LSPs bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively.

1.3 The economy

This year has seen economic turmoil unmatched in recent years. In April 2008, most forecasters were still expecting growth in the year ahead, and despite the impact of the credit crunch, economic fears focused on rising commodity prices and the prospect of increasing inflation. Yet by March 2009, UK GDP had shrunk by 4.3%, and interest rates had been cut to a record low in an effort to encourage demand.

Looking to the future, current forecasts¹ suggest a further contraction in the national economy of 4.3% in 2009, before a weak return to growth in 2010. KCC's support for businesses and employment through the downturn is reflected in its commitment to *Backing Kent Business* and the promotion of a closer relationship between KCC and the business community highlighted in the *Regeneration Framework*. However, the challenges of recession will also be reflected in increased pressure on public spending.

¹ HM Treasury (August 2009) *Forecasts for the UK Economy*

For KCC, this is likely to mean increased demand on services and greater pressure on the budgets available to provide them.

1.4 The duty to involve

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 sets out measures for councils (and other Best Value authorities) to engage local people, lead their communities and find new and more effective ways to deliver high quality services with their partners.

Section 138 of the Act contains a new duty to involve local representatives and came into force on 1st April 2009 for all councils. The duty seeks to ensure that local people have greater opportunities to have their say. The aim of the new duty is to embed a culture of engagement and empowerment across all the work of a council.

The duty requires councils to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve representatives of local persons in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so. It specifies the three ways of involving that need to be covered:

- **providing information** about the exercise of the particular function
- **consulting** about the exercise of the particular function
- **involving in another way**

KCC will build on existing engagement tools to ensure that it meets the requirements of the duty from 2009 onwards.

1.5 Personalising services

KCC is committed to personalising services to ensure they meet the needs of the people of Kent. This means continuing to innovate and improve by:

- Giving individuals and communities a stronger voice in the design and transformation of services
- Ensuring improved access through innovative projects such as *Gateway* and the self-assessment website so that services are accessible to all
- Continuing to find new and innovative ways of offering more choice and individual control in order to meet and surpass public expectations
- Making the most of technological innovations to personalise services
- Getting the simple things right first time and ensuring an excellent customer experience for all.

KCC's Personalisation and Engagement Board, chaired by the Managing Director of Kent Adult Social Services, supports the council in meeting these aims by championing improvements in community engagement, identifying and communicating good practice within KCC and maintaining a clear focus on improving the customer experience.

1.6 The older population

People in Britain are living longer than ever before and the population is ageing. This pattern can be found in developed economies worldwide and will have a very significant

impact on the future of public services. It is essential that KCC plans for the impact this will have.

This year saw the publication of Kent's Policy Framework for Later Life, *Living Later Life to the Full*, which sets out how people in Kent want to live their later lives and what they want from public and community services and facilities.

Following extensive consultation, seven key priorities have been developed to reflect the issues and concerns that are important to the older people of Kent:

- To ensure communities are designed to be “age proof”, stronger, safer and sustainable
- To improve transport and accessibility
- To enable people to lead healthier lives and have better access to healthcare
- To support people's citizenship, learning and participation in community life
- To ensure those people who need support to live independently have choice, control and good quality care
- To encourage people to plan for a secure later life
- To promote a positive image of later life and dignity and respect for older people.

Targets have been drawn up under each of these priorities, and are set out in the Policy Framework. A mapping process has been carried out to identify and collate all the action public services in Kent are taking and planning for older people. This will publicise the existing projects that people may not be aware of, and will also highlight key areas that require strategic and collective actions in the future.

Section 2: Customer Satisfaction

Kent County Council's (KCC's) customers are everyone in Kent, not just the people who directly access its services. KCC constantly tries to listen to what people have to say and uses this feedback to improve its performance.

The council considers the views of Kent residents to be very important. In October and November 2008, Ipsos-Mori carried out a face-to-face survey on behalf of KCC with over 1100 Kent residents, to get their opinion on living in Kent.

The results from the survey were positive, with 89% saying they were satisfied with their local area and 74% saying they felt that they belonged to their local neighbourhood. Both of these are above the national average.

The survey showed that the score for overall satisfaction with KCC increased from 46% in 2006 to 51%, although the different methodologies used mean that direct comparisons should be treated with caution. KCC will work hard to improve on this in the coming year.

KCC wants to give everyone a first class service, but recognises that sometimes it don't always get it right first time. That's why this year, following consultation, the council has revised its complaints process and leaflet.

This revision is one part of the developing strategy to transform customer service by listening to what customers want and expect. The aim is to reduce the bureaucracy involved. This strategy includes reducing the number of formal stages and changing the culture within KCC by encouraging staff to deal with complaints speedily and sympathetically, apologising when things go wrong and taking action to resolve the source of complaints by learning lessons from what causes them.

KCC has developed a whole range of forums and engagement tools which enable people to express their views, which are then fed into the appropriate service development processes. This provides people will alternative avenues to let the council know what is wrong, rather than resorting to making a complaint.

Section 3: Connecting with Communities

3.1 Why it matters

People are at the heart of everything KCC strives to achieve. It has an excellent track record of engaging with service users in the design and delivery of services. However, there has been relatively less success with the wider Kent public, with decision-making felt to be quite remote from local people.

KCC wants to ensure that in the future it connects with local people both as individuals who use its services and as residents and members of local communities. KCC wants residents and service users to know that when they say something it not only listens but responds – operating the simple ‘you said; we did’ principle.

3.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- The wider Kent community regularly engaged with by KCC in a meaningful and constructive way, helping to inform all policy and service developments and decision-making
- The most vulnerable and least heard communities in Kent actively engaged in policy and service design
- Joined-up public services which are convenient and easy-to-access for all sections of the community
- Strong relationships between KCC Members and their local communities

3.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Seeking people’s views

Throughout 2008/09 KCC has consulted with Kent residents on major policies and service issues. These range from using the views of disabled children and their parents to design a new respite centre to consulting the wider public on the revision of the *Kent Public Health Strategy*.

In partnership with the Kent Messenger Group, KCC has established a new *Kent and Medway Citizens’ Panel*, enabling it to seek the views of a large number of Kent residents aged 16 or over. This is the only citizens’ panel in the country to be run jointly by a local newspaper and a local authority. So far two surveys have been undertaken; the results have been used to inform policy development, such as the *Backing Kent Business* and *Backing Kent People* campaigns.

Membership of the Panel at the end of March stood at around 700, which is still some way below the intended target of 5000 by 2011. KCC will continue to recruit new members in 2009/10.

Consultation and participation with children and young people continues to develop.

Over 45,000 children and young people took part in the 2008 *Kent Children & Young People’s Survey*, up from 42,000 in 2007. Findings have been used to inform the planning of children’s services at a county, local and school level and also used to produce a needs assessment. In early 2009, Ipsos-Mori undertook 16 “mini focus groups” with young people in Kent to follow up on issues such as bullying and health that came out of the Survey.

Version 0.7
17/9/09

The *Children and Young People's Plan* was reviewed in 2008 and was subject to extensive consultation with children and young people, including a series of focus groups with seldom heard children. The design and wording of the summary version was led by a group of young people.

The *Kent Youth County Council (KYCC)* remained highly active during 2008/09 and is well-supported by young people in Kent with 30,921 young people voting in the November 2008 elections. KYCC has continued to play a strong role in giving a voice to young people in Kent and informing the work of KCC, influencing the decision to extend the Freedom Pass and being asked to inform KCC's Policy Framework for Later Life: *Living Later Life to the Full*.

The Framework for Participation with Children and Young People in Kent has been produced, agreed by the Kent Children's Trust and distributed widely to organisations in Kent. An inter-agency workshop in February 2009 identified further actions to take forward the work on participation and to revitalise the strategy.

Kent's Children's Social Services has actively engaged service users in their recruitment processes.

KCC has ensured that pupils and parents have been fully engaged in the *Building Schools for the Future* programme and have been able to influence the changes made to their school. A workshop for over 150 year 6 - 13 students was held in June 2008, which aimed to capture students' ideas about how and where they would like to learn in the future and to integrate these ideas into the development of new school facilities planned through the BSF Programme.

Public access and technology

KCC recognises that public access in the 21st century is changing and that the way we deliver services across the whole public sector needs to change accordingly, particularly the way in which we use technology.

Critical to improving the customer experience and physical access to services is the *Gateway*, which offers increasingly convenient public service points in a retail format in high-street and town centre locations. Gateway delivers this by using innovative technologies and working with key public, voluntary sector and private sector organisations to shape services around people's needs.

During 2008/09, KCC began work on simplifying access to public services in Kent via the *Gateway Multi-Channel* programme. This is being led by KCC in partnership with other local public sector organisations and the private and voluntary sector. The programme has seen the expansion of Gateway from a face-to-face project to a multi-channel project incorporating face-to-face, phone and web. This will deliver joined-up web and telephone access across the non-emergency public sector in Kent.

"This is a great idea - to have advice, housing advice and general help under one roof, close to the town-centre. Brilliant."
Customer at Tunbridge Wells Gateway

Linked to Gateway is KCC's *Better Work Places* programme, an office transformation programme that aims to ensure that KCC has the right buildings in the right places for

Version 0.7
17/9/09

the 21st century - for contact with Kent residents and for staff, in conjunction with partner agencies, and to deliver real efficiencies. This year discussions have taken place between KCC, district councils and health trusts across Kent about sharing office and building space. Local arrangements for flexible working have been encouraged where these can be done at minimal cost – for example in Shepway KCC adult social services are due to shortly begin operating out of premises owned by the Romney Marsh Day Centre, a local charitable organisation.

Gateway continued to be rolled-out across Kent in 2008/09 with 3 new town-centre Gateway locations opening in Maidstone, Tenterden and Tunbridge Wells. Services available within Gateway have increased during 2008/09, and currently exceed 40 agencies working in partnership under the Gateway banner. These include Post Office services through the Tenterden Gateway, the successful piloting of health prevention programmes for diabetes and blood pressure at the Ashford Gateway, Citizens Advice Bureau, West Kent College, migrant helpline, and RBLI pathways to work.

Kent was selected as a Pathfinder for the Department for Work and Pensions-led *Tell Us Once (TUO)* initiative, which aims to vastly improve the process of telling statutory organisations that a loved one has died. The highly innovative and effective approach the Gateway service team and KCC Registrars have taken has resulted in a very effective service being redesigned, enabling Districts staff to fully engage in TUO.

ICT has a crucial role to play in improving the way public services are delivered. The *Kent Connects* Partnership offers the expertise and resources to help partner organisations deliver real change in the way public services are delivered. It aims to tackle the barriers to the joining up and sharing of public services through the application of leading edge technology.

In July 2008 KCC commissioned the *Kent Public Services Network (KPSN)*, a single Wide Area Network replacing KCC's existing corporate and schools network. This is now in the final stages of installing the connections to over 1,100 public service sites serving 14 councils, Police and Fire authorities as well as providing connection to the secure Government Gateway. KPSN is one of 3 aggregated solutions in the UK and the only one to achieve 100% participation of all councils in the region.

Access to technology is also important in helping communities to connect with each other and the wider world. KCC's *Connecting Kent* programme has been working to support community broadband groups since 2002. 2008/09 saw the start of the Broadband Grant scheme, which makes up to £50,000 available to a "not spot" area (a group of houses and businesses with no access to broadband services) through the local Parish Council. This one-off capital grant pays for the installation costs for a broadband service, and the subscribers then meet the on-going monthly charges. The "not spots" helped in 2008/9 were Barham, Sutton-by-Dover, Tilmanstone and Ulcombe with at least 2 more (Iwade and Selling) planned for late 2009.

Kent TV, the KCC-funded broadband community channel, underwent a substantial refresh in April 2008 to make it easier to use. The refreshed site has become more interactive, with voting ability, and it has become easier to upload comments and video content. The site is widely used by both Kent residents and businesses to showcase their own content and there are now over 2000 videos available on the site, encompassing a wide range of topics from business, education, history, and sport to

Version 0.7
17/9/09

tourism. At the end of March 2009, visitor numbers for Kent TV reached 1.5 million, far exceeding the 250,000 target.

Co-designing services

Through the work of the *Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK)* KCC has sought to place the person at the heart of service design, both within KCC and in partnership with others.

In 2008, SILK worked with low-income families, to gain an insight into the daily lives and the ways in which they manage to survive. This has informed a number of additional projects in order to address the issues raised, including one to create a bulk-buying model in the Parkwood area of Maidstone. SILK also undertook focused work with the Sheerness Children's Centre to find new ways of engaging fathers in family life, leading to the creation of the local 'GO' community card for parents.

In March 2009, SILK worked with Gateway frontline staff to co-design 'Insight to Idea' – a structured process for groups to reflect on customer needs, map their journey of interaction with the Gateway, and generate creative solutions for better services. 'Insight-to-Idea' is now being used as part of a team building day for the roll out of new Gateways around Kent.

Member engagement

KCC with its partners continues to pilot a range of models for community engagement. Building on the first successful pilot of *Neighbourhood Forums* in Dover, discussions have continued across the county with partners to establish which model of community engagement which is appropriate for each of our partners.

During 2008/09 productive discussions have taken place, which have resulted in the creation of three Neighbourhood Forums in Gravesham based on the Dover model. In Swale the Borough Council and KCC have established Local Engagement Forums which have created a stronger link to the Swale Local Strategic Partnership. In Tonbridge and Malling and Canterbury, KCC is joining existing models of community engagement which were set-up by the District Councils.

In 2008/09 the *Member Topic Review Programme* included three select committees on: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Provision of Activities for Young People and Passenger Rail Services in Kent. Each review resulted in a number of recommendations designed to address issues identified by the research carried out. Topic reviews have a doubly beneficial effect, both in that the process itself tends to catalyse positive action and the effects of the recommendations themselves. Since the topics chosen for review are often highly significant, cross-cutting and can sometimes involve radical change, the benefits are designed to be far reaching and 'medium to long range' rather than of the 'quick fix' variety.

KCC operates three *community grant schemes* (Member Community Grant, Local Schemes Grant and the Small Community Capital Projects Fund) which empower local County Councillors to give awards to deserving projects which will benefit their local community. These schemes provide more than £1.7 million each year directly to community projects. In 2008/09 a total of 1,152 awards were made across Kent. Recipients included Town and Parish Councils and small local voluntary groups and

projects supported ranged from a community centre to a project to engage young people through fishing.

3.4 How this made a difference

Engaging Fathers

Seashells, a Children's Centre in Sheerness, initiated a project with the Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK) to look at what kind of support fathers require and how they could provide it.

To answer this, a user centred approach was adopted that involved actively engaging fathers both inside and outside the Seashells centre. Placing a core group of 12 fathers at the centre of the work made them feel welcomed and encouraged them to take part. Talking to the fathers enabled Seashells to understand how they wanted to spend time with their children and how they view their role within the family.

As a result of the project, a full-time dad's worker has been appointed at Seashells, to act as a continued advocate for dads and ensure that their views are heard.

Member Grants

Local Members in Gravesend and Dartford have given funds to support the work of mediation in North Kent (MiNK). MiNK is a voluntary organisation that provides a mediation service for the general community, providing a free, impartial and confidential service for people involved in a neighbour or community dispute.

Through funding from Member community grants in 2008/09, MiNK has recently been training both primary and secondary school children across Dartford and Gravesend in conflict resolution techniques to help resolve disputes in their own schools. Pupils who have become peer mediators have found it a rewarding experience. A Dartford pupil said: "It is good to know that you are trusted by children and adults. We never tell anyone what is told to us unless it is serious and then we have to tell a teacher. Being a mediator is a great experience".

Gateways

In early 2009 Brett and Chelsea were the first customers to use the new Housing Plus service at the Ashford Gateway and found it invaluable. They returned to the UK after Brett's building work dried up in Spain and had no idea where to start in terms of building a new life in Ashford. Brett's Dad suggested they visit the Ashford Gateway and through Housing Plus they were able to sort out the majority of their problems, from claiming benefits and using the internet to look for jobs, to finding a Sure Start children's centre just a few minutes walk from their home.

The couple are now much happier and settled in the area and were amazed at how much help they received so quickly. Chelsea says: "I don't know where we would have found all this information if it hadn't been for Housing Plus. It seems like they have made sure they are in contact with all the local organisations a person might need and have found out how they can help you. They look at the whole picture not just say, benefits, or job seeking and if Housing Plus can't help you directly it seems they always know someone who can. We can't thank them enough for all their help".

Section 4: Economic Success – Opportunities for All Supporting business, creating jobs

4.1 Why it matters

Successful local businesses matter to us all. Kent County Council must do all it can to help our business community; the wealth it creates helps pay for good public services and the jobs it provides are key to a happy and successful life.

Kent has a unique opportunity to take full advantage of the busiest 'gateway' to the UK between Europe, London and the rest of the country to bring more employment to the county. KCC will support school leavers and the workforce to develop the right skills to access the jobs and opportunities that a thriving business sector brings. KCC will also capitalise on Kent's proven strengths in construction, land-based industries, pharmaceuticals, technology, tourism and biodiversity.

4.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- Long-term sustainable economic growth in Kent
- Long-term regeneration of Kent's coastal towns
- A thriving rural Kent economy
- More jobs created and businesses moving to Kent
- Kent regarded as a premier UK tourist destination

4.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Regeneration

In January 2009, KCC published the draft of *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, KCC's Framework for Regeneration. This takes a long term view of the main challenges and opportunities affecting Kent, promotes a closer relationship between KCC and the business community and provides a basis for putting economic development and regeneration at the centre of everything KCC does.

KCC has carried out targeted regeneration work in the coastal towns of Margate, Dover and Folkestone. Work this year has been disrupted by the economic downturn affecting partners and funding availability. However there have been some notable successes, including the securing of £7.75m from the CABE Sea Change Programme to deliver substantial improvements to Dover waterfront and Castle facilities.

In Margate the start of work on the *Turner Contemporary* site (see Section 7) has created greater confidence in the future of the town. There have been a number of new shops, cafés and creative spaces opening in Margate's Old Town in anticipation of the gallery's opening, such as on the Harbour Arm, although the full benefits will be realised closer to or post opening.

The University Centre and new Adult Education Centre opened in Folkestone in 2008, and the Performing Arts and Business Centre, which includes business incubator space, opened in March 2009.

KCC also supports regeneration through the *Property Enterprise Fund*, which realises capital from the disposal of non-operational property, and acquires property for future use, regeneration and income generation opportunities. KCC has undertaken a vigorous disposal strategy for non-operational assets. As of March 2009, 131 properties

had been sold for a total receipt of £12,288,050 with the money in turn being re-invested through acquisitions, such as Manston Business Park in Thanet.

The rural economy

In 2008/09 KCC has continued to provide support to rural businesses and communities across Kent. The *Kent Action for Rural Retailers* initiative provided specialist retail advice to 54 independent village retailers in 2008/09 to help them remain in business. The *Kent Rural Access to Services* programme has supported the creation of one community shop at Barham, which has also saved the village post office. This shop is due to officially open in August 2009 and three more community shops are currently in development for next year.

“This is a great day for our community and just shows what can be done by individuals with a common purpose who will work together to effect change. We took up the challenge in Barham and now the shop is open it makes all the effort worthwhile” *Liz Minter, Chair of Nailbourne Community Store*

The *LEADER+*, *Kent Rural Towns* and *Rural Revival* programmes have now delivered funding to over 200 rural community-based regeneration projects and assisted a range of community-led projects, including *Funding Buddies*, which was recently awarded over £300,000 of

lottery funding to be rolled out to rural communities across Kent.

Tourism

Tourist related business supports approximately 50,000 jobs in the Kent economy, which is 7% of total Kent jobs. KCC has undertaken a number of campaigns through *Visit Kent* to support tourism-related business in Kent and increase visitor spend.

A European campaign aimed at France, Netherlands, Belgium and Germany secured over £1 million Euros worth of bookings to Kent via Dutch tour operator “House of Britain” during 2008/09. The *Other Boleyn Girl* campaign, based around the Hollywood film and delivered in partnership with the Kent Film Office brought in around £1m worth of visitor spend and PR in 2008/09.

The value of on-line bookings for accommodation in Kent’s *Destination Management System* has increased slightly from £300K in 2007/09 to around £370K in 2008/09, although this is below the intended target of £500K. This is partly due to the economic climate and partly due to an increase in the number of large-scale commercial competitors within this market. In 2009 KCC will review its role in this market to see if it can realistically compete and where it adds value.

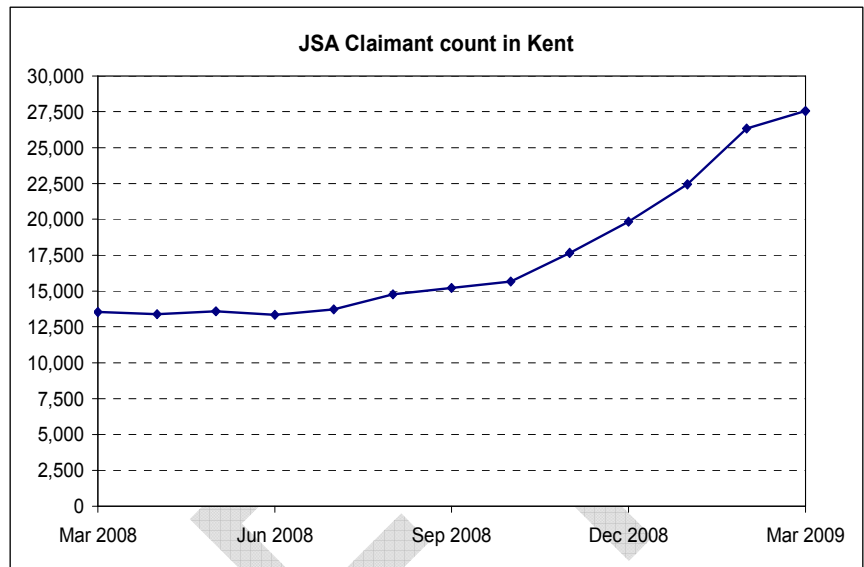
Economic growth

Despite the tough economic climate, through *Locate in Kent* (LiK) 3,786 jobs were created or safeguarded in 08/09, exceeding their target, and 70 new companies invested in Kent, meeting their target.

KCC’s *Backing Kent Business* campaign was launched in December 2008. This focuses on ten commitments by KCC to help Kent businesses through the recession. These include paying businesses supplying KCC within 20 days rather than 30. On average, 78% of businesses have been paid within 20 days. This is up from 44% prior to the launch of the campaign. KCC will look to build on this further during 2009/10.

KCC has continued to provide support to the film and television industry in Kent in line with the *Kent Film and Television Strategy*, mainly through the work of the *Kent Film Office (KFO)*. This year the KFO has managed over 700 filming days, taking the total income generation into Kent to £13m since 2006.

Obviously, any activity in 2008/09 has been in the context of severe economic turbulence. The effects of global recession have been felt in Kent, as they have across the world. After fifteen years of falling or static unemployment, numbers claiming Jobseekers' Allowance in Kent more than doubled in 2008/09, although at 3.3% of the working age population remains below the national average (4%).



The coming year will prove challenging for Kent as it recovers from recession. It will continue to be dependent on changes in the national and international economic climate. KCC will continue to promote Kent's significant structural economic advantages and ensure that the necessary physical, skills and social infrastructure is in place to keep Kent an attractive location in which to live, visit and invest.

4.4 How this has made a difference

Kent Film Office

The Kent Film Office (KFO) has been dedicated in the promotion and development of the creative industries in Kent, which includes the training of young people. The unit has helped local production company Maeve Films obtain funding to set up the *Kent Film Foundation* which aims to give young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to find their way back into education and/or employment through work on their own films. So far the company has hosted a film school for 3 autistic young adults and 3 autistic young offenders and is hosting a further 6 places for young offenders during summer 2009. It is hoped that they will be able to set up a long term film school for young adults from disadvantaged backgrounds, in conjunction with Thanet Works and Thanet College.

Elaine Wickham, Producer at Maeve Films is grateful for the help she has received from KFO. She says "The Kent Film Office is invaluable, not only because they offer production support and advice, but because they're totally committed to film training in Kent. They are dedicated to creating and collaborating on film initiatives that support college and university graduates, as well as young disenfranchised youth, which I think is commendable".

Marlow Innovation Centre

Marlowe Innovation Centre opened in September 2008. It is the first Innovation Centre in the UK to be located on a school campus, at the Marlowe Academy in Ramsgate and was built there as a key part of the regeneration strategy for Thanet.

The Centre provides space for 6 light industrial units and 19 offices and is already nearly full. Tenants are provided with free support, including monthly Innovation and Business Support clinics and banking advice as well as the opportunity to network with fellow tenants. One tenant, Sarah Wallace, the owner of Clinical Litigation Services, has found moving into the Centre to be a real benefit to her business. She says "it's a fantastic interactive place to work, there are all these different businesses in one place, it is very dynamic, and it means that you are forward looking and share experiences".

All tenants agree to some kind of contact with Marlowe Academy students. Sarah mentored a student from the Marlowe Academy who had a particular interest in law. Asked about the connection with the Marlowe, Sarah said "That is something that I feel quite strongly about and I think it is a very positive thing. I think it is good for the school because there are role models here for the school children. The older pupils can see that there are thriving businesses in the Centre, and work is actually quite exciting if you are doing something that you enjoy. I think that it is a great idea to bring business and education together."

Wealden Wheels

Wealden Wheels is a KCC-funded community transport operation run by volunteers to improve rural access to services in the five parishes of Pluckley, Charing, Egerton, Challock and Smarden.

It provides the opportunity for the housebound to get out and socialise, attend medical appointments, or just have a day out. Without Wealden Wheels, they would either have to rely on individuals to transport them or in many cases simply would not leave their homes.

Users of the service find it invaluable and come from all age ranges. A local care home had this to say: "We have been able to book the transport for all our outings a year in advance. The drivers are always very helpful, polite and professional. The tail lift enables us to take residents whose disabilities do not allow them to sit safely in ordinary seats".

Alan Davies, the treasurer of Wealden Wheels is grateful for the part KCC has played in keeping this service running during 2008/09. He says "I think KCC should be properly recognised for the major contribution they have made to Wealden Wheels. Last year, after our LEADER+ funding ended, KCC made a major donation to support our running costs and it was this that kept us going through 08/09".

Section 5: Learning for Everyone

Getting it right from the start

5.1 Why it matters

Providing our youngest children with the very best start in life is crucial. Early years and nursery education has an enormous impact in developing a child's readiness to learn from an early age, along with building essential social skills and good behaviour. With these key skills, a child's appetite for learning is considerably improved.

KCC acknowledges family and education as the most important factors in ensuring that children grow into adults who are able both to look after themselves and to contribute to society as a whole. The council is convinced that education, skills, learning and well-being are key to personal success and fulfilment and to the future prosperity and quality of life in Kent. KCC is determined to improve the quality of education received by every child in every school and setting and to protect and improve the life chances of the most underprivileged and vulnerable children in our community.

5.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- Higher quality early years education across the whole of Kent
- Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results improving faster in Kent than the national rate
- No disruptive behaviour, bullying or vandalism in any of our schools
- Children in need in Kent, particularly the most vulnerable, fully supported to deal with the problems they and their families face
- Adults in Kent given opportunities to improve their numeracy and literacy skills

5.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Early years

Kent recognises that good quality early years provision is crucial in developing a child's receptiveness to learn, building essential social skills and encouraging good behaviour. Since 2005, KCC has sought to increase access to early years settings through doubling the number of maintained nurseries linked to primary schools to 70, creating over 12,000 new childcare places and establishing 72 Children's Centres with a further 30 planned in areas of deprivation.

The Parklife Centre in Herne Bay, the result of a partnership between KCC, Canterbury City Council and The Gap, was opened in January 2009. It features the Poppy Children's Centre for children up to 5 years and the Sparks Youth Centre for 13 to 19 year olds, making it the first in the county to offer services for residents from birth to their late teens.

In September 2008 a new Communication, Language and Literacy Development project was established within the Gravesham Local Children's Strategic Partnership, developing joint working across schools and early years settings through training and exchange visits. This has seen improvements for children in Kent above the national and regional averages for this project.

There was further improvement in Foundation Stage Profile data in 2008. Out of the thirteen aspects of learning that are assessed at the end of the reception year, twelve demonstrated improvement. Kent's performance in the percentage of children achieving the expected level in Foundation Stage was better than nationally in eight out of the

thirteen areas. However, overall this was slightly below the national average, at 46% compared to 49%. Work to improve this further will be undertaken in 2009/10.

Getting results

Kent is committed to ensuring that attainment results for Key Stage 1 and 2 in its schools improve faster than the national average.

This year has shown above average increases in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in Key Stage 1 for reading and writing, with an increase of 2% from 82% to 84% for reading and an increase of 1% from 79% to 80% for writing. This is in contrast to the national rates, which have remained static at 84% and 80% respectively. This has been helped by initiatives such as the 23 reading recovery teachers trained as part of the *Every Child a Reader* programme.

The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 and above in Key Stage 1 for mathematics remained the same at 90%, in line with the national rate. This year KCC piloted the *Numbers Count* project, as part of the *Every Child Counts* programme, which aims to improve achievement in mathematics for 7 year olds. Statistics indicate that children's progress was accelerated by average gains of 14.4 months from 20 one-to-one sessions. KCC will be looking to roll the pilot out across Kent from next year.

"Reading Recovery has raised the profile of reading in the school. People are talking about children's reading all the time at every level". *Carole, Kent Headteacher*

The percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 or above for *both* English and mathematics in Key Stage 2 tests increased by 2% from 67% to 69%, which is remains slightly below the

national rate of 73%. Work to improve this will be undertaken in 2009/10.

From September 2008, a differentiated programme of support was implemented in target schools. 19 schools were engaged in the *Raising Achievement in Your Schools* project, which provides an enhanced package of adviser support and challenge for schools that in 2006 had been below 65% in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for four years. Six of these exceeded the government's base line of 65% in at least one subject whilst others improved their performance. 20 schools were engaged in the *Intensifying Support* programme and 57 in the *Ensuring Success* programme. Both programmes showed improved performance, particularly in mathematics. Further differentiated support is planned for 129 schools from September 2009.

Attainment at GCSE level also continues to improve. In 2008, 49.7% of students achieved 5 or more GCSE A* - C grades including English and Maths compared to the national average of 47.6%. The proportion of young people leaving care with five or more good grades at GCSE was 11.4%, which was an improvement on the year before and in line with the national average.

More students in Kent achieved passes at 'A' level or equivalent with 93% receiving 2 or more A -E grades, a 1% increase on last year. The quality of performance by students increased to 206 average point score per 'A' level entry, up from 202.7 the previous year.

Tackling bullying

Kent Safe Schools has developed, in partnership with the Kent Anti-Bullying Strategy Group, a ground breaking *Anti-Bullying Accreditation Scheme* which is being rolled out across Kent. Currently over 130 schools have or are working towards anti-bullying accreditation, which is set to increase as the scheme expands.

An on-line survey about bullying took place with more than 8,000 children and young people in November 2008. Results from this showed that 85% of pupils felt that their school were good at dealing with bullying (up from 77% in 2007) and only 12% said that they were being bullied, a significant reduction from 25% in 2007.

Supporting families

KCC and its partners continue to focus on preventative strategies, making sure help is available at the earliest possible opportunity to respond to families in need and those who are vulnerable.

Growth in the number of *Children's Centres* in 2008/09 to 72 has enabled improved local access to services and a range of support for families of children from 0 to age 5.

KCC has expended to 240 the number of *Family Liaison Officers* (FLOs) and *Parent Support Advisers* (PSAs) working to support parents and enhance relationships and communication between parents and schools. This has led to an increase in the number of families accessing the most appropriate support from agencies and engaging with schools and with their children's learning. Over 12,500 parents accessed advice through their FLO or PSA this year.

"Thank you for the wonderful services you give. I had two lovely ladies come to visit me regarding my son who has Aspergers and ADHD which has created behavioural problems. 'X' has been absolutely fantastic, she has guided me and encourages me to have the confidence to manage my son's behaviour and that I can do it." *Parent*

In addition, following consultation with parents, KCC is running a pilot programme in Dover, Gravesham and Maidstone, appointing 3 PSAs to work with families of excluded children, families of those at risk of exclusion and families with children out of school. These PSAs are currently working with over 30 families.

This year has seen increased participation in family learning and parenting programmes, Kent Adult Education Service has had just under 7,000 learners engaged on family programmes this year, with another 4,000 engaged through family programmes with *Kent Children's University* and *Children's University in Schools*. As a result, parents have reported increased confidence in their own parenting abilities and improved relationships with their children.

Supporting vulnerable groups

Protecting children and keeping families together is KCC's overriding priority. It continues to take robust action with partners and through the *Kent Children's Safeguarding Board* to protect children and develop a wide range of preventative services, ensuring children are supported in their families and the need to remove children becomes a rarity.

The Safeguarding Board continues to work hard to achieve good outcomes for children. The Child Death Review Panel has been put into place and other recent achievements include promoting safe recruitment within the third sector and the broadening of the Kent E-safety strategy to include awareness-raising for parents and carers.

The *Kent Pledge* articulates KCC's commitment to children and young people who become looked after by KCC to ensure that they enjoy their life and achieve their potential, taking good memories of their time in care into the future. During 2008 KCC developed the framework for delivering effective corporate parenting in Kent, including the corporate parenting forum and the children in care council. The Kent Freedom Pass was also extended to KCC care leavers up to 21 years of age.

As part of the national *Aiming High for Disabled Children* programme, KCC together with Eastern and Coastal Kent and West Kent PCTs, is developing a range of new services to give children with disabilities the opportunity to experience enjoyable and valuable activities away from their parents and carers and give parents the chance for a break from caring. An example is an overnight activity weekend held at the Bewl/Swattenden centre, which provided disabled youngsters with their first night's stay away from home. As well as activities such as sailing and football the children were responsible for making their own beds to assist them in developing independent living skills.

Windchimes, a new resource centre for disabled children from East Kent was opened in July 2008. Children with the most complex needs can stay there for up to seven nights, providing parents with respite and children the opportunity to undertake a range of fun activities and socialise with other young people.

Adult skills and learning

There are numerous adult learning opportunities offered throughout Kent. The *Skills Plus* initiative is offered free to adults wanting to improve their numeracy and literacy and is available through the Kent Adult Education Service. Courses are run at dedicated Skills Plus centres across Kent mornings, afternoons and evenings so studies can be fitted around family life and other commitments. As at July 2008, 2474 learners had enrolled on Skills Plus courses. In addition, 266 adults with learning difficulties or disabilities were helped last year to develop the skills they need to become more independent in their daily lives and active members of the community through the *Independent Living Skills* programme.

5.4 How this has made a difference

Every Child a Reader

Every Child a Reader is an initiative which aims to tackle the literacy difficulties that blight many children's lives, particularly those of children living in poverty. It part funds the salary and training of highly-skilled Reading Recovery teachers in targeted schools, to provide intensive help to children most in need. Of the 386 lowest attaining children in Kent who received Reading Recovery programmes during the academic year 2008/09, 300 (78%) successfully caught up with peers and in line with national averages. The majority of the remaining children made at least twice the expected rate of progress.

Pauline, a Kent Reading Recovery Teacher, says: "I've been a successful teacher for 35 years and I didn't know how to teach reading until I did Reading Recovery. To see

these children who were always left behind catching up with their peers and going on to make the same progress is fantastic.”

Anti-Bullying Accreditation Scheme

Kent Safe Schools launched a pilot project two years ago to provide a county wide accreditation for schools in anti-bullying work. The scheme is designed to ensure that all aspects of anti-bullying work, including preventative work and awareness-raising for the whole school community, are at the same high standard. The work is supported by Kent Safe Schools project officers, who provide training in peer mentoring, mediation and restorative approaches. The anti-bullying co-ordinators work with school leaders to ensure that the impact is strategic and impacts at all levels throughout the school.

One school in Dover took part during 2008/09. The school was formed through a merger between two schools and the Year 6 pupils were having difficulty mixing. Kent Safe Schools worked with the Year 6 teachers and pupils throughout the academic year, including intensive work with the whole school during Anti-Bullying week, to great success. Kate Winspear, KCC anti-bullying co-ordinator says “The final test for me was the last week of term. I was invited in to the school to say goodbye to the Year 6 pupils. I watched as they rehearsed their play, full of good fun and enjoyment, all working together. One child, who had won the poster competition, told me that ‘*Year 6 had just got better and better*’”

Family Support

The *Children and Families Project (CAFE)* was set-up in 2006 as a 6 month pilot project to develop a service to support the children and families of offenders. Following its success, largely to the involvement of a voluntary sector partner with experience of working with excluded families on a London housing estate, the project was continued with funding from KCC and Canterbury Community Safety Partnership and expanded to other areas. Positive outcomes from the project include stable accommodation, parental employment and enhanced family relationships and parenting skills.

The project has helped young women such as BW develop a stable family relationship. BW was referred by her partner’s Probation Officer when she had a 2 year old child and was expecting another shortly. She was living in unsuitable accommodation and facing eviction. Her partner had an older son with ADHT who lived with them and they had bad finance and debt problems. The CAFE project worker helped them to negotiate with their debtors to resolve these problems. She also helped them to liaise with the older boy’s school to recognise his special needs. With CAFÉ’s support, the family moved into more suitable and stable accommodation and BW started as a volunteer with a young families group last summer. Her partner’s elder son is more settled at school with considerable improvement in his attitude and behaviour. BW believes that the CAFE support has “kept them together and made them stronger as a family”.

Section 6: Preparing for Employment

Making education relevant to all our young people

6.1 Why it matters

Although Kent's overall GCSE and 'A' level results are significantly above the national average and the county is a national leader in improving secondary education, too many students leave school with insufficient careers advice to fulfil their potential or make the right choices for entry into employment, post-16 education or university. Too many students drop out because they make ill-informed choices and too many businesses say there is a significant skills deficit in the young people they employ. Vocational courses that are tailor made to the needs of industry, matching skills to market requirements, and the provision of first-class careers guidance for young people are pivotal to KCC's vision.

All school and college leavers should display the hallmarks of employability – knowledge, discipline, motivation, reliability and respect.

6.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- More young people gaining relevant vocational skills and using these to gain employment
- All young people provided with high quality impartial careers advice to help them make the right career choices
- Fewer young people becoming NEET
- More young people being awarded apprenticeships through the Kent Success programme and going on to permanent employment

6.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Vocational learning

Kent's *14-24 Innovation Unit* enjoyed great success in 2008/09 engaging with young people through its range of skills and training programmes, including vocational Master Classes in partnership with organisations such as the Royal Ballet and the Fifteen Foundation.

The number of young people engaged in the 14-16 vocational programme continues to increase. In September 2008 over 5,000 learners opted to join a vocational course, and most courses are over-subscribed. Of those attending a vocational course during 2008/09, 98% felt that it was having a positive effect on their lives.

NEETs

KCC runs a number of programmes aimed at young people who are, or are in danger of becoming, NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). From April 2008, KCC has commissioned the delivery of Connexions Services to the Connexions Partnership Kent & Medway.

The *Skill Force* programme provides innovative courses for young people aged 14-16 who feel disengaged and uninspired by the traditional school curriculum. The Institute of Education at the University of London has evaluated Skill Force as providing "a unique service to schools (and is) successful in meeting the needs of many disaffected students, improving their motivation and social skills". In September 2008, 400 young people enrolled on Skill Force. Also in September pilot courses for post-16 students

started. The *Skill Force Leadership Award* is designed to engage Year 12 students who traditionally have been in danger of becoming NEET. The pilot has been highly successful and will be expanded into a full programme from September 2009.

KCC ran two *Brand You Experience* sessions during 2008/09, in Dover and Maidstone. This five-day 'out of school' programme is aimed at supporting vulnerable students who are in danger of becoming NEET. It is designed to raise aspirations, provide direction, raise confidence, increase motivation, and introduce the skills of success. 84% of those that attended these sessions stated that they had found them "potentially life changing" and more are planned for 2009/10.

"I didn't realise until now that anything is possible", *Brand You Experience Participant*

The Kent Community Programme (KCP) is a 3-month programme for those who are already NEET, which combines community-based voluntary work with learning life and employability skills. At

the end of March 2009, KCP had worked with 116 young people (all previously NEET) across Kent, undertaking projects such as renovating Murston Community Centre gardens and assisting in the build of a barn in Dover. Positive routes of progression for the young people are a priority for the KCP project teams. So far, 78% of the young people involved have been guided and supported into either further education, employment or an extended work placement.

Kent has taken a strategic approach to preparing groups of particularly vulnerable young people for post 16 pathways. The NEET County Strategy Group has representation from the Youth Offending Service, Alternative Curriculum, Looked After Children, Unaccompanied Minors and Children's Social Services. In 2008/09 the percentage of those aged 16-19 who were NEET and were disabled or had a learning disability was 8.2%, reduced from 10.3% in 2006. In 2008-9 the percentage of young offenders in employment, education and training was 69.8%.

Overall, the percentage of those aged 16-18 in Kent who are NEET decreased from 5.2% to 4.7% in 2008/09, significantly ahead of the national average of 6.7%.

Careers guidance

High quality impartial careers advice and guidance is vital for school children to ensure that they make the career choices that suit them. Providing this information is a priority for KCC. During 2008/09, KCC has worked with leading careers advice teachers to develop a Kent Careers Education Curriculum Framework, due to start in schools in September 2009 and funded the development of nine lead teachers to focus on Careers, Education and Guidance developments, who were appointed in January 2009.

Fostering good relationships between schools and local businesses is a key way of raising students' awareness of job opportunities and helping them to understand what type of career they would be interested in pursuing. Through *Kent Works*, KCC arranged work-related learning activity for over 7,000 young people across Kent in the 2007/8 academic year. This included interview days, career awareness work, and preparation for work experience and enterprise.

Apprenticeships

The *Kent Success* apprenticeship programme has enjoyed another successful year. The programme is now a formal employment route of entry into KCC. It is regarded as an integral element of KCC's wider workforce development strategy and KCC recruitment procedures have been re-designed to make it easier to recruit apprentices into permanent posts, in line with KCC's wider strategic workforce goals of employing more young people.

"After spending 7 months on Job Seekers Allowance, I honestly believe completing a Kent Success Apprenticeship was the best life choice I've made to date."
Alex Ellis, former Kent Success apprentice

As at March 2009, 228 apprentices had been taken on by KCC. Of those that have completed the programme, around 70% have remained permanently employed by KCC, 20% have found employment with other

private or public sector organisations and the remainder are being supported to ensure that they move forward positively into employment and further training opportunities.

In 2009/10, priority focus will be given to increasing the establishment of apprenticeship schemes across the wider Kent public sector and work is already underway with the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) initiative and the contractor for the Turner Contemporary project in Thanet to provide apprenticeship placements.

6.4 How this has made a difference

Swale Skills Centre

The Swale Skills Centre opened in September 2008 and is funded by KCC, the Kent and Medway Learning Skills Council and Department for Communities and Local Government.

This unique state-of-the-art Vocational Centre is designed to deliver training in construction, engineering and green sustainable technologies to all those 14 years and above. The Centre has been purposely positioned on the Eurolink Business Park to be in the heart of industry.

120 students from schools across Swale attend the skills centre one day a week as part of their GCSE option or vocational training. The number of young people taking part in a construction or engineering course there is expected to double in September 2009. As well as school age students, the centre also caters for post-16 studies and employers use the facilities to train their apprentices.

Master Classes

In 2008 Kent Works joined with Brand You to facilitate a series of Master Class conferences across Kent, aimed towards year 10 and 11 students, nearing the end of compulsory education. These events are designed to introduce young people to key employability skills ranging from teamwork to business & customer awareness. They also ran Master Class Taster days aimed at year 9 pupils, which were industry specific sessions run by enthusiastic professionals, covering sectors such as engineering, media and retail.

Version 0.7
17/9/09

Feedback from young people and teachers attending these events has been very positive. One teacher said ““They enjoyed the environment and conference facilities, it was out of their comfort zone, but raised their aspirations”. Student feedback included: “I think this could really help someone who is not sure what they want in life” and “Today has inspired me”.

Kent Success

Kent Success is KCC’s internal apprenticeship programme, which enables young people aged 16 to 19 to achieve an accredited qualification in a supported work placement across a wide range of vocational skill areas. In addition, the programme provides young people with an extensive range of life and employability skills.

Chris Mitchell found out about Kent Success at his local job centre. “I got fairly average results at school, so I was finding it hard to get into work and to get into the work mode. I had a few part time jobs, like working in the local chip shop. Then at the job centre I saw the KEY training services leaflet and I thought the scheme sounded quite good.”

Chris is now in a finance assistant job role at KCC, having realised during his apprenticeship that finance was the area he was interested in. Summing up his experience as an apprentice Chris says, “it was a good stepping platform, I made some friends through it, and it was a good move forward.”

DRAFT

Section 7: Enjoying Life **Kent, a great place to live and work**

7.1 Why it matters

How we spend our leisure time is crucial to enjoying life in Kent. Kent has a unique heritage, beautiful countryside and great choice of leisure activities. Opportunities are all around us and there is a huge variety to suit all interests.

KCC must ensure that residents and visitors can discover what this county has to offer and can participate in enjoying life in Kent.

7.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- Kent established as a centre for the arts
- Continued growth in local sport across Kent
- A modern library service fit for the 21st century
- More young people engaged in cultural activities across Kent
- A network of volunteers to support sport and cultural events across the county

7.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Culture

KCC has worked hard to support arts and culture across Kent in 2008/09. The first Kent Cultural Strategy Summit was held in February 2009 and was attended by over 130 partners from across the county. The event helped to establish agreement on the value of culture and strengthened Kent's position and profile as a developer of the arts. Following the summit, a Kent Cultural Strategy is being developed, to be launched in early 2010. This will align with the KCC regeneration agenda, in terms of recognising culture as a driver or contributor to regeneration and community cohesion.

KCC supported several nationally-recognised arts events held in Kent during 2008/09, including the *Folkestone Triennial* and *Whitstable Biennial*. It also helped to secure £40,000 of investment for the *Light Up Open Up* event held in Dover to launch the Cultural Olympiad in the South East.

Opportunities have been created for more young people to get involved in theatre activity across Kent. The *Kent Youth Theatre Festival* was successfully staged for the first time in March 2009, based on extensive prior consultation of organisations in Kent and wider research. The resulting energy and consensus has enabled the start-up of new initiatives to drive forward youth theatre development.

Considerable progress has been made in 2008/09 in preparation for the completion of the *Turner Contemporary* Gallery in Margate by 2010. Kent-based contractor Durnells were appointed in October 2008 to build the gallery and work at the site began in November 2008. The gallery building programme has made noted improvements to the whole of the eastern seafront area of Margate, such as the de-dualling of Fort Hill, completed in Autumn 2008.

The Turner Contemporary Project Space occupied the former Marks and Spencer building on Margate High Street from February 2008, helping to build audience capacity

and generate further interest in the project. A varied artistic programme will continue in the period prior to the gallery opening.

Sport & Leisure

Local sport across KCC has been helped to grow through practical help and support, including administering grants and helping organisations to secure funding. During 2008/09 KCC's Sport, Leisure and Olympics Service levered over £4 of external funding for every £1 spent on the service.

KCC has continued to support sports clubs in gaining nationally recognised accreditation through the *Clubmark programme*. KCC's Sport, Leisure & Olympics Service became registered in summer 2008 to run a local Clubmark licence scheme with district councils, in order to support clubs from minority sports through the

“Clubmark identifies the club as a flagship within our community and for parents to see that we are safe and accessible” *Sheppey Rugby Club*

accreditation process. So far, 150 sports clubs across Kent have received Clubmark accreditation.

We have worked with district councils during 2008/09 to establish 10 local

Community Sports Networks with voluntary sector sport representation, so that the local voice of sport can feed into local plans, alongside other partners. This is below the target of 13, due to a lack of interest in some parts of Kent and reduced emphasis from Sport England, but more work will be done to further this in 2009/10.

Kent's work to secure a legacy from the Olympic and Paralympic Games was nationally recognised in 2008 and awarded Beacon Status. Through the *Kent Free Access to National-level Sportspeople* scheme, during the last 3 years over 700 national level sportspeople have had access to free sports facilities across the county as well as discounts on equipment, clothing and physiotherapy services. In 2008/09, 20 top performers, both disabled and non-disabled, have been directly supported by KCC and a further 5 performers have been supported through P & O Funding.

This is starting to show real results for Kent sportspeople, including bronze and silver medals in Rhythmic Gymnastics at the Youth Olympic Festival in January 2009, 6 swimming gold medals in the DSE Junior Nationals 2009 and a top 10 world table tennis champion who participated in the Beijing Paralympics Games in 2008.

As part of KCC's *Kent Pledge* to children and young people who become looked after by KCC, arrangements have been established for free access to certain leisure facilities in 5 districts in Kent: Ashford, Dover, Maidstone, Thanet and Tonbridge and Malling.

Kent's *Library Services* enjoyed another good year. Overall issues are up 2.8% on 2007/08 and visitors to libraries have increased by 9%.

KCC has sought to improve the user experience through its *Library Modernisation* programme, with libraries in Ramsgate, Tenterden, Hadlow, East Peckham and Marling Cross undergoing modernisation during 2008/09. The programme seeks to find new ways of working, co-locating with other partners to deliver an improved, seamless service to customers, such as locating libraries in the new Thanet and Tenterden Gateways and. This has helped the service reach many more customers, with issues at

the newly-refurbished Ramsgate and East Peckham libraries increasing by 67% and 11% respectively compared to 2008.

The number of young people involved in activities and borrowing books has increased at modernised libraries. On average children's fiction issues at these libraries have increased by 4.09% and children's non-fiction by 4.6% compared with 2007/8.

"Love the look and feel of the new library.
Peaceful and welcoming."

"Lovely, bright, modern. Loads of new books"

Customers at Hadlow Library

In Kent, the National Year of Reading was launched in April 2008 under the banner, "Kent: a Great Place to Read". It has acted as a catalyst for numerous projects and initiatives such as the *Doorstep Library* in Sheerness, where volunteers from Seashells Children's Centre read stories to children in streets and in their homes.

Volunteering

KCC has sought to build a strong partnership with statutory, voluntary and business organisations to support volunteering across Kent. The *Kent Voluntary Advisory Group* is able to identify good practice as well as barriers to volunteer engagement and seek ways to work together to increase involvement. For example, Kent Police worked with Kent Volunteers to develop opportunities for volunteers across their services. Now some 330 are engaged, with a sizeable waiting list.

KCC launched the *Kent eVents Team* (KET) project in May 2008, a network of people willing to volunteer for one-off sport, leisure and cultural events. This has been developed jointly with Kent's volunteering networks. At the end of March 2009 just under 500 people had registered with KET as volunteers and 29 sports events had been supported. We will look to build on this next year to ensure we meet our intended target of 2,500 ahead of the 2012 Games.

Ashford Volunteers are located in the Tenterden Gateway, and have seen a significant upturn in the number of people applying for volunteering projects since its opening.

KCC employee volunteering continues to grow. 35% of KCC staff have volunteered with many more using the encouragement we provide to volunteer in their own time. Benefits include personal and team development and evidence of making a difference to projects and the community. One example was the work conducted by Kent Highway Services Staff from Gravesend, who took part in volunteering days at the Rare Breeds Centre near Woodchurch. The Centre is run by the Canterbury Oast Trust, which changes the lives of people with learning and physical disabilities, creating opportunities for those who would not be able to look after themselves outside a safe and supportive environment.

7.4 How this has made a difference

Supporting future Olympians

KCC is working in partnership with a number of other organisations to support Kent sportsmen and women to compete at a national level in the run up to the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This year KCC has provided enhanced support to 20 of the county's top performers. These sportsmen and women were selected across a range of sports, and include disabled and non disabled performers. The ambitions of all of the performers include selection for GB at future Olympic and Paralympic Games and International events.

One beneficiary is Alek Makucewicz a 17yr old international fencer from Dartford. KCC funding has enabled Alek to work closely with a sports scientist at the University of Greenwich, a nutritionist and a sports psychologist. Through FANs Alek has made regular use of his local Sports Centre to train. Alek's coach recently contacted KCC to say: "all this support over the last few months has made a significant improvement in Alek as a fencer, he is fitter and a lot more confident, and this is reflected in a significant improvement in his results over recent months. Once again thank you for all your help and support".

Kent Youth Theatre Festival

The first Kent Youth Theatre Festival was launched on 22nd March 2009 and involved over 200 young theatre practitioners, facilitators, youth theatre leaders and supporters. The young people involved were aged between 11 -18 years of age, from diverse backgrounds and with varied levels of experience in theatre. 12 theatre groups attended, 2 of which were inclusive groups for young people with disabilities.

All young people participated in a range of workshops that would not usually be available to them including special effects make-up, musical theatre, mask theatre, physical theatre and acting for screen. They also had the opportunity to perform in front of their peers, invited VIPs and professionals giving them new experiences in terms of performance.

Feedback from both the young people and the organisations that took part was positive. One youth theatre leader said: "This was such a wonderful opportunity for similar minded people to get together and share our visions; the young people behaved impeccably and had such a good time, encouraging and congratulating each other without any competitiveness. It just shows the power of the arts on young people."

Hadlow Library

Hadlow Library is one of the latest KCC Libraries to undergo refurbishment as part of the Library Modernisation programme and the transformed building opened in April 2008. As Hadlow is set in a rural location, it has a fairly restricted customer base and visitor numbers had been in decline. Since the modernisation, visits are up around 13%, adult issues 13% and children's issues 52%.

As well as transforming the building, KCC has sort to change the way in which the library is used by the local community, including setting up a new reading group, arranging author visits and allowing the library to be used out of hours by local community groups. Caroline Wetten, one of Hadlow library's regular users, said "I think the modernisation is a good idea. People tend to view libraries as stuffy places, but it is now light and airy, and is easy to walk around. It helps that the staff are always friendly too, even though they haven't changed. There are new things going on that you wouldn't see in older libraries. I use the computers at the library now as well as the books."

Section 8: Keeping Kent Moving

Tackling congestion

8.1 Why it matters

Traffic congestion is the bane of everyone's life, whether they travel by car, bus or train. It causes frustration and pollution in equal measures, slows down economic development and hampers efforts to bring inward investment into Kent.

Further investment is needed for Kent roads and the council will continue to press the Government to give Kent its fair share of funding for new roads and improvements. KCC will also press for the building of a third lower Thames crossing and to reduce the impact on Kent of *Operation Stack*.

8.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- High quality public transport available for all
- Better journey times and less congestion around Kent's major towns
- Greater public satisfaction with Kent's roads and pavements

8.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Improving public transport

KCC has an excellent record of working with bus providers to improve public transport in Kent. This is reflected by year on year increases in the number of people using Kent bus services. In 2008/09 there were 55.2 million passenger journeys, a 6.8% increase over the year before.

The Ashford *Quality Bus Partnership* was launched in February 2009. This included the introduction of 10 brand new low floor easy access buses, which are now running on Ashford's A line route. The buses were funded through a KCC *Kickstart* grant, with Stagecoach providing additional funding and marketing to increase patronage. Around two thirds of the total bus fleet in Kent are now easy access, low floor entry.

KCC provides financial support to around 200 bus services and seven *Kent Karriers*. These provide 'dial-a-ride' accessible services to disabled people and those living more than 500m from an existing bus route. A successful re-tendering of around 25% of all bus services supported by KCC has been completed within budget, ensuring services can be sustained during 2009.

KCC is providing additional funding to the *Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme* for over 60s. This has enabled the scheme's start time to be returned to 9.00am and for disabled companion passes to be valid across Kent.

During 2008/09 the *Kent Freedom Pass* was rolled-out to schools beyond the original pilot areas of Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge. In June 2008 it was extended to Maidstone, Malling, Dover and Shepway and in January 2009 to schools in Swale and Thanet. The pass will be offered Kent-wide from June 2009.

The scheme has proved very popular and 12,800 passes had been issued by end March 2009.

Version 0.7
17/9/09

As well as the obvious benefits for young people, the scheme has had a positive effect on congestion, with KCC surveys indicating a 2-6% reduction in journey times near schools with a high take up of passes and a big shift from car users shortly after the introduction of the Pass.

On the rail front, lobbying of Eurostar by KCC and others was successful in getting services between Ashford and Brussels restored. A new timetable for domestic passengers comes into operation in December 2009 which will improve connections between Kent and London with more trains running from most towns in Kent. Overall, Southeastern will be operating 200 more services from mid-December – a 5% increase in capacity.

Reducing congestion

Through the *Traffic Management Centre*, KCC has enabled improvements in the management of traffic to reduce congestion in Maidstone. Average peak journey times on key routes in Maidstone have reduced and the situation is being monitored.

A series of health checks at key locations in the network were carried out throughout 2008/09. These have resulted in a programme of over 50 “quick win” improvements ranging from adjusting traffic signal timings to renewing white lines, which have helped to improve traffic flows.

During 2008/09, Kent Police agreed to devolve some powers to ‘congestion busting’ teams, known as *Kent Traffic Officers (KTOs)*, who will be able to deal with traffic issues such as obstruction and will have powers to move vehicles on where appropriate. Extensive training has taken place throughout the year and all those participating have passed the required examination in order to receive the delegated powers. The KTO scheme is due to be officially launched in June 2009, once it has received approval from Kent Police.

Improving roads

This year Kent Highways Services (KHS) has made improvements to the way in which it repairs roads and pavements across the county.

KHS is providing twice as many road patching crews as in April 2008 and this will be sustained throughout 2009/10.

Extra funding of approximately 35% has been provided to enable a significant increase in carriageway surfacing schemes, with nearly 1,000,000 m² of road intended to be resurfaced in 2009.

“I would like to thank Kent Highways for how fast they responded to a request for service. Within 30 minutes of the problem being reported to the police, Kent Highways came out and fixed the problem. I was so impressed with how polite the engineer was and how quickly Kent Highways sorted this problem out to stop any danger.” Mrs A, Margate

The cold weather in early 2009 caused havoc on Kent’s roads, with frost creating major damage and potholes. To cope with this KHS provided additional crews for repair, peaking at 70 at the end of February 2009. During this cold spell around 3,000 potholes a week were being repaired. In the period January to March 2009 over 12,000 potholes were repaired.

These improvements are having a positive impact on our customers. Net satisfaction of residents with the condition of roads in Kent has steadily increased from 5% in 2006/07 to 19% in 2007/08 and 29% in 2008/09.

This is a significant improvement and compares very favourably with national surveys by Ipsos-Mori, which show net satisfaction with road maintenance remaining static at around 6% since 2006/07. KCC will look to build on this momentum into 2009/10 and beyond.

Closer links are now in place with all Parish/Town Councils and KCC Members, who all have a designated named Liaison Officer. Good relationships are being built and KHS is engaging positively with local communities.

8.4 How this has made a difference

Kent Freedom Pass

The Kent Freedom Pass (KFP) arose out of the views expressed by the Kent Youth County Council (KYCC) that young people needed better access to buses. The KFP was introduced as a pilot in 3 areas and following its success is now being rolled-out across the county.

Achieved through a partnership between KCC, Kent's bus operators and Kent schools, the KFP allows young people in academic years 7–11 to travel free at the point of use, on any public bus in Kent, at any time of the day, week or year, for a one-off annual fee of just £50. Due to the KFP young people across Kent now have the independence to travel to and from school or evening and weekend activities, as well as throughout the school holidays.

KCC undertook a questionnaire survey of young people in May 2008 in conjunction with KYCC. Responses demonstrate the range of benefits the project brings. These included:

"It has helped me to get to school early and I have been able to see my friends at weekends" *Katrina Rootes, Angley School*

"It gives me freedom to have a social life beyond school" *Thomas Ashby, Herne Bay High*

"I have used it to get to school and I have started to use it to help to get to my part time job" *Stuart Smitherman, Herne Bay High*

Keeping Kent Moving through the Snow

The 20 October marked the beginning of winter for Kent Highway Services. From that date the winter service plans came into effect and KHS were ready to work to ensure that Kent's roads were kept safe during the winter months.

The planning that had taken place enabled the 'ice-busters' to respond quickly and efficiently when the snow arrived in early 2009. More than 20,000 tonnes of salt had been ordered and was stored throughout Kent in preparation for the severe weather.

Version 0.7
17/9/09

The 53 salting crews worked throughout the nights to keep the main roads safe and passable, covering about a third of the county's road network, over 1500 miles.

Residents across Kent got in touch with KHS to express their thanks at the way in which the roads were kept clear during the winter. These included Mr E from Meopham who said: "Thank you for your excellent response to my request to grit our road. I phoned your service desk reporting that our road was like a skating rink. Within 2 hours our road and the road leading to us had been gritted. I was very impressed with this level of service, especially in the very inclement weather we have experienced over the past week".

Traffic Management Centre

The Traffic Management Centre (TMC) was designed and built to enable Kent Highway Services (KHS) to more effectively manage the road network within the Maidstone area. The successful development and use of systems such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition, closed circuit television cameras, variable message signs, vehicle detectors and a KHS database called 'Cutlas' enable the TMC operators to provide 'hands-on' management of Maidstone's traffic systems.

This has enabled the TMC to ensure that when large-scale public events are held in Maidstone, such as the Radio 1 "Big Weekend" in July 2008, minimal disruption is caused to traffic and roads. The TMC has had a positive effect on congestion and journey times in and around Maidstone. A 5.6% reduction in travel time into Maidstone was recorded from Summer 2008 through to December 2008.

Section 9: Environmental Excellence & High Quality Homes

Future generations will judge us by the quality of the environment they inherit

9.1 Why it matters

At the heart of KCC's approach will be a renewed pledge to protect and enhance the beauty and diversity of our countryside. The housing growth agenda enforced by central government presents enormous challenges for Kent. KCC's challenge is to manage this growth sensitively so that it results in the construction of quality housing with the minimum environmental impact. KCC will continue to ensure that new and existing public buildings (such as schools and offices) are as environmentally friendly as possible.

9.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- A clean and protected natural Kent
- All people in Kent able to access and enjoy the Kent countryside
- Sustainable new housing growth across the county
- Long-term empty properties brought back into use across Kent

9.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Enjoying the environment

The *Kent Countryside Access Improvement Plan* sets out a clear strategy to protect, manage, enhance and promote access to Kent's countryside and won the "most innovative and enterprising improvement plan" in the country award in March 09.

"Thank you for getting the bridleway sorted out. For the first time in years I am able to enjoy hacking out without worrying about having to turn back because of badly hung gates. Because of my disability, I am unable to mount if I have to get off to open gates and it was bliss to go round Dry Hill the other day and really enjoy the ride"
H Owen – Crippenden

The Plan includes new design standards to improve the quality of the furniture on the *Public Rights Of Way* network (gates, stiles, bridges etc). The standards were recognised in "Country Walking Magazine" as leading the way nationally in improving access to the countryside.

In 2008/09 15 routes to schools were substantially improved and are now providing a facility for *walking buses* of school children to use, relieving traffic congestion at peak times in those areas.

A new Countryside Education Pack was launched in February 2009 and distributed to all primary schools in Kent. The pack gives teachers lesson and activity ideas tied into the National Curriculum for junior school children. They cover topics like travel to school, the Countryside Code, public rights of way, and who looks after them.

This year, KCC has also worked hard to improve the popular Country Parks, and new play areas were installed at four sites which all received very positive customer feedback.

KCC has sought to protect and enhance Kent's valuable man-made heritage and in 2008 the *Historic Fortifications Project*, supported by Interreg funding, was completed. In the last four years this has helped deliver £2.5m for conservation and promotion

projects including accessible trails, interpretation panels, audio-visual displays and educational projects.

Housing

Housing growth in Kent must be sustainable, with the right level of infrastructure in place to support it. Through the Kent Partnership, KCC is involved in the development of a new *Kent Housing Strategy*, which is reviewing evidence on housing need and mix in terms of type, size and tenure and how planning policies might be deployed to address imbalances in the type and size of housing accommodation.

KCC is committed to ensuring that where feasible new housing development is carried out on previously developed land. Housing completion rates and the contribution of previously developed land to this remained high until early 2008. However the severe downturn in the housing market associated with the credit crunch is affecting both the level of new development and its composition in the short term.

With regards to existing property, the *No Use Empty Initiative* continued to enjoy success during 2008/09, with 728 long-term empty properties brought back into use in East Kent, exceeding its target figure of 511 properties by around 40%. Following success of the Initiative in East Kent, it was rolled-out across the rest of the Kent districts in Spring 2008.

A key achievement was the enforced sale of 77 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate which had been in disrepair for some 20 years. Town & Country Housing Group worked with No Use Empty and Thanet District Council to bring the property back into use as affordable housing, with the first unit becoming occupied in January 2009.

9.4 How this has made a difference

Faversham Walks

2008 saw the launch of a ground-breaking LEADER+ funded project to develop Faversham as a 'centre of excellence' for walking.

KCC and the Faversham Enterprise Partnership established a new partnership with Swale Borough Council, the Faversham Area Tourism Association, a consortium of local businesses, including Shepherd Neame Brewery, and local volunteer groups.

Together they developed and promoted four new circular walks, supported by a voucher scheme offering visitors discounts at many local businesses. Significant investment was made in improving Faversham's public rights of way network.

Laurence Young, Faversham Enterprise Partnership Manager says: "The Faversham project has made a tangible, positive difference to the local area. Businesses such as eateries and B&Bs are reporting increasing numbers of walkers using them, good news for the local economy. Local people have also been using the routes for leisure, health and education benefits".

Linda Harrison the leader of the walk group in Faversham regularly uses sections of the Faversham Walking Project routes. She says: "Many of my walkers have completed the

walks and are full of praise for their excellent presentation. I know that the project has inspired people to make more of their surroundings, and to benefit their health by walking on a more regular basis, and I feel that it has been tremendously valuable in this respect."

The Shorne Archaeology Project

The Shorne Archaeology Project began as part of a Heritage Lottery Fund HLF funded Project in 2006, to identify, investigate, interpret and conserve some of the many different archaeological sites within Shorne Woods Country Park, focussing in particular on the remains of Randall Manor. Starting as a one week community dig, for the last two summers this has been extended to a three week excavation, with events tied into the nationwide Festival of Archaeology.

The project specifically set out to engage local communities and in 2008 involved hundreds of people from a wide age range, including local primary schools, archaeology clubs, brownie groups and a school for children with special needs. The open nature of the site enables people to get up close to and be inspired by their local heritage. Feedback from people who took part has been very positive. Comments included: "Thank you for the open day on Sunday which my children greatly enjoyed, my 6 year old daughter has now decided that she's going to dig up bones and find treasure when she's a grown up!" and "the archaeology weekend was brilliant, many thanks to whoever organised it".

No Use Empty Initiative

The No Use Empty Initiative is a partnership between KCC and district councils, which aims to improve the physical urban environment in Kent by bringing empty properties back into use as quality housing accommodation.

This year the Initiative has supported the renovation of a Victorian warehouse situated in Dover Town Centre, which had been derelict for 10 years. The Initiative provided an interest-free loan to meet the cost of turning the building into 8 residential units, which were due to be marketed in June 2009. Owner of the property, Philip Bigio, said: "The No Use Empty Initiative has been a tremendous support in the re-development of the building. We have been able to move quickly, carry out the renovations in under a year, and the net result is a cluster of new apartments in a prime location in the centre of town."

Section 10: Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Staying Healthy **An essential part of life is staying healthy**

10.1 Why it matters

Good health matters to all of us. Obesity, teenage pregnancy and smoking can all result in poor health and a lower quality of life. Kent County Council has a responsibility to give people support to make 'healthy lifestyle' decisions.

10.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- More adults and young people taking part in regular physical activity
- All Kent schools achieving Healthy Schools status
- Young people in Kent supported to make healthy lifestyle decisions
- Reduction in health inequalities between the best and worst wards in Kent

10.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Keeping Fit

The *Kent Healthy Weight Strategy* promotes the key messages of more physical activity in everyday life and healthy travel through walking and cycling.

Cycling and walking to school is being actively encouraged with enthusiastic take up by pupils. There was a 1% shift to sustainable modes of travel to school in 2008/9 (against 2006/07 school census base data). In addition, as of March 09 114,000 school-run journeys had been saved through walk to school initiatives. In 2008/09 The Sustrans *Bike It* project in Ashord, part funded by Kent Highway Services, saw a 7.8% increase in the number of children who cycle to school every day and a 14.6% decrease in the number of children who never cycle to school.

Naturally Active and *Walking for Health* programmes are delivering hundreds of country walks within Kent's country parks. *Naturally Active* has attracted well over 400 people in Dartford and Gravesham.

There are now 30 *Activmobs* across Kent, extending the fitness of people through a variety of different activities ranging from dancing to gardening and even dog training.

The number of Kent adults who participated in sport for at least 30 minutes 3 or more times a week has increased slightly in 2008/09 to 21.2% from 20.5% last year but still remains just below the national average (21.5%). More work will be carried out in 2009/10 to increase this.

KCC has had more success in increasing activity levels of young people during 2008/09, with the percentage of pupils taking part in at least 2 hours PE and school sport per week increasing from 87% in 2007/08 to 88%. In addition, the number of out of school hours sports programmes stood at 121 at end March 2009, up from 113 a year earlier.

KCC has worked with the School Sport Partnerships, local authorities and Extended Schools Managers to co-ordinate a successful bid for over £1million from Sport England to run a *Sport Unlimited Programme* as part of the 5 hour offer for young people to participate in PE and sport per week. In 2008/09 approximately 100 schemes were funded, providing opportunities for nearly 6,000 young people to take part in a wide

range of sports opportunities. There are plans to increase this number to over 10,000 young people in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

The finals of the *Kent School Games* took place in June 2008, involving over 500 schools and 30,000 young people taking part in over 23 different sports. The Games have acted as a catalyst for additional competitive sport in Kent, which are becoming embedded within the schools competition structures, ensuring increased competitive opportunities for young people in schools.

Healthy Eating

The Kent *Healthy Schools* programme has had a 100% sign up in Thanet, which is Kent's most deprived area, and is on target to reach 100% of all Kent schools by December 2009.

Further work has been undertaken in 2008/09 to help children and families with healthy eating and community healthy eating pilots have been launched to increase the uptake of healthier school meals. Funding has been provided for two community chef programmes in Swale and Dartford, launched in May and July 2008 respectively.

"The fruit and veg scheme encourages them to eat good meals, not takeaway; they reckon everyone's obese don't they. It's nice for children to have a home cooked dinner and enjoy it. It's all fresh" *Parent, Vale View Community School Dover*

Lack of access to fruit and vegetables has been identified as a barrier to healthy eating and as a result four fruit and vegetable bag schemes were launched in areas of Kent with accessibility problems. The first bag scheme was launched at the Riverside Centre, Gravesend in May 2008 in

conjunction with Gravesend Borough Council. It runs weekly on Wednesdays and bags are sold for £3. After just 4 weeks of operation an impressive 100 bags were being sold weekly before the scheme had been formally promoted.

The latest available data shows that obesity levels in children (in years R & 6 combined) reduced by 0.4% in 2007/08 from the initial baseline set in 2006/07. Whilst this is cause for optimism, the coming years will establish the trend as the data is gathered from different cohorts of children each year.

Tackling inequalities

KCC is working with its partners to narrow the gap between the most and least healthy wards in Kent and undertaking a wide range of projects and initiatives.

In light of growing health issues linked to poor diet and a lack of awareness about how to cook, the *Food for Families* programme is aimed at young mums or potential mums-to-be who are living on a low income. This 8 week course covers many aspects of food including practical sessions in the kitchen followed by meals shared together with the children, how to cook healthily on a budget and safety in the kitchen. The programme has been so successful that the young women are requesting an advanced course or other community food projects.

Access to health care is one of the key considerations and criteria for investment in Quality Bus Partnerships. The *Thanet Loop*, accessing the Queen Elizabeth Queen Mother hospital site in Margate, has now become an essential hospital link for many

people living in Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate through the provision of low floor, easy access vehicles which provide good access for wheelchairs. This enables more effective co-ordination of the public health functions which will promote the health and wellbeing of Kent residents.

Work is also underway to help raise people's awareness of particular health issues, such as the *Books Can Help* scheme, whereby GPs prescribe relevant reading materials for patients who then present the prescriptions at libraries and receive help in choosing appropriate books. KCC has also worked in partnership with Kent and Medway Cancer Network, and Macmillan Cancer Support to provide a comprehensive collection of cancer-related books, leaflets, tapes, CDs and DVDs, together with specialist items for children, black and minority ethnic communities and people with learning disabilities, in the 13 main libraries in Kent.

As well as these targeted approaches to tackling health inequalities, KCC also seeks to ensure successful take up of opportunities by those that need to access them through adopting a "whole population" approach, to stimulate buy in and then bias the interventions to those that need them most. This approach has been adopted by ActivMobs and the innovative *HOUSE* programme, which aims to give young people impartial health advice.

10.4 How this has made a difference

Kent School Games

With its partners KCC held the first Kent School Games Finals in June 2008 over a two week period. There is great enthusiasm for the establishment of the Games, mirroring the County's commitment to building a long-term legacy for young people from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

During the finals there were 52 separate events held resulting in 12,000 medal winners. The finals went down well with the pupils taking part in the Games. Didi Enonuya, a medal winner said: "I started as a girl who wanted to try something new and ended as a gold medallist. I was representing Dartford Grammar School for Girls, which was a huge honour and an even bigger honour was representing Team Dartford. I started the shot putt competition just hoping it was enough and in the end I found out that I had won. It was an amazing feeling. I am so happy that I tried something new which has brought me so much success."

Community chef

In May 2008, a Community Chef was recruited to the Isle of Sheppey Healthy Living Centre to work with families and children to give them confidence about food skills and cooking, a better understanding of nutrition and improve their health and diets.

Ten different targeted groups, including young people and one-parent families have had the opportunity to take part in an eight-week cooking and food skills programme, which is based on the British Nutrition Foundation's basic life skills cooking programme.

Mike Spackman, a trained chef, stated "you have to get involved with them- how to cook, share and eat good food that's affordable. Give people the confidence that cooking for yourself can be fun. They need to be able to stand on their own two feet, and look after themselves well."

One of the ladies attending the class said “we thought kebabs tasted nice, but coming here and tasting cooked food from fresh ingredients is so much better. My favourite dish to cook is chicken curry. I never knew how to cook anything like that before. Knowing that it hasn’t come out of a jar and that we made the sauce ourselves, made it taste so much better”.

HOUSE

HOUSE is a set designed as 4 rooms of a house in a series of temporary shops in 12 town centres. The set includes a dance machine, Wii, music, internet access and is a friendly, informal and safe place for young people to hang out. The environment was designed by young people to create a space conducive to them listening to health information and receiving help and support on their own terms.

HOUSE is hugely popular with over 50 young people attending per day. Many of those who attend are young people who are not currently known to our services and young people are reporting a positive change to lifestyle attitudes and behaviours as a result of HOUSE.

In 2008 a young man of 16 visited the first HOUSE in Gravesend. After about a week or so he started telling the HOUSE staff about a range of problems he had – drinking, smoking. The friendly and informal way that HOUSE operates, with no-one forcing help or services on people, led to this young man coming back again and again until he felt able to explain what was happening in his life and get the support he needed to find a better place to live, training for employment and eventually a job.

Section 11: Improved Health, Care & Well-Being: Maintaining Independence

Helping older people and those with disabilities to be independent

11.1 Why it matters

People are living longer. This provides major opportunities as well as challenges. KCC will encourage people to plan for their health, social and economic well-being in old age and champion senior citizens. KCC will lead by example to promote a positive image of older people and the value their contribution makes to community life.

The majority of older people want to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible and this is also true for younger people with disabilities or mental health problems. KCC will move away from traditional care models towards providing greater choice and control, giving people the support to lead their lives as they want, in their own homes.

11.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- More older people and people with disabilities living independently
- Fewer avoidable admissions to hospital
- Carers of all ages supported
- More people, and particularly older people, in receipt of Direct Payments

11.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Promoting independence

In 2008/09 the number of people supported by community based services provided by Kent Adult Social Services to live independently rose to just over 35,000, an increase of around 2,500 from the year before.

In partnership with Eastern Kent and Coastal PCT, KCC was successful in bidding for the £1.5 million Partnerships for Older People Project. Out of this has sprung the *Independence through the Voluntary action of Kent Elders* project. The project is designed to give older people greater independence, enhance self-management through choice and control and reduce hospital admissions. Feedback and initial research suggests that the project has been a success to date and the project is about to be extended in East Kent.

"We were very grateful for the way you respected my father's dignity and treated him with such dedicated care and compassion throughout", P Family, Newham

KCC was one of only 3 authorities selected by the Department Health to be a *Whole System Demonstrator (WSD)*, which was officially launched in April 2008. The WSD project has enabled

KCC to offer to more people its innovative preventative technology services *TeleHealth* and *Telecare*, helping them to remain in their own homes. The intended outcome is for 1,000 extra people to be offered Telecare and 1,000 extra people to be offered TeleHealth by July 2010.

A key feature of enabling people to continue to live independently is to ensure they have choice and control over the support they need. The development of Direct Payments has made a significant contribution to this. In March 2009, 2342 people were in receipt of Direct Payments. Over 740 of these are for older people compared to only

9 older people in 2002. A range of innovative actions has supported the increasing take up of Direct Payments, including the *Kent Card*, which was being used by 831 people as at end March 2009.

Personalising services

KCC has continued the implementation of *Active Lives for Adults* with a focus on *Self-Directed Support*, whereby people can self manage their support or, if they choose to, have somebody else manage it for them. This is a programme of total transformation for all of Kent Adult Social Services whether directly provided or commissioned from other agencies, which is underpinned by a shift in culture focussed on personalisation. The focus of the transformation has been to give people more choice and control over their support. It will also put KCC in a better position to deal with increased need and an ageing population.

This has seen the development of new services such as *Enablement*, an intensive, short term service of three to six weeks designed to offer support to people who, by reason of injury, frailty, illness or disability wish to regain or extend their independent living skills. Enablement is an essential element of Self Directed Support and feeds into the assessment process.

KCC has also implemented *Personal Budgets*, an essential part of delivering personalisation. A Personal Budget is a clear allocation of funding and all new eligible clients will have one from April 2009. This will enable them to have greater choice and control over the support they receive, so they can live their lives as they want.

Supporting carers

KCC is working to strengthen support available to people caring for relatives or friends. A Kent Adult Carers Strategy was due to be launched in July 2009, to be delivered via multi-agency joint commissioning plans.

The *Kent Carers Emergency Card Scheme* was launched in December 2008. The scheme aims to provide carers with peace of mind when away from the person that they care for by offering them as much support as necessary to complete their emergency plan. Currently there are over 750 carers signed up to the scheme and the number is growing steadily. Feedback regarding the scheme has been positive.

A young carers strategy *Invisible People* was launched in June 2008. As part of the strategy, Children's Social Services allocated £20,000 to each of the five young carers' projects across Kent to enable them to work directly with local schools. Young carers are increasingly identifying themselves as a result of targeted work in schools and more are taking part in local projects. A range of support is being developed in mainstream and specific settings to meet young carers' needs. In 2007/08, through the voluntary sector we were supporting 600 young carers across Kent. At the end of 2008/09 this figure had increased to 950.

Awareness has been raised, particularly within schools, of the needs of young carers. A group of young carers have helped to produce a DVD that highlights their caring responsibilities and the physical and emotional impact on them. The DVD is being used as a training aid in schools. 160 young carers were funded to join leisure centres in their locality, others attended residential camping weekends. The young carer provider organisations have increased their out of school activities for young carers through services commissioned by the Local Children Services Partnerships.

11.4 How this has made a difference

Voluntary Action Maidstone

As part of the KCC-funded *Brighter Futures Group* project, VAM operates a supported shopping service for older people, working with a local major supermarket which includes transport, lunch and staff support to complete supermarket shopping. This service helps people to maintain their social contacts, good nutrition and mobility and is available to individuals who do not meet eligibility criteria for care management intervention.

Mrs H came to use the service after her husband died, as she could not get to the shops on her own. Through the service Mrs H was able to remain independent and go out shopping on her own. It also enabled her to socialise and not become isolated at a time when she was very vulnerable. Mrs H said “that the scheme makes you feel ‘part of something’ and you don’t realise what a great comfort this is to someone when they are alone”.

Thanet Day Opportunity Service

Thanet Day Opportunities Service aims to support people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their own communities and develop a range of friendships, activities, relationships, skills and experience.

The service works with the Job Centre and with parents and carers to help each person fulfill their aspirations and promote their independence within the community. The service offers job profiling and job coaching to service users and to the employer. Giving this support helps to encourage service users become independent individuals.

Steven works in the Day Opportunities Centre kitchen. He attended Thanet College where he gained his certificate in food hygiene. Steven came to the team to help him find employment. With help from the Job Centre and job coaching from Thanet Day Opportunities Service Steven now works part time at a cafe in Broadstairs.

Steven says; “I’m happy to be working, I meet lots of people and I’m learning all the time. I feel good and I’m being paid”. Steven, a resident of Cleveland House in Broadstairs, manages his own flat and pays rent. Working has made him more independent. The manager of Cleveland House said “it’s fantastic Steven was given the opportunity to work. It has made him feel he is a valued member of the community”.

Kent Young Carers Kearsney

This year, 88 young carers aged 6 – 11 years old took part in an overnight camp at the Kearsney campsite near Dover. A total of 2640 respite hours were provided for the young carers, many of whom had never been away from home overnight been camping before. Activities included arts and crafts, sports, team games and challenges, scavenger hunt, face painting, drama and an African drumming workshop.

The weekend was a great success, with positive feedback from all who attended. Comments included “It was really cool and very funny” and “I really enjoyed meeting new friends”. The most important aspect for the young carers themselves was being able to make new friendships and having the opportunity to develop social skills and access activities and social lives outside of their caring roles.

Section 12: Stronger & Safer Communities

We must make sure that everyone feels safe in their communities

12.1 Why it matters

Although there is much less crime in Kent than in most parts of the country, the 24-hour society, high and increasing traffic volumes and lack of confidence in the criminal justice system have all brought concerns to the people of Kent. KCC's work with Kent Police, the Kent Community Partnership and Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) are key to solving these issues.

Crime and antisocial behaviour is often worse in areas that are economically deprived, isolated or in need of regeneration. Vandalism, graffiti, litter, abandoned cars and fly-tipping all degrade communities. Alcohol and drug-related crime is also rising. It is important to promote a strong sense of pride in local communities as well as working with the police to provide services to reassure local people and reduce the fear of crime.

KCC is committed to helping to maintain Kent's low level of burglary and car theft and to working with off-licence, pub and club owners to reduce alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse. KCC will work with the police to tackle crime and with local people to create stronger communities.

12.2 What KCC wants to achieve

- Continued reduction in levels of crime and anti-social behaviour across Kent
- People in Kent feeling safe and less fearful of crime
- Less alcohol-fuelled anti-social behaviour, particularly amongst young people
- Fewer young people entering the criminal justice system

12.3 What has happened in 2008/09

Reducing crime and fear of crime

Crime and anti-social behaviour across Kent remains at a relatively low level and is reducing. Between 2006/7 and 2008/9 there was an approximate 17% decrease in crime across the KCC area. In particular, domestic burglary per 1,000 households has decreased to 8.2% from 8.5% in 2007/08 and car crime per 1,000 population has reduced from 8.6 in 2007/08 to 7.8 in 2008/09.

People's fear of crime in Kent has also reduced. The percentage of people worried about burglary has decreased from 56% in 2006/07 to 36% in 2008/09 and fear of 4 specific crimes - domestic burglary, car theft, mugging/robbery & physical attack - in Kent has reduced from 44% in 2006/07 to 28% in 2008/09.

Kent has worked with statutory partners such as Kent Police to establish a managed and safe *Night Time Economy*. Across Kent between 2007/08 and 2008/09 Night Time Economy crime² has shown a 22.7% reduction, making Kent a safer place for its residents. This is reflected in the Kent Crime and Victimisation Survey which shows that since 2006/07 feelings of safety at night (at home alone and walking alone at night) in Kent, have increased from 74% to 81% by the end of 2008/09. In particular feelings of

² crimes committed by offenders under the influence of drink or drugs between the periods of 8pm and 4am Monday to Sunday

safety walking alone at night are at their highest for the last three years rising from 55% in 2006/07 to 66% currently.

KCC has worked with its partners to help raise awareness of and disrupt the activities of rogue traders. In 2008/09, Kent Trading Standards intervened 57 times, supported 141 victims and also significantly disrupted the activity of 20 rogue traders. Kent Trading Standards operates an alert system to local communities to bogus trading practices, which is sent to 246 local partners, including parish and town councils. These messages are used as articles in newspapers / parish magazines. In 2008/09, 94% of recipients found the messages 'useful' and 86% found them 'easy to understand'.

KCC also supports legitimate Kent businesses through the *Buy with Confidence* scheme and there are now 102 approved businesses across Kent.

The *HandyVan* scheme provides improved home security to better protect against burglary and reduce the fear of crime for vulnerable people. The remit of the service has expanded with a wider range of services offered to make homes more secure, including the installation of hand rails and minor adaptations. At end March 2009, 7,765 safety checks had been made by the service since 2006. This is slightly below the 2008/9 target of 8,100 due to the changing remit of the service and the greater focus on spending more time with people to make them feel safe, although the service is on course to achieve the 10,800 target over the 2006-2010 period.

"Thank you for making such a difference to my peace of mind and well-being"
HandyVan client

The 5th *HandyVan* has been targeted in the North Kent area since August 2007 and following a number of initiatives and a partnership focused approach, domestic burglary in Gravesham reduced by 40% between 2006/07 and 2007/08 and continued to decrease in 2008/09 by 3.5%. In addition, there has been a huge change in the percentage of residents who are worried about being burgled in Gravesham which has decreased from 70% at the end of 2006/07 to 45% at the end of 2008/09

Dealing with drug and alcohol problems

The multi-agency *Kent Community Alcohol Partnership* was launched in November 2008, aimed at changing the attitudes to drinking among young people and supporting retailers to reduce sales of alcohol to underage drinkers. Local community groups are also being engaged to get their point of view and youngsters are being educated about the dangers of alcohol and diverted into alternative activities. The scheme is currently being piloted in Canterbury, Edenbridge and Thanet and is intended to be rolled out across Kent at a later date.

In May 2008, KCC supported Gravesham Borough Council and North Kent Police's high profile week-long campaign to increase awareness of the role alcohol plays in health problems, crime and anti-social behaviour. It aimed to spread the word about drinking, especially under-age drinking – and encourage a safe, sensible and social approach. Trading Standards Officers undertook a series of enforcement measures across the borough during the week,

The *Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team* (KDAAT) multi-agency partnership works to deliver the national drug and alcohol strategies at a local level in Kent. KDAAT **achieved**

a 13.5% increase in the numbers of problem drug users in effective treatment for the 12 months to the end of December 2008, the highest in the south-east region.

Building strong communities

KCC Community Wardens continue to make a positive impact in their local areas. The 101 Wardens in 128 local areas were originally envisaged as a visible uniformed presence to tackle anti-social behaviour, but have developed a much broader remit, working with a wide range of other authorities and services. Their operations range from walking buses through to providing intelligence to the Police which has led to a variety of arrests.

The Wardens facilitate a number of activities and events within their communities, both big and small to engage with the local residents. The largest of this is a countywide 7-a-side football tournament, the finals of which were held in summer 2008. Over 1,000 'hard to engage' young people, both boys and girls, were involved in this positive diversionary activity. The event was a great success and another one is being planned for next year.

Since 2006, Wardens have provided awareness training to over 9,500 people against the dangers of bogus callers, helping the elderly and vulnerable to remain safe and secure in their own homes.

The environment which people live in makes a big difference to their quality of life and their perception of their local area. The multi-agency *Clean Kent* programme has encouraged citizenship and environmental responsibility with, for example, the Street-Wise Educational Project being nationally recognised as good practice.

With its partners, KCC has taken a firm enforcement line against fly-tippers, which has seen 17 people receive a criminal conviction and over £12K of fines imposed. Since last year, four of the then top 20 fly-tipping hot spots across Kent have been resolved and are no longer subject to fly-tipping. This list is dynamic with sites being added as they become a target for fly-tipping and KCC will work hard over the next year to tackle the existing hot spots.

Tackling youth offending

The Youth Offending Service and its partners have worked hard to establish a prevention-led approach to tackling youth offending. This has resulted in fewer first time entrants to the youth justice system from 2020 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2006/07 to 1660 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2007/08. Current estimates show that this is on course to drop again to around 1480 per 100,000 10-17 population in 2008/09, although final figures will not be available from the Department for Children, Schools and Families until November 2009.

In 2008/09, a refocus of prevention activity led to the creation of *Youth Inclusion Support Panels* (YISPs) in each of the 12 Districts. The aim of the YISPs is to contribute to a reduction in the number of children and young people entering the youth justice system, which they will achieve by receiving referrals about young people thought "at risk" of offending and co-ordinating relevant services to match their needs and risks.

KCC and its partners have also engaged young people in a range of diversionary activities during 2008/09. These include the Challenger Troop, offering an Army Cadet

type approach to youth activities and a partnership, with the English Rugby Football Union to increase sports participation amongst those most “at risk”.

Increasing road safety

Kent Highways Services has continued to work to improve safety and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs) on Kent roads. KCC’s approach has been to integrate the known benefits of education, enforcement, engineering and evaluation. A programme of countywide publicity campaigns, proactive press features and public engagement projects using road safety officers has proved effective, as has the drinking and driving campaign in the run up to last Christmas, which contributed to the lowest recorded number of road crash fatalities in December for over a decade.

KCC’s approach appears to be working, as the 2008 KSI casualty figures represents a 13% reduction in KSI casualties compared with 2007. It should be noted that the 2008 KSI road traffic casualty figures are exceptionally low, 627 compared with 723 in 2007 and represents a 5% greater reduction than the KHS target figure for 2008. This ongoing work in casualty reduction appears to be maintaining the downward trend in KSI casualties, however outside factors, such as fuel prices, may have influenced the excessive reduction in 2008.

12.4 How this has made a difference

Streetwise

The multi-agency Clean Kent Campaign aims to make Kent a cleaner county. It takes a bold and creative approach to communication and education in order to positively influence behaviour across all sectors of society and has forged strong links with Kent schools.

Street Wise is an innovative theatre-in-education project for year 8 and 9 pupils delivered in schools, which centres on the issues of anti-social behaviour and restorative justice as its main themes. It uses actors, including a serving prisoner from a re-settlement prison, to demonstrate through theatre how relatively small acts of anti-social behaviour such as littering / graffiti can escalate to criminal activities.

A teacher at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar school in Faversham, who experienced one of the sessions stated: “I don’t think it came across really as a way of giving information. There was an information exchange. It didn’t seem the children thought they were having something done to them. There were some really dramatic moments when Sean came in, the whole hall was quiet and still and it was really quite dramatic and powerful”.

Feedback forms from the school showed that session had a good impact, with pupils stating that it had made them aware that “small things can have big consequences” and that they were less likely to drop litter or set rubbish on fire in the future.

Buy with Confidence

Kent Trading Standards has joined with the other local authority Trading Standards Services in the South East to set up a scheme called Buy with Confidence (BWC). The scheme helps protect consumers from rogue traders and promotes legitimate local businesses.

Version 0.7
17/9/09

Trading Standards Officers vet applicants for trustworthiness and to make sure they comply with consumer protection laws. Only traders that pass stringent checks are accepted on to the scheme and are able to display the Buy with Confidence logo. Approved businesses are constantly monitored by Trading Standards to ensure their standards remain high.

Vicky Marks and her husband Darren run Headway Doors & Windows Limited and recently joined the scheme. Vicky says: "When we applied to the scheme we had no idea how vigorous their vetting procedures would be. It ranged from contacting many customers for references and criminal record checks, to checking our complaints procedures and internal systems. After many months we were accepted and can now proudly say we are approved and recommended by trading standards, a real achievement with no better recommendation."

The scheme has grown to over 100 businesses and more and more consumers are using the scheme and feeding back favourable comments through customer feedback cards.

Peer-led Support Groups

Gravesham Addiction Striving 4 Progress (GAS4P) is a peer-led support group supported by the Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT), in partnership with its commissioned service providers.

In 2005, GAS4P was the first peer-led support group of its kind in Kent, since then its success has led to two other groups forming in Sheerness and Folkestone.

All of the GAS4P team have experienced problems with substance or alcohol misuse. This allows them connect to members on a personal level which is vitally important as many vulnerable people can be intimidated by professional staff.

The group offers advice and support for anyone with drug or alcohol misuse problems, while also providing information on local treatment services.

Zena Watson, Team Leader at service provider Turning Point, supports the peer-led support groups and finds the benefits and energy within the groups inspirational. "It's amazing to see the impact these groups have within their local communities. GAS4P helps those who may not be ready to access professional services and allows them to still have access to important information. For people currently in treatment the group provides a safe haven and new social or supportive networks."

Section 13: The Finances of Kent County Council

Finance

During 2008/09, KCC faced significant challenges and was still the only County Council to score 4 stars for four years in a row in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment undertaken by the Audit Commission. They said, “Kent County Council is improving strongly,” and “the Council continues to provide excellent value for money. Strong leadership and capacity, coupled with a consistent and effective approach to performance management and improvement planning, ensures the Council is well placed to sustain its strong track record and deliver future improvements.”

Our annual financial statements for 2008/09 have been approved by our external auditors the Audit Commission.

The net underspend of £7.5m (excluding £16.2m delegated schools overspend) will be added to future years’ budget to help the Council’s to achieve key priorities and service improvements.

The finances of a large authority like KCC are complex and are complicated by the uncertainties surrounding future government funding. One of the key issues is the growth of demand for services such as adult social care because of the growing elderly population. There is also pressure in children’s social services resulting from the tragic events in Haringey.

What follows is a summary of our financial statements. The table below shows that the Council is spending more each year on improving front-line services, with efficiency savings contributing significantly to the funding of these improvements.

Income & Expenditure Account for 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009:

Service	Gross spend	Income	Net spend in 2008/9	Net spend in 2007/08
	£million	£million	£million	£million
Regulatory Services and Emergency Planning	10.3	-3.3	7.0	6.6
Court Services	3.1	-0.4	2.7	2.9
Arts & Libraries	32.9	-3.0	29.9	26.7
Waste Management	62.7	-5.0	57.7	55.3
Environmental, Planning and Other Services	55.1	-27.7	27.4	42.8
Children’s and Education Services (including schools)	1,487.3	-1,300.1	187.2	119.9
Highways, Roads and Transport Services	113.8	-8.5	105.3	92.4
Adult Social Care	471.9	-140.9	331	286.5
Corporate and Democratic Core	26.1	-15.3	10.8	12.7

Non-distributed costs	32.0		32.0	17.3
Net Cost of Services	2,295.2	-1,504.2	791.0	663.1
Loss (gain) on the disposal of fixed assets			-6.1	65.2
Precepts and Levies			0.6	0.6
Surplus on trading activities			-6.4	-4.6
Interest payable			56.3	55.6
Interest and investment income			-14.8	-16.4
Impairment on Icelandic Investments (1)			10.6	0
Interest Receivable on Icelandic Investments			-2.5	
Other			31.9	9.7
Net Operating Expenditure			860.6	773.2
Funded by:				
Government grants			-268.4	-228.7
Area Based Grant			-61.6	0
Council tax funds			-536.6	-513.1
Net General Fund surplus (-) deficit (+)			-6.0	31.4
Amount required by statute to be debited/(credited) to the General Fund (2)			6.0	-31.4
Increase in General Fund balance for the year			0	0
General Fund balance brought forward			-25.8	-25.8
General Fund balance carried forward			-25.8	-25.8

Note to the Income and Expenditure account

1. The impairment loss of £10.6m has been calculated by discounting the assumed cash flows at the effective interest rate of the original deposits in order to recognise the anticipated loss to the authority until monies are recovered. The 'real' loss to the Council is currently calculated to be around £4.5m. The situation is still very fluid and there have been developments since the 31 March 2009, however, these are not material to the accounts and therefore no adjustments have been made.
2. This figure comprises the reversal of items of spend which must not impact council tax, e.g. depreciation charges and transfers to and from reserves.

The balance of our general reserves of £25.8m represents the amount of money the Council has set aside to deal with unexpected events that otherwise might cause the

budget to be overspent in any future year(s). The amount reflects 'best practice' guidance for local authorities and is equivalent to less than two weeks spend on services, excluding schools.

In addition to general reserves, the Council has a number of earmarked or specific reserves. These sums have been set aside to fund projects that are known to be happening in the future. This avoids uneven changes in council tax levels each year. These reserves are clearly shown in the notes to the full balance sheet, from which the extract below has been taken:

Kent County Council Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2009:

	31 March 2009		31 March 2008	
	£million	£million	£million	£million
Operational assets (1)	2113.8		2041.7	
Non-operational assets (2)	434.2		345.3	
Other fixed assets	3.6		3.6	
Long-term assets (3)	159.2		194.9	
Total fixed and long-term assets		2,710.8		2,585.5
Current assets (4)		473.9		447.0
Current liabilities (5)		-462.7		-375.1
Total assets less current liabilities		2,722.0		2,657.4
Long-term liabilities				
- Long-term borrowing (6)	-998.4		-1017.2	
- Pensions liability (7)	-742.1		-571.7	
- Other long-term liabilities	-262.5		-264.9	
Total long-term liabilities		-2,003.0		-1,853.9
Total assets less total liabilities		719.0		803.5
Reserves and provisions:				
- Cash reserves		-191.2		-191.7
- Notional reserves (8)		742.1		571.7
- Capital accounting reserves (9)		-1,269.9		-1,183.5
Total reserves and provisions		-719.0		-803.5

Notes to the Balance Sheet

- 1 Operational assets includes land and buildings, roads, and vehicles, plant and equipment, worth a total of £2.1 billion
- 2 This is mainly due to capital projects that were 'work-in-progress' at the year-end
- 3 Money owed to KCC that will not be repaid within the next 12 months
- 4 Includes cash and bank balances, investments, and debts that will be paid to the Council within the next 12 months
- 5 Mainly represents amounts owed by the Council to service providers, most of which will have been paid within 30 days of the year-end

- 6 This is the amount outstanding from monies the Council borrowed to fund capital expenditure. Funding to repay most of these loans is part of the Government grant settlement each year. The Council has also borrowed other money (included in the £998.4m) under the 'prudential' scheme based on its ability to repay the debt
- 7 The figure of £742.1m is a notional valuation provided by the Council's pensions actuary
- 8 This balances the pension liability as detailed in note 7
- 9 The capital accounting reserves figure includes some notional reserves such as the revaluation reserve which holds the value of the change in property valuations and capital receipts reserves which hold grants, contributions and income from sales of property to fund capital expenditure in future years.

The people of Kent are entitled to know about the financial position of the County Council, but the full Statement of Accounts is a detailed and complex document. This summary is designed to give you an insight into how much we spend (income and expenditure account) and our assets and liabilities (the balance sheet).

For further information, or if you would like to comment or make suggestions on how we can improve the understanding of the Statement of Accounts, please contact Cath Head on 01622 221135 or email cath.head@kent.gov.uk. Alternatively, you can view the full Statement of Accounts at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/financialpublications>.

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

By Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support Services & Performance Management
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: Corporate Services Policy Overview Committee

Date: 25 September 2009

Subject: Corporate Services Connecting with Communities – Annual Report to Policy Overview Committee.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of this report is to update Members with developments regarding consultation, engagement and involvement within the Chief Executives Department. The report provides the national and local policy context and a summary of the key activities undertaken by the Chief Executives Department during 2008/09 and the activities planned for 2009/10.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the main aspects of consultation, engagement and involvement within the Chief Executives Department over the last 12 months. It also informs Members of key developments at a national and local level, on both existing and future work and highlights how the Department intends to further embed and extend engagement processes within our services.

Effective community engagement helps to make sure that:

- Public services reflect and respond to the views and concerns of local people
- People feel involved in and responsible for improving their quality of life
- Solutions work over the long term.

Engagement is more than consultation; it is a continuous process that requires day to day involvement at an operational level between KCC, its partners and communities, to identify needs, determine priorities, agree actions, deliver responses and assess and review progress and outcomes. Implemented effectively, engagement will also have strong strategic benefits by helping to inform and shape the priorities and needs of the county council and partner organisations without causing consultation fatigue.

2. NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 The government has pledged to promote active citizenship and community engagement at all levels and in all policy areas. This has led to community engagement being at the core of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (White Paper *Strong and Prosperous Communities*) places a duty on Local Authorities to involve local people.

From April 2009 we have all had to comply with this new statutory duty to 'inform, consult and involve' people if we plan to make changes to our services (section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act).

It provides that where a best value authority, such as Kent County Council, considers it appropriate for 'representatives of local persons', or of local persons of a particular description, to be involved in the exercise of any of its functions they should be:

- (a) **provided with information** about the exercise of the function
- (b) **consulted** about the exercise of the function
- (c) **involved** in another way.

At the heart of the new 'Duty to Involve' is the aspiration to "ensure that local people have a greater opportunity to have their say about local issues and helping to shape service delivery in their area" and that we "embed a culture of engagement and empowerment", principally across the council's outward facing functions.

This will mean that we will need to consider **information provision, consultation activities and involvement opportunities** that are made available to people across the county. The new duty will help shift how the Council 'does business' and support council priorities.

The key changes for us are that we now:

- (1) need to **evidence** why each service has decided either to apply the duty or not and, if so, in which way e.g. by consulting, informing or involving people in another way
- (2) need to take steps **much earlier** in the preparation of service changes or new schemes/initiatives, to ensure it does not delay the decision-making process and takes into account the views of local people before taking any decision.

The good news is that we can use existing mechanisms in many cases – and more importantly we do have a degree of discretion about the level of involvement, meaning that the 'scope' and 'impact' of a proposed change will inform the degree and depth of the 'inform, consult and involve' path that needs to be taken. It is not a case of a one size fits all approach and different approaches will have to be adopted for different functions.

We should be able to demonstrate, through evidence gathered in the normal course of business, that:

- we understand the interests and requirements of the communities we serve
- we use our understanding of the county to ensure information, consultation and involvement opportunities are provided on the right issues, targeted at the right people and accessible to those we are trying to reach
- we have an appropriate corporate approach to providing information, consultation and involving in other ways that flows throughout our organisation, from strategic policies into individual service delivery and our work with partners where appropriate

- people feel that the authority provides relevant and accessible engagement opportunities and they will know how to get involved, either directly or through their elected representative
- people will recognise that the authority's policies reflect this involvement and that services are tailored to local and individual needs, even though difficult choices in service provision need to be made.

In December 2008, the White Paper '**Communities in Control: real people, real power**' was introduced into Parliament as **the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill 2008**. This builds on the 'duty to involve', and highlights a duty to promote democracy, participatory budgeting, and community led planning. It is aimed at driving power to local communities, with an emphasis on involving local citizens in the decision making process, and in their local communities.

The 'bill' proposes a duty on local councils to respond to all petitions, including e-petitions that relate to:

- services they are responsible for
- services where they share delivery responsibility
- to an improvement in the economic social or environmental well-being of the authority's area to which any of its partner authorities could contribute (upper tier only).

Every Council must adopt, publish and comply with a Petition Scheme and introduce an e-petition scheme.

The **Sustainable Communities Act** became law on 23 October 2007. The Act sets up a new process where local communities and their local authorities (district, county and unitary councils) can guide policy and action to promote local sustainability and reverse community decline by proposing changes in legislation or budgets that currently only central government can influence. Local authorities are currently the only bodies able to make these proposals. The Act sets out that any proposals must be discussed with a panel of local representatives and consensus reached where possible.

One of the key dimensions of the new **Equality Framework for Local Government** that we are working within (and aiming for 'Excellent' by the end of 2010/11) is the extent of our engagement with local communities from different Diversity backgrounds about our priorities and the services we deliver.

In April 2009, the **Comprehensive Area Assessment** (CAA) replaced the CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment). It has a greater focus on citizen experience and perspectives.

The new **Customer Service Excellence** standard was introduced following a detailed review of the Charter Mark. It includes criteria around developing an in-depth understanding of customers. This includes consulting customers and using the information gained to design and provide services, the importance of monitoring the outcomes of your services and whether customers are satisfied with them.

3. KCC CONTEXT

The expectations of residents and businesses as consumers of public services are changing. KCC is responding to the fact that service users increasingly see themselves as customers, expecting greater choice and services tailored to their needs and those of their families and businesses. Residents want to access services that meet their individual needs at convenient locations and at times that suit them.

In Kent we now need to bring together all the good practice that currently exists to demonstrate how we already meet the requirements and to identify areas we need to improve.

Locally we are doing more consultation, engagement and involvement than ever before. This has greatly increased the amount of feedback we get from our stakeholders and residents, and this feedback has been used in a variety of ways. However this needs to be achieved 'with fewer but smarter' questions being posed to Kent residents.

Much of this is rightly led by individual services in contact with their own customers. The corporate responsibilities are for setting and supporting coherent standards, challenging under-performance and creating the framework for work with partners on this agenda.

In 2008/09 links were made between community and democratic engagement, communications, access to services and engagement with residents. This is alongside, not instead of, the current strong emphasis on the involvement of direct service users.

Webcasting of our formal democratic proceedings extends the audience far beyond what could ever be achieved in the traditional way and the combination of public service information, community-based news and user-generated content on Kent TV offer a unique platform for people in Kent to get their views and priorities across to decision-makers and for decision-makers to connect with local people.

The Social Innovation Lab Kent (SILK) gives us a set of tools and a way of working to support in-depth conversations and the co-design of policy and services for some of the most vulnerable and least heard communities in Kent.

Other innovations at earlier stages include the piloting of the Pic N Mix approach to information for the public – where we enable pilot groups of residents and local businesses to access social, economic and performance data across the public sector to create 'shop windows' of information that meets their specific needs (as opposed to the needs of those publishing the data).

We need to ensure that we are clear about how feedback from, and information about, our various communities is being used to provide added value in our decision making. The emphasis should be not only on the *quantity* of consultations, but on the *quality*, and the *effectiveness* with which consultation results are converted into meaningful actions.

4. CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Customer Insight

This area of work is driven by the information and data we hold about residents of Kent, including the feedback we get from customer comments and complaints, referred to

elsewhere on this agenda. A range of other reports, studies and papers are also used by staff across the Department to help gain a better understanding of issues, communities and service users.

The Research and Intelligence Unit has corporate responsibility for all of the research and data areas outlined below:

- Demography
- Deprivation
- Economy and the labour market
- Land use:
 - Commercial
 - Housing
- Retail and town centres
- Customer Insight (MOSAIC).

The unit collects, collates, process, analyse and map data for a wide range of projects across the whole of Kent County Council and beyond. Some of the most recent projects contributed to include Kent Crime View, The Kent and Medway Structure Plan, The Kent Economic Report, The People of Kent, coastal town analysis, developer contributions and What Price Growth?

All of the latest data and publications on these topics can be found on the Research and Intelligence website www.kent.gov.uk/research

As part of the Gateway programme, partnership funding from the EU Interreg IVa programme has been obtained for all 14 Kent local authorities to work with French partners to use customer insight and profiling as the basis for a shared approach to shaping future service delivery – especially in relation to the location of public access premises.

4.2 Gateway Multi-Channel

KCC recognises that public access in the 21st century is changing and that the way we deliver services across the whole public sector needs to change accordingly, particularly the way in which we utilise technology, across all channels (face-to-face, phone and web).

During 2008/09, KCC began work on simplifying access to public services in Kent with the *Access Kent* programme (now part of the Gateway programme), which aims to deliver joined-up web and telephone access across the non-emergency public sector in Kent, along with providing a network of physical Gateway for improved face-to-face service delivery, enhanced further by a fleet of Mobile Gateway, for rural and hard-to-reach urban communities across the county. This is being led by KCC, in partnership with district and borough councils, NHS, Fire, Police, Medway council, the voluntary sector and business organisations.

4.3 Community Liaison Managers

KCC Community Liaison Managers provide a key link between local people, local organizations and decision makers in Kent. One of the roles of the team is working with elected members to arrange public meetings in each of the districts in Kent. The meetings are an opportunity for the Council to engage with the local community and understand

their views. The form of these meetings varies from district to district, and can be varied to suite the issues being raised. The team is a valuable resource and a good first point of contact for any KCC officers who need to undertake work which requires the duty to involve.

4.4 Neighbourhood Forums

The County Council working with its partners continues to pilot a range of models for community engagement. Building on the first successful pilot of Neighbourhood Forums in Dover which was recognised by the Comprehensive Performance Assessment Team as a good model discussions have continued across the county with partners on a range of models of community engagement which is appropriate for each of the partners.

During 2008/09 productive discussions have taken place which have resulted in the establishment of three Neighbourhood Forums in Gravesham based on the Dover model.

In Swale the Borough Council and the County Council have established Local Engagement Forums which has created a stronger link to the Swale Local Strategic Partnership. Membership of the Swale Local Engagement Forums includes Local Strategic Partnership representatives e.g. Police, Primary Care Trust, local organisations in addition to Parish, Borough and County Council Members.

In Tonbridge and Malling and in Canterbury the County Council is joining models of community engagement established by the Borough Councils which have been in place for some time.

4.5 Kent Partners Compact

The Kent Partners Compact is an agreement between Public Sector and Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) partners in Kent, setting out how they will work together and act in their dealings with each other.

The *Compact* was endorsed by a meeting of the Kent Public Service Board in 2008 and is currently going through KCC's own policy processes.

The *Kent Partners Compact* commits each sector to specific ways of working in four Codes of Practice. The *Communication and Engagement Code of Practice* (pages 14 - 15) covers how we should ensure honest two-way dialogue between the sectors. The Code of Practice lays out VCS undertakings, Public Sector undertakings and joint undertakings. For instance:

- The VCS commits to “respect the confidentiality of information, when given access to it on that basis”
- The Public Sector undertakes to “give organisations enough time to respond to consultation and, where possible, a standard period of 12 weeks and a minimum of 8 weeks”
- The Sectors jointly undertake to “listen as well as talk”.

Whilst there is a compliance procedure in place should disputes arise, the value of the *Kent Partners Compact* is in the ethos it embeds in both Sectors, which will lead to a

positive working relationship between organisations. This can only help to lead to better services for the people of Kent.

4.6 Customer Impact Assessments

From 6 April 2009, Customer Impact Assessments (CIAs) replaced Equality Impact Assessments in KCC, to reflect the continuous mainstreaming of equalities and diversity into our everyday thinking about who our customers are and how we can best meet their needs.

A Customer Impact Assessment (CIA) is primarily a tool for improving council services. It enables policy and service managers to identify the potential impact of a policy, procedure, project or service on the residents of Kent and KCC's workforce. It can help KCC to provide and deliver excellent services to the people of Kent by making sure that these reflect the needs of *all* members of the community.

CIAs give KCC staff the opportunity to think about how their work impacts on local people or other staff, particularly those from diverse communities, and to take action to prevent unfair discrimination.

4.7 Kent Health Watch

Kent Health Watch is run by KCC in partnership with the NHS and provides another route by which people can make their voice heard. Kent Health Watch:

- is a 'signposting' service that points callers in the right direction
- helps ensure that all feedback about health and social care services in Kent - including compliments and complaints, comments and concerns - are captured in the most appropriate manner
- helps the NHS to ensure that all public views and suggestions are taken into account to improve services
- adds to and enhances, rather than replaces, existing services.

Data collected by Kent Health Watch - either by telephone or email - will be recorded and reported back to the NHS and Kent County Council.

5. CONSULTATION, ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT FOR 2008/09

5.1 2009/10 Budget Consultation Process

The annual budget process provides formally for consultation with the public, Trade Unions, the business community, opposition Members and professional organisations.

KCC commissioned market research firm Ipsos MORI to carry out a study of public attitudes to KCC expenditure priorities and Council Tax levels. This information has informed the recommendations made to County Council and a summary was attached to the report to Cabinet on 2 February 2009.

The main findings confirmed many of the themes identified by previous research for KCC by Ipsos MORI and others. Kent is generally well-liked by its residents; it is attractive, and with good transport links but there is also a very strong sense that the county faces many

threats. These centre on the growing population, which cannot be sustained by existing infrastructure / facilities.

Roads are a powerful symbol of this – both in regards maintenance and capacity – and they also tap into local unease about the presence of foreigners, whether transitory or permanent. Crime, education, health, social services and employment are also major issues.

As found in previous years, Kent's residents as elsewhere in the country display a typically vague understanding of local government structure, and the division of responsibilities between county and district. Policing, motorways, housing and local planning are all often supposed (wrongly) to fall under the county's jurisdiction although education is correctly seen as one of KCC's main areas.

The sources of council funding and division of spending are also not well understood, and people are generally unaware of the legislative constraints on budgets. Despite this, people know what they want. Among those areas for which KCC is responsible, education is a key priority, along with road maintenance, community safety and social services. Further, public transport is deemed to be in particular need of improvement, e.g. buses' operating hours.

A meeting with business leaders was held on 27 January and there was a consultation with staff representatives on 11 February. The budget proposals were reviewed at Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 26 January and 10 February.

5.2 Kent & Medway Citizen Panel

The Kent Residents' Panel was started in spring 2004 and had a membership of some 1,100 residents when it was closed in autumn 2008. In partnership with the Kent Messenger Group, KCC has established a new *Kent and Medway Citizens' Panel*, enabling us to seek the views of a large number of Kent residents aged 16 or over. The Panel marks a first in that it is the only citizens' panel in the country to be run jointly by a local newspaper and a local authority.

The new Panels coverage extends to Kent and Medway, meaning that Police, Fire and other partners can now use this Panel. The new panel is managed by Ipsos MORI, who hold all the Panellists' details and personal information and use their extensive resources to ensure that all Citizens' Panel surveys are truly representative. It is intended to use the new and more representative Panel as the appointed panel for *the duty to involve* under the Sustainable Communities Act.

Membership of the new Panel was started with a large scale survey undertaken by Ipsos MORI and has been followed by a £1,000 prize draw for new members and an open invitation for Kent residents to join either using the website www.kmcp.co.uk or by phone to 020 7347 3176.

So far two surveys have been undertaken with the Kent & Medway Citizens' Panel, the initial benchmark and recruitment survey and a subsequent snapshot survey.

In addition to seeking recruits for the Panel, the initial survey covered a total of 1,838 residents between 25 February and 31 April 2008 and included topics as follows:

- Living in Kent

- Moving out of Kent
- Satisfaction with Kent
- Satisfaction with the local neighbourhood
- Future change in Kent
- Priorities for Kent
- Economic optimism – national, Kent and personal
- Use of local media
- Use of technology
- Awareness of Kent organizations
- Social and political activity
- Community involvement
- Contact with the Council.

Further information on the results of these surveys can be found at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/council-and-democracy/opinion-four.htm>

The subsequent snapshot poll was e-mailed out to KMCP members on 14 November and included questions on:

- Economic situation and its effects
- Intentions for Christmas holiday shopping
- Cooking at home and eating out.

Further information on the results of these surveys can be found at [http://surveys.glopanel.com/communities/default.aspx?p=p110689507&n=\(0%3a0-205450163%230%2c+238\)](http://surveys.glopanel.com/communities/default.aspx?p=p110689507&n=(0%3a0-205450163%230%2c+238))

5.3 Around Kent

In the April 2008 edition of Around Kent we asked the public how we could improve the publication. That, together with other research we have carried out, gave us a great insight into what the people of Kent think about the publication. As a result, changes were made and we reported back on the outcome in the July 2008 Around Kent edition.

5.4 Gateways

Customer surveys are carried out at all Gateway locations. Pre-opening questionnaires were carried out for the Tenterden Gateway in December 2008 and then the exercise repeated in March 2009. This feedback led to a re-design of the floor plan for Tenterden Gateway to better accommodate customer needs, and improve public access further. Tunbridge Wells Gateway have a web based customer feedback process that is collated and reviewed monthly.

Maidstone and Tenterden Gateway carried out surveys in March - April 2009 as part of the 'National One Stop Shop Benchmarking Group'. From July 2009 we will be rolling this out to all Gateways on a quarterly basis. Maidstone have made changes to their queuing system in response to some of the feedback received.

Along with SILK and Engine (a Service Design company) we have developed an 'Insight to Idea' tool. This is a staff development tool that introduces customer insight techniques and journey mapping to spot opportunities for service improvement. Working with staff the focus is on understanding customer needs and experiences as a means of

delivering an enhanced customer service and engaging customers in the Gateway service offer. As part of the rollout of this from Oct - Dec 2009, customer focus groups will be set up in each Gateway.

A DVD has been produced using real customers and their experiences. This can be seen on Kent.gov.uk by the public, along with Kenttv.com/gatewayexperience. This is also available in British Sign Language (kenttv.com/gatewayexperiencesigned).

5.5 Kent TV

In October 2008 Kent TV held its first debate, which focused on the local housing crisis in Canterbury. A panel of members, councillors and housing experts were invited to face an audience of local residents and students. A special web page was created for this purpose and included polls and somewhere viewers could upload their own comments and questions. The housing debate has been used to help inform policy decisions.

The housing debate proved to be an effective way of engaging, informing and interacting with the public. Since the first debate, Kent TV has also hosted a debate on Backing Kent Business in which the public could put forward questions to be answered by a panel of experts and covered the Kent 20-20 conference giving businesses a say on how the event works for them.

Results from the polls and the dialogue from the comments are available indefinitely on Kent TV, and have been used to inform relevant policies and agendas. All the videos filmed and uploaded from both the debates and the competitions are available for viewers to access on demand.

Additionally, Kent TV has been engaging young people through various competitions. The first was Sound Clash 2009, which was a battle of the bands type competition, giving singers and bands a chance to showcase their talents. Viewers were able to vote for their favourite band with the winning band getting £1,000 and a professionally made video. There were 84 entries from across Kent and 12,000 registrations to vote online.

The second competition was called Animate and Create and was aimed at children of primary and secondary age. They were asked to submit short animations around the theme 'Cleaner, Greener and Safer', and the chosen video won an animation kit for their school.

We wanted to gauge the views of the public on the direction of Kent TV and it was suggested that 2 members of the public become members of the Board of Governors. A press release was sent out and the search was mentioned in Kent on Sunday, sent out in the Business Link and the Chartered Institute of Marketing newsletters, emailed to students at Canterbury Christchurch University, as well as being placed online at Kent.gov.uk and Kent TV.

We received limited responses from the public and a decision was taken by the Board of Governors that Kent TV should direct its attentions to gathering wider feedback from other sources.

We also wanted to find out the public's opinions on various key topics and carry out ongoing engagement with viewers utilising the "Your Say" section on Kent TV to gather

feedback on a range of Kent issues and services, and use this information to help raise Kent's profile.

It was decided by the Board of Governors that the Your Say section of the website did not offer value for money. Instead Kent TV has found it useful to gauge the views of the people in other ways for example by conducting online polls and by asking people to submit comments and questions on various topics.

5.6 *Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK)*

Through the work of the *Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK)* KCC has sought to place the person at the heart of service design, both within KCC and in partnership with others. SILK carries out intensive work with specific target groups and aims to provide a creative environment for people to work together.

The 'Just Coping' report on low income families was published in July 2008. The report is about the everyday lives and challenges of families who are coping with material hardship, and the ways in which they manage to survive. In an era where family life is given unprecedented levels of attention, and where parenting practice is closely scrutinised by a judgemental public, it highlights the social, cultural and environmental factors that combine to make life so difficult for 'just coping' families. It received a national level profile and has informed a number of additional projects in order to address the issues raised. Further information on this report is available on:

<http://socialinnovation.typepad.com/silk/2008/10/just-coping-rep.html>

A partnership was created with the Digital Inclusion team at Communities and Local Government (CLG) to explore ways in which technology can better support families at risk. A key theme emerging from this work was that of 'bulk buying'. Bulk-buying means simply buying items in bulk to cut down on costs. This has evolved into a new cross-sector, multi-disciplinary project under the umbrella of the poverty pilot, focussing on community involvement, to create a bulk-buying model in the Parkwood area of Maidstone. SILK is involved in the bulk-buying project because it was voted as one of the favourite ideas at a public event in November 2008 last year attended by 50 plus Parkwood residents.

SILK undertook focused work with the Sheerness Children's Centre to find new ways of engaging fathers in family life. The 'Engaging Fathers' report was published in August 2008, which resulted in the appointment of a full-time dads' worker at the Centre. Further information on this report is available on:

<http://socialinnovation.typepad.com/silk/2008/10/engaging-father.html#more>

In March 2009, SILK worked with *Gateway* frontline staff to co-design 'Insight to Idea' – a structured process for groups to reflect on customer needs, map the customer journey of interaction with the Gateway, and generate creative solutions for improved services. 'Insight-to-Idea' is now being used as part of a team building workshop day for the roll out of new Gateways around Kent.

6. PLANNED INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY THAT DID NOT TAKEN PLACE IN 2008/09

6.1 Usability and accessibility study of the Website

Due to budget restraints this survey was deferred to 2009/10 and has now taken place.

6.2 Usability and accessibility study of the KNet

Due to budget restraints this survey did not take place

6.3 Kent & Medway Citizen Panel

The attitudes towards migration and the attitude towards poverty questions were not included within the Kent & Medway Citizen Panel questions.

7. PLANNED INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITY WITHIN CHIEF EXECUTIVES DEPARTMENT 2009/10

7.1 The following work will be carried out in 2009/10 to develop and support a coherent framework for a KCC approach to engagement with individuals (personalisation), communities (localism) and partners (V4K/LAA) in a 'Comprehensive' Engagement Strategy (CES) for KCC, taking a lead role on:

- developing a more coherent KCC approach to engagement, build links and common activities with partners – the ultimate aim being a series of approaches (if not a strategy) that works across partners and partnerships
- developing systematic KCC wide approaches to gathering and acting on customer insight (trends from complaints, the use of MOSAIC, lessons from user focus groups and other forms of soft and hard data)
- customer insight (e.g. KMCP, People of Kent, public perception PIs, learning from comments and complaints)
- quality assurance of KCC community engagement activities and leadership of corporate engagement initiatives.
- mainstreaming the SILK methodology and creating a permanent resource across KCC and Kent Public Service Board (KPSB) partners to drive service improvement and policy development
- ensuring that service-led engagement and member-led engagement work comes together - Local Boards and Neighbourhood forums used to engage communities
- a new system for dealing with petitions
- ensuring Equality & Diversity in service delivery (as opposed to in the workforce) should be simply a facet of wider performance improvement and engagement, not a separate 'industry' in its own right. This can be achieved by embedding it as part of the Performance, Improvement and Engagement structure, but still using the specific focus of the Equalities Framework for Local Government (EFLG) to drive progress. Equality mapping and the mechanisms for community engagement are two of the key elements of EFLG and link strongly to the wider role of the unit and are complementary to it
- update and improve the Communication and Media toolkit so that it becomes the key guidance on communication standards at KCC
- pilot the October 2009 edition of *Around Kent* with a district council (possibly Swale) and explore options for a more joined up approach to the magazine with other public sector organisations and partners
- deliver a more usable, accessible and interactive kent.gov.uk website for the public, colleagues and members

- deliver a more usable, accessible and interactive staff intranet for colleagues and members
- develop and implement a Members' portal, giving members easy access to council and other information online in one place
- begin work on joining up online services and information with other Kent public services, as part of the Gateway Multi-Channel
- continue to support the ongoing review of localism across the County, with a view to ensuring the future and lasting success of participative and deliberative local government at all 3 tiers, subject to appropriate resources
- budget consultation with the public, consistent with best practice. Statutory duty to consult taxpayers on budget and council tax levels before setting budget

7.2 A list of consultations planned with the public in 2009/10 is included in Appendix 1.

8. CONCLUSION

This report demonstrates the Department's commitment to effective consultation and involvement, and highlights some of the work already being done. There continues to be a need for setting and supporting coherent standards, challenging under-performance and creating the framework for work with partners on this agenda and it forms an integral part of planning, procurement and performance review activity.

People are at the heart of everything KCC strives to achieve. We have an excellent track record of engaging with our service users in the design and delivery of what we do. We have good knowledge and customer insight. However, we have achieved less success in engaging with the wider Kent public, with our decision-making felt to be quite remote from local people.

We now need to ensure that we are clear about how feedback from, and information about, our various communities is being used to provide added value in our decision making. The emphasis should be not only on the *quantity* of consultations, but on the *quality*, and the *effectiveness* with which consultation results are converted into meaningful actions.

There are always opportunities to further improve what we do and how we do it and to ensure value for money from the various programmes that are underway. These will be reviewed as part of the forward planning and budget process, and the implementation of the new Duty to Inform, Consult and Involve which came into force on 1 April 2009.

A further detailed report on KCC wide community engagement will be presented at the next meeting. This report will look at the work carried out across the Authority in 2008/09, what we have learnt and future improvements.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a) note the information contained in this report,

- b) decide what further information the Committee would like to see as part of the evolving process of improved public involvement

Janice Hill
Performance Manager – Performance, Improvement & Engagement
(01622) 221981
Janice.hill@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents: None

Other Useful Information: None

APPENDIX 1

Name	Start Date/ End Date	Feedback Date	Target Group	Target Area	Brief Summary	What we want to find out & how it will be used	Contact Name, email & phone no
Feedback from residents on Around Kent	Each edition - Spring 09 & Autumn 09	N/A	Residents	Across Kent	Request for feedback from residents printed in each edition of Around Kent	Feedback on the design and content of Around Kent to make sure that we meet residents' needs and improve the publication	Jane Clarke jane.clarke2@kent.gov.uk 01622 694015
Feedback on the success of KCC's contribution to the Kent County Show	Within 3 months of the end of the County Show	N/A	Officers and Members who were involved in the Show. Visitors to the Kent stands	All visitors to KCC stands at the Kent show and all officers and Members who were involved	Feedback meeting is held to gather views from officers and Members. Visitors' comments are captured on paper questionnaires completed by visitors at the show	Feedback on the success of Kent County Council's presence at the Kent County Show to use to improve for future years.	Deborah Malthouse deborah.malthouse@kent.gov.uk 01622 694119
Budget Focus Groups	01/08/09 – 30/09/09	January 2010	Random Sample of Kent Residents	Kent	Public consultation with council taxpayers on budget	Budget consultation with the public, consistent with best practice. Statutory duty to consult taxpayers on budget and council tax levels before setting budget.	Dave Shipton dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk 01622 671411
	Nov 09 – Feb 10	February 2010	Trade Unions		Consultation with Unions on budget	Trade Union's response to the Council's budget proposals.	
	Aug 09 – Nov 09	January 2010	Youth Council		Consultation with Youth Council on budget	Youth Council's response to the Council's budget proposals.	
	Jan 10	February 2010	Business Community		Consultation with Business Community on budget	Business Community's response to the Council's budget proposals.	
Feedback on how we handle complaints	01/07/09	31/03/10	Random sample of complainants	Kent	Monitoring our performance	To ensure we maintain standards conducive with our Charter Mark standards	Caroline Dodge Caroline.dodge@kent.gov.uk 01622 221652

Name	Start Date/ End Date	Feedback Date	Target Group	Target Area	Brief Summary	What we want to find out & how it will be used	Contact Name, email & phone no
Annual Client Survey	Aug 2008	Aug 2009	Senior Managers	All Directorates	Feedback from clients.	An indication of the areas in which we have done well, and those in which we need to improve.	Geoff Wild Geoff.wild@kent.gov.uk 01622 694302
Customer Survey - Schools	June 2009		Schools buying SPS services	Kent	Feedback from schools using KCC SPS services	Customer views/satisfaction will be compared with the previous 2 survey outcomes.	Nicky Whichelow Nicky.whichelow@kent.gov.uk 01622 694156
Kent Health Watch	Ongoing		Kent population	Kent	Ongoing service to ensure public attitudes to health and social care services are monitored and acted upon	Issues of concern to the public will be identified and dealt with appropriately. Feedback from callers to Health-watch will be used to further develop the service. Work with the Kent LINK will help identify gaps and overlaps in service delivery	Tish Gailey Tish.Gailey@kent.gov.uk 01622 696802
Public Health Strategy	01/03/09 – 31/05/09	30/06/09	Public and organisations in Kent	Kent	Consultation and engagement to produce a revised Public Health Strategy for Kent	Views on the public health priorities for Kent and how they should be addressed.	Mark Lemon Mark.Lemon@kent.gov.uk 01622 694853
Health Inequalities Action Plan	01/03/09 – 31/05/09	30/06/09	Principally district councils but also NHS, KCC & other partners.	Kent	Consultation and engagement to produce a revised Kent Health Inequalities Action Plan	Information and views on how health inequalities can be addressed.	Deborah Smith Deborah.Smith@kent.gov.uk 01622 696176
House campaign	Ongoing		Young people	Kent	Continued engagement in the development of the House campaign and concept.	To ensure relevance to young people is maintained	Deborah Smith Deborah.Smith@kent.gov.uk 01622 696176

Name	Start Date/ End Date	Feedback Date	Target Group	Target Area	Brief Summary	What we want to find out & how it will be used	Contact Name, email & phone no
Kent & Medway Citizens' Panel	TBC	TBC	General residents	Kent	Snapshot survey	Proposed subjects – topical issues, place & belonging – to inform policy development	Nick Warren nick.warren@kent.gov.uk 01622 221959
Strategic Statement (statement of priorities to replace Towards 2010)	TBC	TBC	General residents	Kent	Variety of methods including surveys, events and on-line engagement	(a) seeking views about priorities (b) testing out the draft statement before it is finalised To ensure the new Strategic Statement reflects views of Kent public.	David Whittle David.whittle@kent.gov.uk 01622 696969
Kent Agreement	TBC	TBC	General residents	Kent	Tracking survey	Tracking National Indicators 3, 6 and 21 on citizen insight	Graeme Brown graeme.brown@kent.gov.uk 01622 696070
Kent & Medway Citizen's panel	TBC	TBC	General residents	Kent	Snapshot survey	Proposed subjects – topical issues & health- to inform policy development.	Nick Warren nick.warren@kent.gov.uk 01622 221959
Pic N Mix pilots	Apr – Sep 09	Oct 09	SME's	Cluster based on Enterprise Hub	Improving access to KCC data	What public sector information SME's need	Robert Hardy robert.hardy@kent.gov.uk 01622 221343
Web Jam	Feb	April 10	Residents	Kent	Alive on-line debate	Input to priority settings	Robert Hardy robert.hardy@kent.gov.uk 01622 221343
KMCP quarterly surveys and 'snapshot'	June Oct Jan	Aug Dec Mar	Citizens Panel members	Kent	Tracking public satisfaction and quality of life issues	Regular updates to cabinet, COG and POC	Nick Warren nick.warren@kent.gov.uk 01622 221959

Name	Start Date/ End Date	Feedback Date	Target Group	Target Area	Brief Summary	What we want to find out & how it will be used	Contact Name, email & phone no
polls							
New Diversity Forums	From July 09	Ongoing	Diversity "Strands"	Kent	Community input into Equality Strategy and impact assessment	Feedback will determine actions in ES action plans	Emkay Magba-Kamara Emkay.magba-kamara@kent.gov.uk 01622 221851
Kent Partnership stakeholder consultations on V4K priorities and LAA	Nov 09 to Nov 10	At 3-monthly intervals throughout 09/10	Stakeholders	Kent	Seeking stakeholders views on priorities and actions	Contributing to the new V4K to be complete by Nov 2010	Graeme Brown graeme.brown@kent.gov.uk 01622 696070
Gateway Multi-channel	March 2009 / ongoing	At regular intervals	Kent residents	Kent	Using existing consultation forums and channels	How Kent residents wish to access services and shape Access Kent accordingly	Amie Barker Amie.barker@kent.gov.uk 01622 221391
Gateway surveys	Ongoing	At regular intervals	Gateway service users	Thanet, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells, Tenterden, Maidstone, Dover & Tonbridge	Surveys within existing Gateways	Satisfaction with Gateways and with the services accessible through Gateways. To shape current and future Gateways and to feed into each relevant organisation	Jane Kendal jane.kendal@kent.gov.uk 01622 694423
Contact Kent consultation individual services	Ongoing	At regular intervals	Contact Kent service users	Kent	Working with service units to obtain feedback	Levels of customer service and how we can improve Contact Kent	Derek Smith Derek.smith@kent.gov.uk 01622 221410

Name	Start Date/ End Date	Feedback Date	Target Group	Target Area	Brief Summary	What we want to find out & how it will be used	Contact Name, email & phone no
Kent TV	Ongoing	At regular intervals	Kent residents & other visitors to Kent TV	Kent	Gaining insight into customer base and targeting content	Informing the Kent TV review and enabling content to be shaped by Kent residents. This will be linked to the customer insight work being carried out by Gateways	Tanya Oliver Tanya.Oliver@kent.gov.uk 01622 694817

This page is intentionally left blank

By: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Corporate Support
Services & Performance Management
Peter Gilroy – Chief Executive

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee –
25 September 2009

Subject: Chief Executives Department Annual Complaints, Comments And
Compliments Report

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides Members with information about the operation of the Chief Executives Department complaints comments and compliments procedure between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Handling complaints appropriately, and using them as a source of feedback about services, is an important element of our approach to community engagement and understanding. This report provides information on complaints received during 2008/09 and gives examples of where analysis has led to service change. The main focus is on complaints, but for the sake of completion, statistics are also included about compliments and comments as all three categories represent ‘unsolicited’ feedback which, although not statistically representative, is nevertheless very valuable in service development.
- 1.2 The report outlines the number of complaints received, complaint trends, the source of complaints and the performance on handling complaints. Information, where available, is provided on improvements taking place as a result of complaints. It also provides information on the number of comments and compliments received.
- 1.3 This year, following consultation, we have revised our complaints process and leaflet. This revision is one part of the developing strategy to transform customer service by listening to what our customers want and expect. The aim is to reduce the bureaucracy involved. This strategy includes reducing the number of formal stages and changing the culture within the Council by encouraging staff to deal with complaints speedily and sympathetically, apologising when things go wrong and taking action to resolve the source of complaints by learning lessons from what causes them.

2. What is a complaint?

- 2.1. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not and however made, about the standard of or the delivery of service, the actions or lack of action by the Council or its staff which affects an individual service

user or group of users. This is consistent with the definitions used by other local authorities.

3. Who can make a complaint

- 3.1 Any individual or organisation who uses or receives a Council Service can make a complaint if they are dissatisfied with the service. This definition includes:
- Statutory or non statutory services provided to individual customers
 - Services provided on a commercial basis (e.g. Home to School transport)
 - Services provided to schools
 - Services provided by contractors on KCC's behalf
- 3.2 The Complaints Procedure does not cover complaints, comments or compliments from members of staff, trainees, apprentices or persons on work placements, involving working conditions, pay or other internal grievances.

4. Stages of the complaints procedure

- 4.1 The first step in the complaints procedure is stage 1: Local Resolution. This is where an attempt to resolve the complaint at a local level is made.

The emphasis in the complaints procedure is to try to resolve complaints at a local level. If the complaint is not resolved at Stage One (problem solving) or if it is particularly serious, then the complaint can progress to Stage Two (Formal Complaint).

- 4.2 If the customer remains dissatisfied then they can ask for their complaint to be considered at stage 2. The complaint is directed to the Managing Director/Director/Head of Service. The customer themselves would usually make the decision on whether they want their complaint to be investigated at stage 2 and (this option is openly published) they are made aware of this option in the Complaints, Comments and Compliments leaflet and on kent.gov.uk.
- 4.3 The third stage is for the customer to take the complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman and (this option is openly published) they are made aware of this option in the Complaints, Comments and Compliments leaflet, on kent.gov.uk and within a standard paragraph within Stage Two complaint responses.

5. The Number of Complaints and Compliments Received

- 5.1 In 2008/09, 131 complaints were received compared with 44 for 2007/08. There was a change in how we report complaints during 2008/09 and this accounts for the increase in numbers reported this year. We now report all complaints received and not just those reported at Stage two (formal complaint). This change came about following the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, Corporate Assessment. (Further information is reported in paragraph 12).

5.2 The number of complaints, comments and compliments needs to be seen in the context of the number of people accessing services and the number of complaints, the number for the Chief Executives Department therefore, is relatively small compared to the number of people accessing the services.

6. Learning Lessons/Practice Improvements

6.1 Customers have the right to complain. However, there are not always wider lessons from complaints. Some complaints often involve one off administration or human errors. Services are encouraged to understand and apply the lessons from complaints in terms of service or procedural improvements where clear trends emerge from individual complaints. There have been no policy changes as a result of complaints in 2008/09.

7. Complaint Handling Performance

7.1 Number of Complaints

	2008/09		2007/08
Business Units	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 2
Business Solutions & Policy			1
Commercial Services	49	18	16
Corporate Finance		8	4
Legal & Democratic Services	3	5	5
Insurance	20		12
Personnel (Employee services)	10		4
Property Group	9	4	1
Strategic Development & Public Access	5		1
TOTAL	96	35	44

	How complaint was received				
Business Units	Total	e-mail	phone	letter	Other
Business Solutions & Policy	0				
Commercial Services	67	15	15	34	3
Corporate Finance	8	1		7	
Legal & Democratic Services	8			8	
Insurance	20			20	
Personnel (Employee services)	10	2	8		
Property Group	13	4		9	
Strategic Development & Public Access	5		4		1
TOTAL	131	22	27	78	4

Complaints acknowledged within 3 working days		Actual	%
Business Solutions & Policy			N/A
Commercial Services		64	95
Corporate Finance		8	100
Legal & Democratic Services		8	100
Insurance		20	100
Personnel (Employee Services)		10	100
Property Group		13	100
Strategic Development & Public Access		4	100

Responses to complaints within 20 working days		Actual	%
Business Solutions & Policy			N/A
Commercial Services		68	100
Corporate Finance		8	100
Legal & Democratic Services		8	
Insurance		20	100
Personnel (Employee Services)		10	100
Property Group		13	100
Strategic Development & Public Access		4	100

7.2 Business Solutions and Policy including Regeneration

Business Solutions and Policy received no complaints from the Public.

7.3 Commercial Services

Commercial Services received 68 complaints compared with 16 the previous year. The increase in recorded complaints relates to complaints now being reported at stage one.

The majority of these complaints are from parents who are not satisfied regarding the mode of transport to school provided for their child. Identified improvements to service delivery introduced in response to complaints includes the following:

- the contract management process instigated in response to several complaints lead to sanctions against suppliers
- process reviewed for chasing medical reports
- process reviewed for collecting equality & diversity information
- Customer Service Training

7.4 Corporate Finance

Within Corporate Finance there were 20 complaints regarding the processing or decisions taken by our insurers relating to claims and 8 connected to council tax. These related to potholes and comments in the press about the Local Government Pension Scheme and Members expenses.

Finance have also dealt with 67 enquires regarding Council Tax increase, Icelandic Banks, the Chief Executive's salary, senior staff salaries, support to Asylum Seekers, potholes and refuse disposal and recycling. The majority of these enquiries are received by e-mail.

7.5 Legal & Democratic Services

The 8 Complaints to Legal and Democratic Services are mainly to do with decisions made by Legal Services which the complainant disagrees with.

7.6 Personnel

10 complaints were received regarding the KCC recruitment process (a total of 1,855 posts were advertised and over 50,346 application forms from candidates were processed during the year). These complaints relate to the feedback to candidates. The team now chase the outcome of vacancies following the shortlisting and interview stages of recruitment to ensure that all candidates are contacted with an outcome and Recruiting Managers now need to contact applicants post interview within 2 days or contact the recruitment team who will follow this through with immediate effect.

7.7 Property Group

There were 13 complaints concerning KCC Property Group. The majority of complaints received relate to work carried out near schools. Three complaints were received about the standard of accommodation at Oakwood House.

7.8 Strategic Development and Public Access

KCC Gateways are managed by the Strategic Development and Public Access Department. Complaints about the Gateways service are dealt with by the relevant business service using the Gateway and will not be reported here.

The Gateway Service itself received 5 complaints. Following these complaints the Gateways radio advert script was revised to make clearer the services offered and the risk assessment process for filming was enhanced to take into account the type of appointments booked into the Gateway when 'filming' is planned.

As from April 2008 complaints received about public access and the Contact Centre will be reported within the Chief Executives Department complaints report. There were no complaints about public access. The Contact Centres current Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System is unable to give us enough information to monitor the level of complaints regarding the service offered by the contact centre. The current CRM is being updated and a project is being undertaken to find an alternative method of recording complaints until the new system is up and running.

8. Valuing Diversity

8.1 The Council provides complaint leaflets for adults, children and those with learning difficulties. We continued to advertise and promote how people with disabilities can make a Complaint, Comment or Compliment.

8.2 Monitoring information is used to inform practice, however due to the relatively low number of complaints received and the current low response

rate to our equality and diversity monitoring forms it has not been feasible to make judgments and set specific objectives or actions from the feedback received.

- 8.3 As from 1 April 2009 when complaints are acknowledged a Complaints Equalities Monitoring Form (EMF) has been included with the acknowledgement letter. Early indications are that this new procedure has significantly improved the number of equality monitoring responses received by the Council.

9. Vexatious and Repetitious Complainants

- 9.1 The Council can review a complaint and give a decision without formal Investigation where it considers it to be deliberately repetitious or vexatious.
- 9.2 The number of such complaints is increasing to such an extent nationally that the Local Government Ombudsman published in September 2008 a Guidance Note on 'Unreasonable and Persistent Complainants'. The Council has amended its Complaints Procedure to take account of this guidance.
- 9.3 There were no complaints recorded as a Vexatious and Repetitious complaint within the Chief Executives Department for the period 1 April 2008 – 31 March 2009.

10. Compensation

- 10.1 No compensation has been paid to complainants within the Chief Executives Department during 2008/09 under the complaint procedure.

11. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

- 11.1 Local Government Ombudsman Complaints are handled by the Corporate Access to Information Coordinator within the Chief Executives Department.
- 11.2 A main criticism of KCC in this year's Local Government Ombudsman letter is the deterioration of the Council's response times to their enquiries from 29.4 days in 2007/08 to 38.1 in 2008/09. The Ombudsman expects a response to their initial approach within 28 calendar days and the Council was well outside of this target. Although some responsibility does lie with a few operational units who have been slow to provide the Corporate Access to Information Coordinator with the information requested by the Ombudsman, the link officer's own lack of resources, increased workload and prioritising responses to FOI requests (which have a statutory deadline to meet) over complaints were primary factors.
- 11.3 A new member of staff was recruited at the beginning of this financial year and this has already had a positive effect; the average number of days to respond to the Ombudsman has fallen to 21.4 so far this year, well within the Ombudsman's target.

- 11.4 The Ombudsman decided four complaints about school transport (Commercial Services). In one complaint, there was no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration and in one other the Ombudsman used his discretion not to pursue an investigation. The third complaint was outside his jurisdiction.
- 11.5 The last complaint the Council had allocated too many places on a school bus so that it was overcrowded. The complainant's children were transferred to another bus which deposited them slightly further from their home. The Council reinstated the original provision.
- 11.6 In another case, which did not call for a formal settlement, the Council agreed to give further attention to procedural issues connected with eligibility for free home to school transport and with its scheme for non-statutory appeals against the refusal of transport.

12. Corporate Assessment - Comprehensive Performance Assessment Improvement Plan

- 12.1 The Corporate Assessment highlighted a number of areas for improvement in the way the Council handles complaints:

'The Council's use of and response to complaints as a resource to drive improved services is being further developed, but currently - although statutory requirements are met - directorates have inconsistent approaches, and mechanisms for monitoring and using complaints are underdeveloped. This inconsistency is reinforced by the mixed quality and availability of service standards'.

- 12.2 These areas have now been addressed by the County Complaints Group. All Directorates now produce an annual complaints report covering the following areas:

- Number of complaints (stage 1 and 2)
- How we received them; phone, letter, e-mail
- % answered within our standards
- % why complaints are being received
- What we have learnt and what we have changed and improved
- Equality and diversity information

and will ensure consistent practice across all Directorates in monitoring and responding to complaints from the public and regarding use of complaints to drive service improvements.

- 12.3 Work is also being carried out to improve public satisfaction with complaints handling. Following consultation the Corporate Complaints, Comments and Compliments leaflet and the website have now been updated to improve information to the public. Public satisfaction with the outcome from complaints was collected in the Best Value Survey which was carried out every 3 years. The Best Value Survey was replaced by the Place Survey in 2009, the Place Survey no longer measures public satisfaction with

complaints and further work is being undertaken to develop a system to monitor public satisfaction in this area.

12.4 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment Performance Improvement Plan for complaints is on target to be achieved and a progress table is attached as Appendix 1.

12.5 A detailed report on KCC complaints will be presented at the next meeting. This report will look at how the new procedures have been implemented across the Authority, complaints trend analysis, performance against our standards, what we have learnt and future improvements.

13. Compliments

13.1 As from September 2008 the number of compliments received by the Department from the Public has been collected.

Business Units	Total
Business Solutions & Policy	0
Commercial Services	79
Corporate Finance	0
Legal & Democratic Services	
Insurance	1
Personnel (Employee Services)	450
Property Group	
Strategic Development & Public Access	59
TOTAL	589

14. Conclusion

14.1 In 2008/09 the Chief Executives Department continued to provide a robust and effective complaints procedure. Lessons are learned from complaints and used to improve service delivery.

15. Recommendations

15.1 Members of the Policy Overview are asked to note the contents of this report.

Janice Hill
Performance Manager
Performance Management Group
Ex 1981

Supporting documents:
[Annual letter from the Local Government Ombudsman](#)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - ENSURE CONSISTENT PRACTICE REGARDING USE OF COMPLAINTS TO DRIVE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Action Required	Timescales	Lead Officer(s)	Evidence	Progress made
Develop a standard process across KCC for responding to complaints, including standard paragraphs for letters, timelines for responding etc	April 2009	Janice Hill Complaints Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standardised complaints process agreed and signed- off by Complaints Group - All relevant staff aware of new process 	Revised Policy & Procedure agreed with Complaints Group, CIA carried out. Global email to staff, Policy & Procedure part of general induction CD. Complaints now part of Directorates Induction Process
Develop a standard complaints leaflet to be used by all KCC Directorates	April 2009	Janice Hill Complaints Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complaint leaflet agreed and signed-off by Complaints Group - Complaint leaflet in use across KCC - Old version of complaints leaflet removed from websites and KCC offices 	Leaflet revised, taken through CIA process and published and printed. Available on web and all KCC offices
Embed these processes and monitor their usage in Directorates through the cross-Directorate complaints group	June 2009 onwards	Janice Hill Complaints Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff in all Directorates working to the same process - High level of satisfaction in dealing with complaints - Consistent monitoring information incorporated into the annual report on complaints for POCs and Governance & Audit Committee 	All Directorates working to same process. Consistent reporting in Sept/Oct POCs (See Satisfaction surveys below)
Annual Ombudsman letter reported to G & A Committee	Sept 2009	Caroline Dodge Janice Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report to G & A - Analysis of report and any actions re improvements to Corporate Complaints Group 	Ombudsman letter to be reported to G&A in Sept. More progress need re meeting the Ombudsman's standards
Annual Complaints report to POCs in September 2009	Sept 2009	Directorate Leads	<p>POC complaints report cover the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of complaints - How we received them; phone, letter, e-mail - % answered within our standards - What we have learnt and what we have changed and improved - Equality and diversity information 	All Directorates will report to their POCs in September under the agreed headings. CE & Communities will not be reporting on new standards as they were only introduced from 1 April 2009.
Review the process for Directorates to record what action is taken, if any,	July 2009	Janice Hill Complaints Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process agreed and signed-off by Complaints Group - Monitoring information incorporated into the annual 	Agenda item September 2009

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - ENSURE CONSISTENT PRACTICE REGARDING USE OF COMPLAINTS TO DRIVE SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Action Required	Timescales	Lead Officer(s)	Evidence	Progress made
following a complaint			report on complaints for Personalisation & Improvement Board, POCs and Governance & Audit Committee	
KCC Annual Complaints report to Governance & Audit Committee and Personalisation and Engagement Board	Sept 2009	Janice Hill	Report agreed by G & A	Revised date of December. Directorates reports moved to September to allow the Ombudsman Report (June) to be addressed.
Work with Directorates and corporate finance to ensure that information from complaints is included in service planning processes	Ongoing	Janice Hill Complaints Group Directorate Leads for Business Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Directorates use data and information from complaints to plan service improvements - Targets in service plans able to be linked back to customer and service user complaints 	Ongoing. Currently working on new guidelines for Community Engagement which will include a section on complaints. Due out in August 2009
Develop a process for Directorates to regularly undertake public satisfaction surveys for their services	Ongoing	Nick Warren	- Regular public satisfaction surveys on complaints-handling carried out	Mapping of current process underway
Review process for Directorates to record what action is taken, if any, following satisfaction surveys regarding complaints	September 2009	Janice Hill Directorate Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistent process agreed by complaints group and signed-off by Personalisation & Engagement Board - Information on action taken to improve satisfaction is reported to POCs and Governance and Audit Committee as part of Annual Complaints reporting 	See above Group to work with Nick Warren
Review of how complaints equalities monitoring is working	September 2009	Directorate Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Information is sent out with acknowledgements -Equalities forms are kept separate from complaints -% received 	New system started 1 April 2009, to reviewed in September 2009
Performance information on complaints standards updated on kent.gov.uk complaints pages 6 monthly	Nov 2009	Directorate Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % achieved against standards Information published on kent.gov.uk 	Meeting in September 2009

By: Alan Marsh - Cabinet member for Public Health
Mark Lemon - Head of Public Health Policy

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee
25th September 2009

Subject: Kent Healthy Weight Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Obesity will soon overtake smoking as the biggest cause of premature death and long-term illnesses.

Unless we reverse the trend of increasing numbers of people being overweight or obese, children born today will have a life expectancy less than their parents for the first time in over 100 years.

Kent and Medway have the highest prevalence of obesity in the South East region and is above the national average.

Some people, often due to their economic and social circumstances have greater difficulty in acting on the advice they receive of taking up the opportunities to live healthier lifestyles than others.

Most people know the key public health messages and are fed up with being told what to do, especially if they are made to feel bad if they do not follow it.

KCC is directing a lot of effort at these problems and there is some excellent practice across the county. The strategy provides a coherent framework for this activity including the key targets that we are working towards.

Introduction

1. Maintaining a healthy weight is a crucial component of being healthy and avoiding many seriously debilitating illnesses and conditions. But despite people's best intentions this can be very difficult to attain in our modern society.
2. The causes of being overweight or obese are simple – eating or drinking more calories than we use in exercise, but their solutions are often complex. People may need help and support to achieve their aspirations. Children especially need to understand the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle to avoid problems in later life. Living in deprivation can also make it very difficult to take advantage of the choices and opportunities available and the Kent Regeneration Framework and the Health Inequalities Strategy will be crucial to addressing weight problems and other lifestyle issues in Kent.
3. We must also acknowledge that people in Kent are generally very aware that they should eat healthily, take more exercise, stop smoking and drink responsibly. They do not need to be lectured or made to feel that they have failed if they do not do always do these things and neither should people be pressured to change many things in their lives all at once. Young people especially tell us this very strongly.
4. The KCC Select Committee on obesity informed the production of a Healthy Weight Strategy by PCT colleagues that was drafted in the second half of last year. The strategy presented today is a higher level summary and distillation of that document which provides a framework for KCC and other organisations to work within when designing and planning interventions designed to address issues of healthy weight and promote healthier lifestyles.

The Kent Healthy weight Strategy

5. The Kent Healthy Weight Strategy outlines the main issues involved and why healthy weight is important for everyone involved in public health. These are:
 - Early prevention for weight problems
 - Promotion of healthier food choices
 - Building physical activity into our lives
 - Creating incentives for better health
 - Use of opportunities created by the KCC regeneration framework
 - Better messages for the public through the use of social marketing

6. The key priorities reflect those identified in the Foresight report and then incorporated in the DH Guidance - Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives. NICE have also issued guidance on how obesity and related matters should be addressed.
7. Aligning this activity with the priorities allows those involved to understand better the connections between the various interventions and how they can be effective. Future initiatives can also be planned and reconciled within the overall framework to ensure they complement and support other actions.
8. Much being done across KCC directorates and by our partners in the District Councils, Primary Care Trusts and Voluntary Sector to help people improve their diet and take more exercise. In the current economic climate we need to ensure that people understand that healthy living can be affordable and does not involve great expense on things like gym membership or playing organised sport. Many of the examples quoted in the strategy are demonstrations about how healthier living can be quite simply incorporated into anyone's lives in small ways by adapting what they do and without making major disruptive changes to their or their families, lives.
9. If the commitment already shown by KCC and its partners is maintained the people of Kent will have support and encouragement to achieve a healthy weight equal to that available anywhere else in the country.

Recommendations

10. Corporate POC are asked to endorse the Healthy Weight Strategy for Kent.

Background documents

- Kent Regeneration Framework
- Health Inequalities Strategy

Contact:

Mark Lemon
Head of Policy
Kent Public Health Department
Mark.lemon@kent.gov.uk
Tel: 01622 694853

This page is intentionally left blank

DRAFT

Kent

Healthy Weight Strategy

Version 11

Version	11
Author	Mark Lemon
Date	15/09/09

“We are a sport-loving nation but we are simply nowhere near as active as we should be. Promoting active lifestyles is the simple answer to many of the big challenges facing our country today. It can save us money and ease the burden on public services.”

Andy Burham

Health Secretary – 13/08/09

The Healthy Weight Strategy for Kent has 7 elements:

- Children, healthy growth and healthy weight
- Promotion of healthier food choices
- Building physical activity into our lives
- Creating incentives for better health
- Personalised advice and support
- Using opportunities in the KCC Regeneration Framework
- Making our messages more effective through social marketing

Introduction

Everyone wants to be healthy and maintaining a healthy weight is an increasingly important part of this aspiration.

In the past messages have tended to emphasise the health risks of being overweight or obese but many people do not relate to these. People nowadays tend to see the issue much more as one of fashion, body image and lifestyle choice. It may become a health issue when it leads to complications that are diagnosed as a medical condition.

Avoiding excess weight is much more difficult than it used to be. Changes in society and the way we live all conspire to make it far easier to put on weight than to lose it.

Our daily lives are far less physically active than they were, even in the recent past. Our jobs are less physically demanding, we drive rather than walk or cycle, and we spend far more of our leisure time in front of a TV screen or computer monitor.

We have far greater access to food, 24/7, and much of it is “fast” or “convenience” food with high fat, salt, and/or sugar content that is often hidden amongst other ingredients. We eat out far more often than previous generations and it is therefore more difficult to know exactly what is in the food we are consuming. Ready meals and processed food are often bought instead of home cooking from fresh ingredients and again the contents of the food may be difficult to control or understand.

Alcohol consumption has been rising steadily and this also contributes to people finding it difficult to manage their weight. The alcohol content of drinks has increased over time and with a single glass of wine containing 120 calories or more (alcohol’s calorie content being second only to pure fat in the average diet) the amount of exercise required to maintain a healthy weight also increases significantly with increased levels of alcohol drinking.

Biologically our bodies are programmed to store food as fat when there is an excess so that we do not starve when it is scarce. However, food is very rarely scarce in our society and losing any excess is hard.

Kent and Medway have the highest prevalence of obesity in the South East region and is above the national average.

Many people feel pressured by the media and advertising to be thin but this can be very difficult to achieve because of all the factors that conspire against people reaching their aspiration to have a healthy weight. This can in turn lead to a sense of failure, giving up and resignation that nothing can be done.

People who are disadvantaged by their economic and social circumstances often have greater difficulty in acting on the advice they receive or taking up the opportunities to live healthier lifestyles than others. This does not mean that their aspirations for themselves and their families are any less ambitious but they may

face greater barriers to achieving them. We must make sure that we understand these increased difficulties and work with people to overcome them or risk an increase in health inequalities between the poorer and the better off in Kent.

We should be trying to support the efforts people want to make for themselves and providing healthier opportunities for them to live the type of lives they wish to lead. We should use our resources to help people achieve their aspirations and support their choices by providing the environment, the economic conditions and the opportunities they need.

Kent has a very good record of doing just that but there is still more we can do.

Only 28% of Kent residents consume at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day with only 21% in Swale and Dartford.

Government momentum

The Department of Health strategy “Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: a Cross-Government Strategy for England” was published in 2008 following a Foresight Report on tackling obesity.

The “Foresight Report – Tackling Obesities: Future Choices – Project Report (2007) gave a comprehensive analysis of obesity and its causes. Whilst the basic issue is simple and straightforward - obesity is caused by an imbalance between energy input (what we eat and drink) and energy output (physical activity and exercise) - the relationship between the two is very complex involving many social and individual factors.

Healthy Weight Healthy Lives identified five major themes which taken together aim to tackle the obesity problem:

Children: healthy growth and healthy weight

Promoting healthier food choices

Building physical activity into our lives

Creating incentives for better health

Personalised advice and support

As a result major government initiatives have recently been launched including:

Change 4 Life is a major national campaign to tackle obesity across the whole population by increasing people’s awareness and giving practical examples of how activity and healthier lifestyles can be incorporated into busy lives.

Fit as a Fiddle is designed to improve the health of older people. Funded by the Big Lottery Fund it is delivered by Age Concern and their partners including local authorities and Primary Care Trusts.

NICE (The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) also publishes guidance on best practice to treat and prevent obesity.

All across Kent we also have many initiatives aimed at these priorities.

Children: healthy growth and healthy weight: *Early prevention of weight problems to avoid the “conveyor belt” effect into adulthood.*

A healthy start to life and helping children keep a healthy weight is probably the most effective way to prevent adult obesity. Lots of evidence shows that overweight children are much more likely to grow into overweight adults.

Good nutrition is especially important for children to maintain a healthy weight and this can start as the baby is developing during pregnancy. Once born the best way to give children a healthy start and avoid problems is breastfeeding for at least the first 6 months.

The West Kent PCT Strategic Commissioning Plan has targets to:

- Reduce obesity among primary school age children.
- Increase the percentage of infants breastfed at 6-8 weeks from 39% to 41% by 2011

Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT has commitments to:

- Reduce the rates of obesity, particularly children
- Increase breastfeeding rates of infants breastfed at 6-8 weeks to 80% by 2013

The Kent Agreement has a target to:

- Reduce Reception Year obesity amongst children

As children grow up good habits can be supported through early years and schools but, as Jamie Oliver discovered, unless these are continued at home they may have little effect. Children’s Centres, Surestart schemes and Healthy Living Centres all help parents understand how important good eating habits are and how to cook nutritious meals on a budget.

The Healthy Schools Programme emphasises all aspects of healthy living for children, including diet and exercise.

Some of what's happening in Kent –

Breastfeeding initiatives across the county to improve infant nutrition

Walk on Wednesdays in Thanet that has increased the percentage of children walking in one area from 48% to 80%

Healthy Schools 100% engaged across the county– helping all schoolchildren understand healthy eating and the importance of physical activity including the 2 hours PE and school sport target

Thousands of school children across the County involved in the Kent Schools Games programme

Physical activity classes for children in Maidstone

Swale have a number of sports and leisure schemes aimed at school children and families such as Skip to be Fit, Don't Sit-Get Fit, MEND, and Bus club

Promoting healthier food choices – *reducing the consumption of foods that are high in fat, sugar and salt and increasing the consumption of fruit and vegetables*

More and more of the food we eat is prepared in some way before we buy it. Whether from fast food outlets or microwaved at home, fewer meals are prepared and cooked from fresh ingredients than in previous generations. The skills and knowledge associated with home cooking are no longer as extensive as they were. Convenience often outweighs nutritional value in the food people choose.

Unfortunately convenient food is rarely very healthy food. It is often very high in calories and can contain large quantities of ingredients that we should eat sparingly, especially fat, sugar and salt. Whilst as an occasional treat this is fine a diet featuring large proportions of “junk” food can cause numerous problems that include putting on weight. Such a diet is also highly unlikely to include sufficient fruit and vegetables.

Alcohol consumption is also a significant contributor to many people's calorie intake. As alcohol consumption levels continue to grow, taking enough exercise to counteract the effects is more difficult.

Some of what's happening in Kent –

Refurbishment of school kitchens and strict dietary requirements for school meals improving nutrition in schools.

Bien etre project in Dover and Nord Pas de Calais helping families and children improve their diets.

House campaign (for 13-19 year olds), attracting young people to access a variety of health advice including healthy eating.

Community chefs in deprived areas demonstrating healthy eating on a budget and how to avoid unhealthy food choices.

Veg Bag schemes in East Kent and allotment projects

In Tunbridge Wells Food 4You, Grow It, Cook It, Eat It, and Looking 4Ward with Food all help people understand how to choose and cook a healthy diet.

The Kent Alcohol strategy will be launched in October 2009

Building physical activity into our lives – *getting people moving as a normal part of their day*

Many people are far more sedentary than in the past. Working lives require less physical effort as computers replace machinery. Heavy industry has declined massively. Labour saving devices in the home have put paid to much of the physical graft of housework. Cars are much more common and walking and cycling are not part of most people's day to day lives as they used to be. Lifts are obvious in public buildings, stairs are often hidden. Children play indoors on games consoles and less outside in physically active games. In addition everyone is very busy and trying to fit in an allocated time for exercise can be very difficult.

Taking exercise doesn't have to be about donning lycra and pumping iron at the gym. Physical activity can include gardening, walking to work, using the stairs, housework and DIY, anything that causes moderate physical exertion.

Some of what's happening in Kent –

The Kent Cycling Strategy designed to increase the number of people cycling and other transport initiatives to promote walking and cycling

Countryside Access Improvement Plan that emphasises the use of Kent's green spaces for active recreation including Green gyms, walking, cycling and riding.

Naturally Active has attracted over 400 people in Dartford and Gravesham

Health Walks that regularly attract hundreds of people across Kent to walk for leisure.

ActivMobs – working with people in communities to help them develop physical activity that fits into their particular lifestyles.

Get Active Feel Alive initiative in Canterbury

Don't Sit, Get Fit programmes in Dartford and Gravesham

Free swimming for the over 60's in East Kent districts

Creating incentives for better health - *Increasing the understanding and value people place on the long-term impact of decisions.*

Most people aspire to be healthy, for themselves and their families. They may have celebrity role models that are slim and fit. Many people are now also very aware of what they should and shouldn't do to reach this aspiration. But somehow it is too difficult to change how they live to achieve what they want.

Fast food, cigarettes, alcohol, watching TV (singly or in any combination) can give an almost immediate feeling of satisfaction to those that enjoy them. In contrast public health messages have often focussed on things that are hard to do, need people to change their habits and customs drastically within busy lives and show rewards only after prolonged periods of effort. Helping people to understand why they should change what they do requires much more than giving them information. We have to be much more in tune with the way people live their lives and the opportunities and barriers to healthier living this presents. We must talk to people in more sophisticated so they can make use of information and knowledge in ways that make sense to them.

This approach which includes the principles of Social Marketing has been shown to be very successful in reaching people in initiatives such as Activmobs and HOUSE.

Some of what's happening in Kent –

Health Trainers – assisting and supporting healthy living for individuals and communities in Kent.

MEND (Mind Exercise Nutrition ...Do it!!!) healthy lifestyle programmes for children and families across North Kent and expanding elsewhere in the county.

Shape Up weight management programme in Sevenoaks

Health Action Gravesham offers cooking sessions with dietary/nutrition advice, a physical activity instructor for those in sheltered accommodation and residential homes and a young people's programme that works in schools, after school and out of school times running weekly swimming sessions.

Personalised advice and support - *Complementing preventative care with treatment for those who already have weight problems.*

Achieving a healthy weight is not easy and many people will need help even when they are strongly motivated. There are a number of treatments, some of which, like gastric banding, involve surgery, that can help people lose weight but individual support and assistance can be critically important for people to succeed in the longer term.

Some of what's happening in Kent –

The Expert Patient Programme helps those with long-term conditions learn from the experience of others

Pharmacy weight-management programmes

GP Lifestyle referrals

The Brighter Futures group supports people aged over 75 in poor housing or on low incomes with services delivered by volunteers including exercise classes and healthy lifestyle advice

Telehealth and Telecare – the Whole Systems Demonstrator project

Health Trainers

Get S.O.R.T.ed in Sevenoaks

Why Weight Plan – Sevenoaks

NHS Life Checks (Vascular Screening)

Brighter Futures

All of this activity means that a lot is already being done across the county to respond to the challenges issued by the government in “Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives”. Unfortunately the sheer size of the problem means we need to do more. This does not necessarily mean spending a lot more money, but it does mean supporting the successful ways of helping people manage their weight to prevent the more expensive consequences of not doing so.

The Facts and Figures

Obesity and issues of over-weight are set to become the major cause of premature death and avoidable illness in the near future.

- The National Child Measurement Programme for 2006-2007 reported that 23% of reception year children and 31% of those in Year 6 were obese or overweight.
- It is forecast that by 2020 20% of boys and 33% of girls will be obese if current trends are maintained.
- Life expectancy at birth will also be less than their parents for children born now, for the first time for over 100 years.
- Only 38% of men and 27% of women are physically active at the recommended levels.

Being obese or over-weight markedly increases the chances of suffering a number of life threatening and debilitating conditions such as:

Type 2 diabetes
High cholesterol
Sleep apnoea
Coronary heart disease
Hypertension
Stroke
Osteoarthritis
Gout

The amount of disease associated with obesity is estimated to cost £ 4.5 billion per year for treatment, cost of premature death and sickness absence. These figures are set to rise dramatically if present trends continue.

The overall cost of inactivity and its effects are estimated at £8.2 billion. If all sedentary people took light exercise, like walking, rates of Coronary Heart Disease could decrease by 14%.

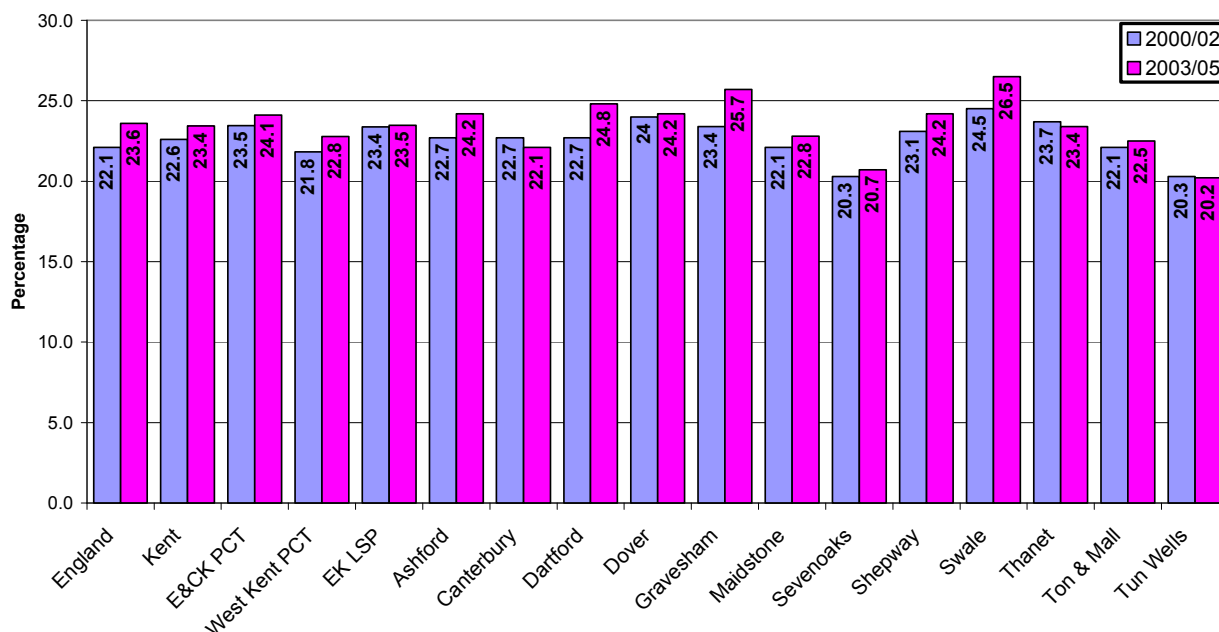
The NHS spends £3,000 every minute on combating illness which could be prevented by physical activity. A modest increase in physical activity amongst older people could cut hip fractures by one per cent, saving us more than £200 million a year. A 20 per cent increase in cycling would save the NHS more than £50 million in treatments.

The Kent Picture:

- Between 20% – 25% of the population is obese (taking a Body Mass Index of 30 as a measure).
- Kent and Medway have the highest prevalence of obesity in the South East region and is above the national average.
- The prevalence of obesity and overweight combined is marginally lower than the national average.
- Rates of obesity are increasing amongst all social classes although there is greater prevalence in areas of deprivation.
- Only 28% of Kent residents consume at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day with only 21% in Swale and Dartford.

The chart below shows the estimated proportion of the Kent population who are obese by local authority and PCT area taken from the ONS synthetic estimates of lifestyle behaviours. Swale and Dover are estimated to have the highest adult obesity rates. There is also a strong relationship between obesity and deprivation in Kent with higher levels of deprivation related to higher levels of estimated obesity.

Synthetic Lifestyle Estimates for Obesity in Adults for 2000/02 & 2003/05



Source: Kent Public Health Observatory – Kent Agreement 2

These figures are the most recent published by the Department of Health derived from the Health Survey for England. We are awaiting more up to date information but expect that new figures will show a further deterioration.

The percentage of adults (aged 16 or over) who are obese (BMI>30) across Kent has risen during the period 2000-2002 and 2003-2005 to 23.4%.

Highest prevalence figures are seen in Swale, Gravesham and Dartford. Lowest prevalence figures are in Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells.

The national estimate is derived directly from the Health Surveys for England and therefore is not a synthetic estimate.

The Future

Tackling obesity is now a major priority in public health and a great deal of activity has been focussed by KCC, the PCTs and the District Councils in Kent on the issue. The KCC Select Committee on obesity reported in 2006 and made 13 detailed recommendations. Recommendations concerning obesity have been incorporated into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children and Young People and many actions to address obesity by KCC and district councils are described in the Health Inequalities Action Plan.

However, with increasing rates of overweight and obesity despite local and government initiatives more action is required.

The DPH Annual report 06/07 recommended:

- The wide range of good practice being undertaken in Kent be sustained and evaluated so as to develop intermediate indicators which assure us that, over time, the good practice will impact upon the prevalence of obesity in Kent. While Kent is delivering on national targets and has funded many innovative pilots, particularly in areas of deprivation, it is important to assess the probability and degree of these providing a positive change to predicted future health patterns.
- As the PCTs are committed to investing in obesity prevention, the expected attributable morbidity prevented should be estimated and evaluated for outcomes.
- The benefits of effective partnership working be calculated and expressed in consolidation of existing partnerships and development of new ones to address the wider determinants of health and their impact on obesity.
- As we broaden our evidence-based practice to ensure that the most effective interventions are supported and resourced we estimate the effects of each on specific segments of the target population.
- We develop with our partners' common aims and objectives, and ensure that we benchmark the shared information, knowledge and resources and set targets for improvement.
- Kent's commitment to improving our population's health through development and investment in changing our 'obesogenic' environment to reduce levels of obesity in children and adults, be summarised in plans and population targets.

Kent is already recognising the importance of promoting good diet and exercise in its strategies and policies.

The KCC Framework for Regeneration "Unlocking Kent's Potential": In designing communities, we will encourage walking and cycling and healthy leisure activities such as sport and the enjoyment of the countryside.

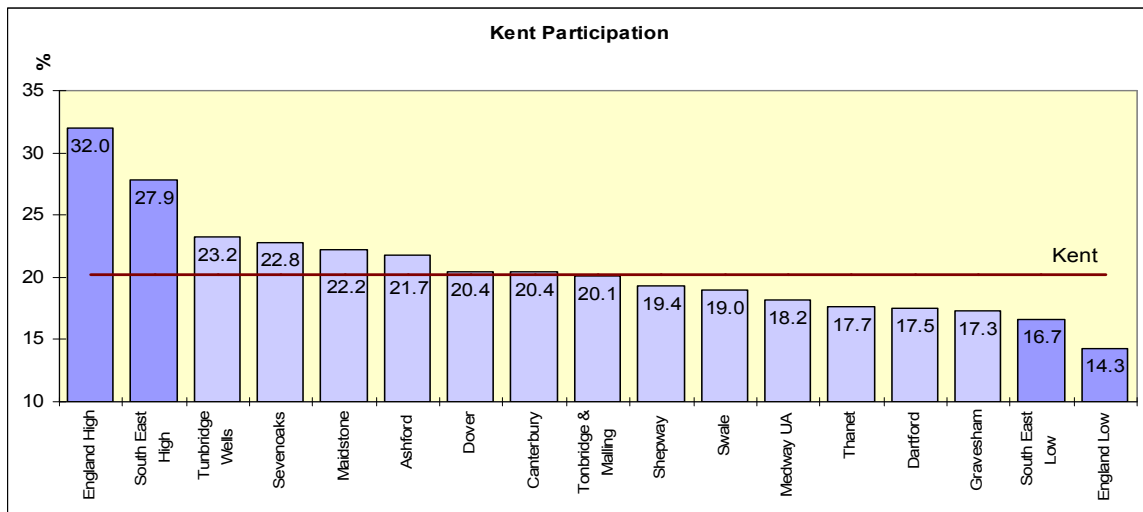
The Kent Agreement

The Kent Agreement also has a clear focus of attention on weight management and obesity.

Tackling obesity and weight issues are reflected in the latest Kent Agreement where a number of indicators are designed to promote interventions that help people achieve a healthy weight. These include:

National Indicator (NI) 8: Adult participation in sport and active recreation.

Active People Survey – baseline information by district

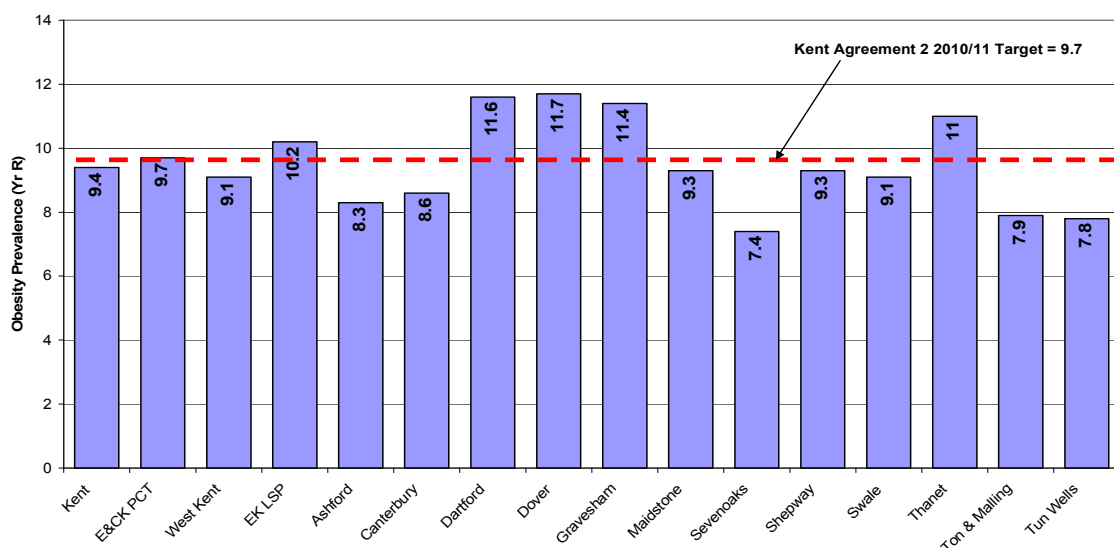


Source: Kent Public Health Observatory – Kent Agreement 2

The Kent Disability Sport Strategy builds on the enthusiasm of people with disabilities to engage in sport and active leisure when it is made accessible and inclusive. Research suggests that whilst there is a greater prevalence of obesity amongst adults with disabilities (24.9%) than the general population (15.1%) weight loss within this group can be as dramatic as within any other, given the right advice and support. The Kent Outdoor Pursuits Disability Project is now working with 7,000 people with disabilities and offers dedicated support and tuition in an increasing variety of sports and activities.

NI 55: Reception year obesity

Childhood Obesity in Reception Year by Area - Baseline year 2006/07



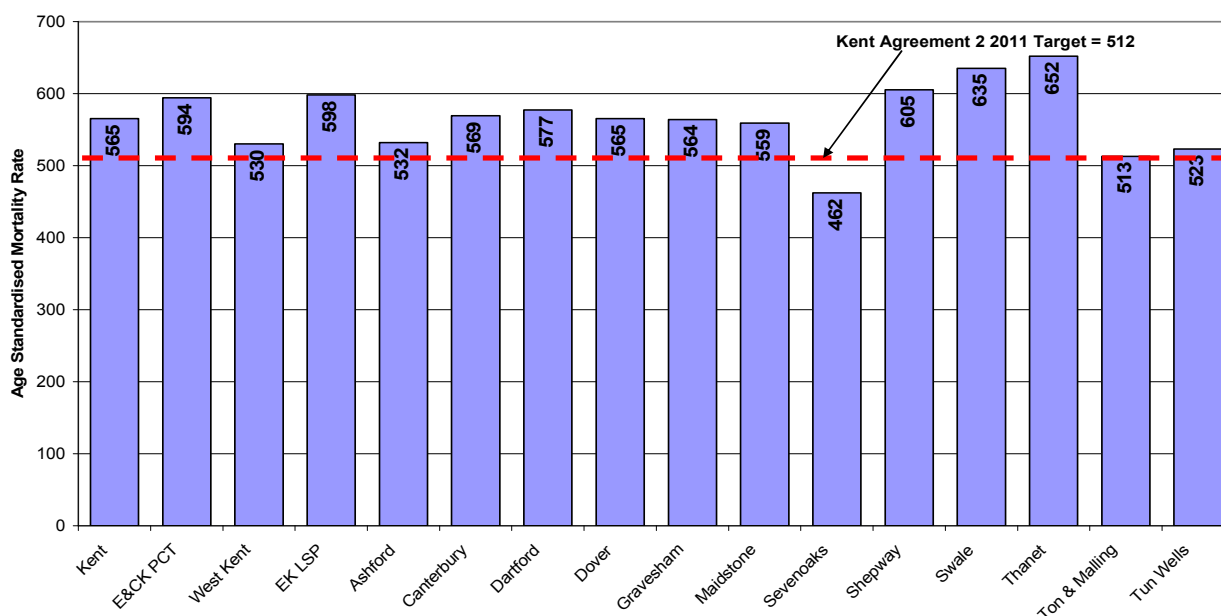
Source: Kent Public Health Observatory – Kent Agreement 2

The national prevalence in obesity for reception year children is slightly higher than the Kent prevalence at 9.9%. However, the South East Coast SHA area prevalence is lower at just 8.5%.

Please note that the recording of this data in its first year was difficult (particularly with parents and children opting out of being measured) the prevalences above are indicative as compliance rates were not always high (e.g. Swale only had a 26% compliance rate, so, the prevalence figure above is based on only a quarter of the population that could have been measured and therefore could go up when more children are measured).

NI 120: All age, all cause mortality

Directly Age-Standardised All Age All Cause Mortality - Baseline year 2006



Source: Kent Public Health Observatory – Kent Agreement 2

The age standardised rate for all age all cause mortality for England is higher than that of Kent at 591 per 100,000.

The rate is South East Coast SHA area is slightly lower than Kent at 549 per 100,000.

Get Active South East is part of a regional framework designed to increase levels of physical activity and promote opportunities presented by the 2012 Olympics and their legacy. This plan complements those of KCC and others that use the impetus of the Olympic Games to raise the profile of physical activity and sport for all.

In Kent – **Get Active in Kent** adds a local dimension to the regional programme and Change 4 Life to promote sport and active recreation.

Kent is a Beacon Authority for sport and has leading initiatives around the 2010 Olympics and its legacy.

In addition both PCTs and their partners have a clear focus on health inequalities including partnership projects aimed at weight management.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation and development of actions on obesity will be monitored through the 12 district based Health and Wellbeing Partnerships or Health Action Teams with the Public Health Board giving strategic oversight.

The **Kent & Medway Public Health Observatory** brings together data and information from a range of sources such as PCTs and Local Authorities to provide a comprehensive picture of issues such as obesity across the area. The information and analysis the Observatory provides will be major benefit to understanding how obesity is affecting the people of Kent.

Other information will be gleaned from initiatives such as the National Vascular screening programme which includes the EK Vascular initiative which will target prevention in areas of greatest need with a focus on smoking and obesity through vascular and Triple Aim screening.

The key Kent Agreement Targets will be monitored through the various subgroups of the Kent Partnership including the Public Health Board.

References:

DH - Healthy Weight Healthy Lives (2008)
KCC Select Committee Report on Obesity (2006)
Kent JSNA Children and Young People (2008)
KCC Health Inequalities Action Plan (2007)
Kent DPH Annual Report (2007)
Get Active South East (2008)
Kent Lifestyle Survey (CHSS 2005)
Kent Disability Sport Strategy (KCC 2008)
A Healthy Weight Strategy for Kent (2008)

NICE Clinical Guideline CG43 Obesity (2006)

NICE Public Health Guidance:

Four commonly used methods to increase physical activity (2006)
Maternal and child nutrition (2008)
Physical activity and the environment (2008)
Promoting physical activity in the workplace (2008)

NICE Guidance – how planning can influence healthy choices.

Children and Young persons plan and JSNA

This page is intentionally left blank

By: **The KCC Environment Board**
 Alex King, Deputy Leader and Chairman of Climate Change Cabinet Working Group) Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee 25th September 2009

Subject: A summary of progress in delivery of KCC's environmental commitments including climate change and the implementation of the KCC Environment Policy – 6 Monthly Update.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper provides a six monthly update of KCC's progress in fulfilling its sustainability and climate change commitments, including implementation of the KCC Environment Policy and the Kent Environment Strategy.

Recommendation: That Members:

- a. Note and discuss progress to date
- b. Discuss and agree the approach in the best way of engaging Members

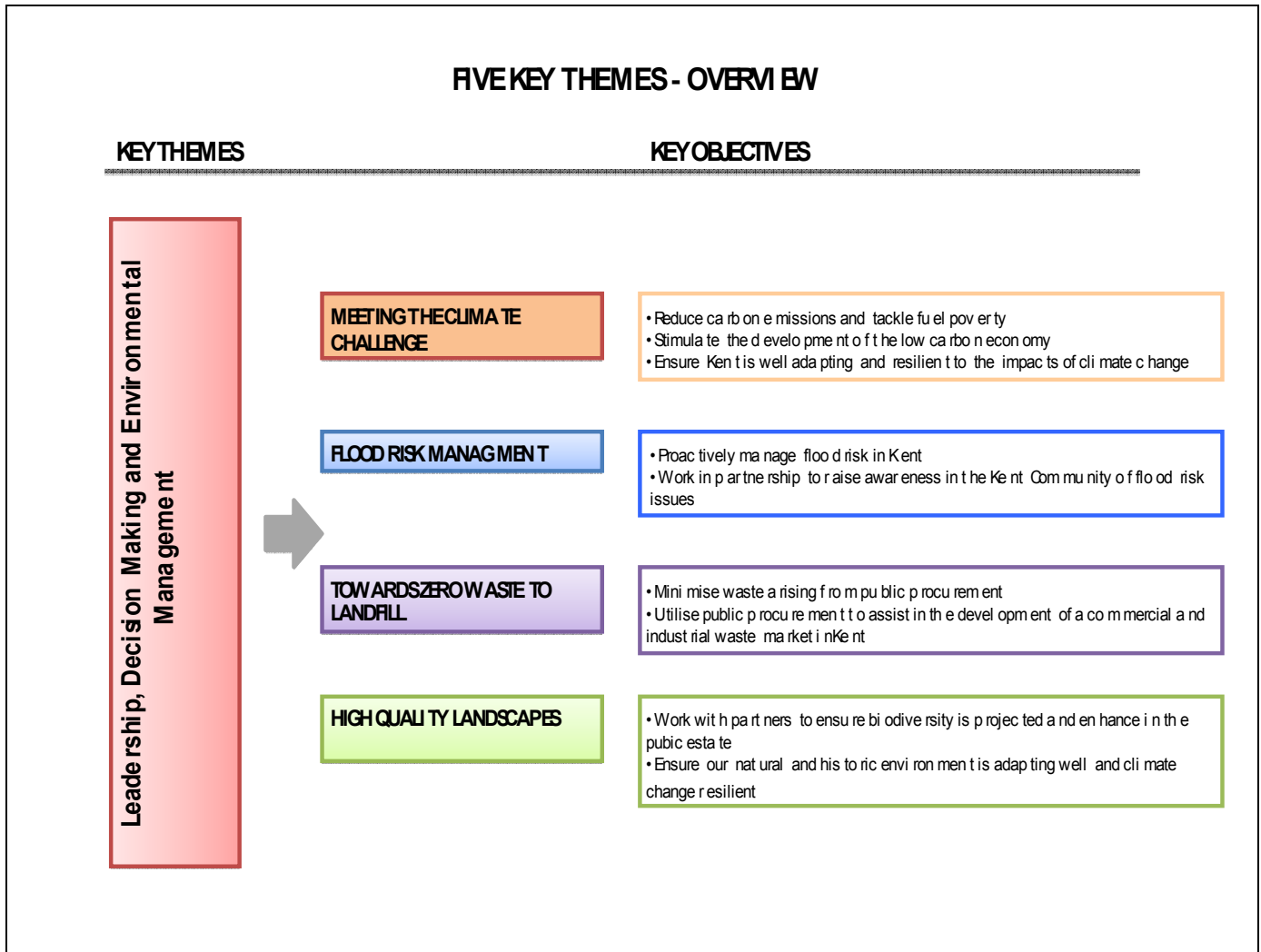
1. Introduction

- 1.1. The KCC Sustainability and Climate Change team are required on behalf of the KCC Environment Board and Climate Change Cabinet Working Group to report to each individual Policy Overview Committee (POC) on a six monthly basis regarding the progress in delivery of KCC's sustainability and climate change commitments, including implementation of the KCC Environment Policy. The last report to this POC was in March 2009 and provided a full summary of progress. This paper updates Members on the significant developments and new initiatives and opportunities since then.
- 1.2. Annex 1 illustrates the key policy and legislative drivers for KCC. A more detailed summary of the policy context can be found in the March 2009 POC Paper. A significant recent development is the launch of the Governments 'Low Carbon Transition Plan' which outlines how the Government is planning to meet its climate change commitments.
- 1.3. KCC's current programme of activity focusing on Five Themes has been informed by our own local priorities as well as national policy and legislative drivers. Five themes underpin our local approach:
 - Theme 1 – Leadership, Decision Making and Environmental Management
 - Theme 2 – Meeting the Climate Challenge
 - Theme 3 – Flood Risk Management
 - Theme 4 – Towards Zero Waste to Landfill
 - Theme 5 – High Quality Landscapes

Figure 1 summarises the current approach.

1.4. There are significant challenges in maintaining momentum on this agenda in the face of the economic recession and a shrinking public purse. Reduction of carbon emissions, as well as ensuring KCC and Kent is well adapting to climate change and primed to take advantage of any emerging low carbon economy opportunities' will remain the main focus of the programme, and indeed is interrelated with all five of the themes.

Figure 1 – Key Themes



2. Significant Developments in 2009

- ISO14001 accreditation – Since the last meeting of this Committee in March, KCC has achieved full accreditation to ISO1400, one of very few County Councils in the UK and certainly the largest. The task now will be to embed the system in decision making processes and mainstream into everyday business, as well as incorporating climate risk priorities.
- Procurement – KCC were successful in winning European funding worth some £400k for its Low Carbon Economy project to support the KCC business supply chain in making environmental efficiency savings and carbon reductions. This project will mean working with Kent businesses to improve their competitiveness and access new business opportunities in an increasingly environmentally aware market and economy.

- The Kent Carbon Hub – with this European funding KCC also has the capacity to develop an online support system to enable businesses to assess their carbon footprint, access additional targeted support and network with other like minded businesses through the use of a ‘Facebook’ style networking tool. The Kent Carbon Hub will help business improve their competitive performance and to show case their achievements and provide signposting to new economic opportunities.
- Kent Local Climate Change Impacts Profile for Kent (LCCLIP) – KCC undertook a broad brush Local Climate Change Impacts Profile (LCCLIP) in 2007, which examined the possible impacts of climate change such as severe weather events on Kent in the coming years. Through accessing funding from Improvement and Efficiency South East (EISE) KCC is now working with all 12 Kent Districts to turn the pilot project into a much more detailed Kent wide approach. KCC are one of only a few authorities taking such a comprehensive, cutting edge approach. The results of the study will be available this autumn.
- Coreflo – Through funding from the Environment Agency, KCC has secured a one year post to work with businesses to help them identify flood risks and prepare for future flooding events to minimise damage and loss of business. This post will be located in KCC but will work very closely with the Environment Agency, Business Support Kent and the Business Link programme.

3. Specific Progress and the Role of the Chief Executive’s Department

- 3.1. The Chief Executive’s Department (CED) continue to play a leading role in driving this agenda forward. The CED Climate Change Programme sits with the wider KCC Sustainability and Climate Change Team in the Environment and Waste Division and is responsible for coordinating the Climate Change Programme for Kent and leading on the Kent Local Climate Change Impacts Profile.
- 3.2. Significant carbon and financial savings continue to be made through the Energy Water Investment Fund (EWIF), in which Laser, Property and Facilities Management play a key role. Powerperfector voltage reduction technology was successfully installed in Sessions House with predicted 9% reduction in energy usage. Further lighting controls have been installed in Invicta House.
- 3.3. Green ICT - KCC is investing in new data centres and server virtualisation which will deliver considerable energy savings. The uninterruptible power supply and air conditioning in the Sessions House machine room have been replaced to increase capacity to enable the server virtualisation work which will be more energy efficient together with a new, more efficient generator being installed by the end of the year.
- 3.4. BT Meet Me - an initiative designed to increase the use of teleconferencing has been piloted across KCC and will be rolled out this autumn and should provide significant carbon and financial savings.
- 3.5. ISO14001 - CED continues to improve on their progress under the ISO14001 programme and the department is currently developing a number of initiatives which will be reported in the end of year report.

4. Communication and Member Engagement

- 4.1. A formal Corporate Environmental Report linked to the ISO14001 programme is currently being produced and will be put on KNET in the autumn. This document will bring together KCC's overall progress in this area, and set out the next 3 years activity plan.
- 4.2. Specific climate change information and communications can be found on KNET and Kent Connects www.kentconnects.gov.uk/climatechange. A senior decision makers climate change pack has also been produced and will be published on KNET and Kent Connects this autumn.
- 4.3. The KCC Climate Change Cabinet Working Group, comprising Alex King (Chair), Nick Chard (EHW) and Kevin Lynes (E&R) meets as needed, usually on a quarterly or six monthly basis and provides a strong steer to the Climate Change Programme. The Programme as a whole is steered by the KCC Environment Board.
- 4.4. More targeted Member training and engagement initiatives, including the possibility of setting up a broader Member Group, are being considered. Feedback from Members of this Committee on how best to keep Members informed and engaged in this agenda will shape this future work.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. Kent County Council continues to make good progress towards the implementation of the KCC Environment Policy and achievement of KCC's sustainability and climate change commitments. However, significant challenges do remain, and every effort will be need to maintain momentum and make the step change approach needed if KCC is to continue to deliver on its commitments.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a. Note and discuss progress to date
- b. Discuss and agree the best approach for engaging Members in the environmental and climate change agenda.

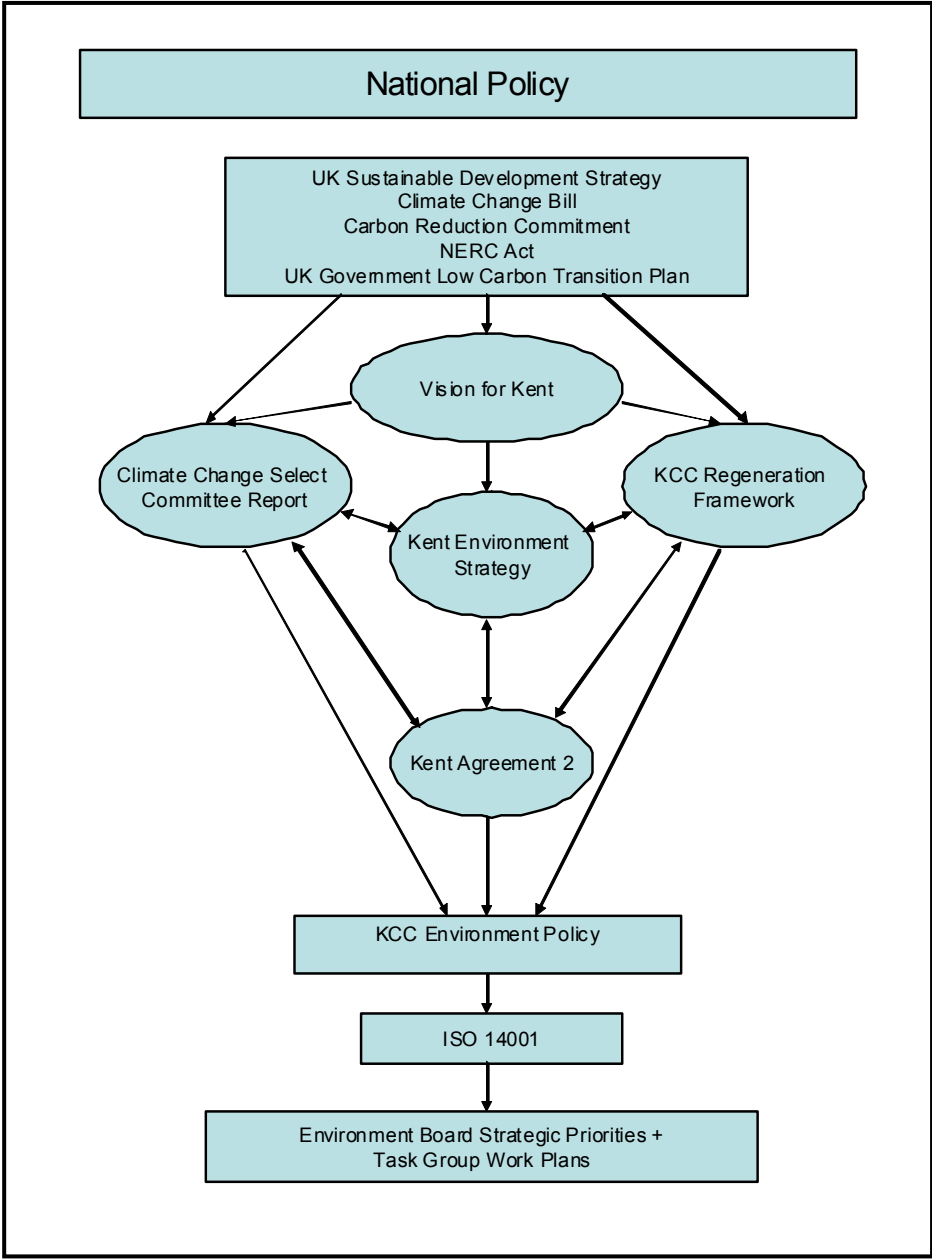
Lead officer contact:

Carolyn McKenzie Extension 1916
Greener Kent Manager
Environment, Highways and Waste

Background Papers:

- CED POC Paper – September 2008, March 2009.

Annex 1: Current Policy and Legislative Context.



Annex 2: KCC's Environment Policy

Kent County Council Environment Policy

At Kent County Council, elected members and staff alike recognise that protection and enhancement of the environment is the key to sustaining a high quality of life in Kent. We recognise that our own activities have an impact on the environment, that we have a responsibility to ensure that these impacts are positive, and that our use of natural resources is minimised.

Our vision

To stabilise and progressively reduce our environmental footprint; to progressively reduce our carbon dioxide emissions and make sure our estate and services are adapted to the future impacts and opportunities of climate change; and to contribute positively to Kent's character, local environmental quality and natural environment

We will do this by applying an evidence led approach to sustainability, identifying the potential for cost savings wherever possible and committing to environmental policies and standards in the following areas:

Our decisions

We will:

- Expect every manager and decision-maker in KCC to demonstrate how they comply with this Policy
- Integrate environmental considerations into our strategic and day-to-day decision-making processes, and give significant weight to them where they conflict with other objectives
- Assess key decisions for their environmental impact, taking a pragmatic whole-life-cost view, and use such assessments to fully inform decision-making
- 'Climate proof' decisions to ensure they reduce our contribution to climate change and help us prepare for the impacts and opportunities of unavoidable climate change, including where appropriate enabling biodiversity and coastal areas to adapt to climate change in line with the KCC Climate Change Action Plan
- Continue to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and statutory duties
- Seek to embrace new environmental technology and methodologies to ensure we are at the leading edge of developments and solutions, within a well-managed risk-analysis and cost-benefit framework

Our estate

We will:

- Reduce energy use within our estate to meet carbon reduction targets of 10% by 2010 and 20% by 2015
- Increase the proportion of the energy needs of our existing estate met from renewable sources
- Reduce water use by 7.5% by 2010 across our estate
- Reduce waste generation across our estate by 10% by 2010, and increase the proportion of our corporate waste which is reused or recycled to 50% by 2010
- Maximise the efficient use of land in our Estate by reusing previously developed land and buildings wherever practical, before using greenfield land.

- Protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, the natural and historic environment within both our buildings and open space, including measures that support climate change adaptation
- Minimise light, noise, air and other forms of pollution arising from our estate
- Ensure KCC-owned highways comply with the relevant parts of this Policy

Our travel and transport

We will:

- Reduce our members and employees' need to travel, including through our estate strategy, locations selected for council events, use of public transport, teleconferencing and other sustainable solutions
- Achieve reductions in total business mileage travelled by employees, encourage greater car sharing and other sustainable solutions, without adversely affecting end-user service delivery
- Promote the use of fuel efficient vehicles and technologies through our vehicle fleet and lease car scheme

Our procurement

We will:

- Increase the proportion of goods and services sourced locally where there are environmental or employment benefits and in compliance with broader UK and EU purchasing legislation
- Work with our suppliers to ensure that they are taking action to reduce the environmental impacts of their businesses
- Identify those goods, including timber and paper, which can be obtained from certified sustainable sources and ensure that these supplies are used
- Work with suppliers to develop markets for environmental technologies, goods and services

Our construction

We will:

- Meet high standards of sustainable construction in all new KCC buildings and refurbishments, and in all developments on KCC-owned land. The BREEAM 'very good'/Code for Sustainable Buildings level 3 or equivalent standard is required as a minimum
- Require all new KCC buildings and refurbishments to assess the feasibility of developing on-site renewable energy to help meet energy needs
- Ensure that our estate and roads are planned and managed in ways which minimise the risk of flooding and do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Seek to avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity and comply with policy and legislative requirements

Our workforce

We will:

- Ensure that our members and employees understand the implications of environmental legislation and regulation, and exceed minimum environmental standards where possible
- Ensure that environmental awareness is raised and good environmental behaviour encouraged through our corporate training, performance appraisal and reward strategies
- Raise awareness of how to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and statutory duties

Our leadership role in the community

We will:

- Lead Kent's communities to a better understanding of the importance of our environment and help them value and enhance the environment locally and globally
- Set out and deliver a vision of environmental excellence with our partners in the Kent Partnership through regular review and implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy

We will set out detailed action plans and guidance for delivery of these commitments, so that colleagues across KCC have a clear basis for decision-making.

This Policy is owned by the KCC Environment Board who may choose to call decision-makers to account for compliance with these commitments and escalate as necessary to the Leader and Chief Executive. Any proposed exceptions to this Policy will need to provide a sound business case based on whole-life economic, social and environmental costs and benefits.

Kent County Council's Corporate Environmental Performance Group will oversee provision of advice and support, monitoring and reporting. In particular, the Group will lead embedding of these commitments in ISO14001 accreditation for the County Council as a whole by 2010. The Group will report via the KCC Environment Board to the Leader and Chief Executive.



Paul Carter
Leader

Peter Gilroy
Chief Executive

Published December 2007. This Policy and its successful implementation will be reviewed annually by the KCC Environment Board, escalating any changes as necessary to the Leader and Chief Executive.

By: Roger Gough, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Support Services & Performance Management
Jane Clarke, Head of Communications

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee – 25 September 2009

Subject: Communicating with Kent Residents

At the March 2009 Corporate Policy Overview Committee Jane Clarke gave a presentation on how we will communicate with Kent residents in the next five years. This paper gives an update on progress we have made over the last six months.

A more responsive website

Since April we have been working on a project to make the website more useful and responsive to Kent residents. An investment of £750,000 has allowed us:

- to test with the public just how easy the website is to use
- commission a contemporary and accessible new look for the website
- make it easier for people to complete the most popular or important tasks

The newly designed home page will have a *Do it online* section. This will list the things people can do online such as pay for things, report faults, apply for services, ask questions or watch film clips. There will be a comprehensive Your Questions Answered section which will list the 20 top questions that Kent residents ask and clear and accessible answers will be given to these questions.

The current website has 8,000 pages. We are working with all the Directorates to make sure that all these pages are reviewed and made easier to understand. By 31 March 2010 all pages on the website will have been reviewed. See **Appendix One** for further details on the three phases of this project.

A single Kent wide publication for the public sector

Currently KCC produces the *Around Kent* magazine twice a year. This is sent to every household in Kent – 630,000 copies. The twelve District Councils also produce their own magazines several times a year and the Police and NHS frequently communicate with residents with bespoke leaflets and newsletters. We spoke about the desirability of pulling this effort together to save resources.

For the autumn/winter edition of *Around Kent* we have joined forces with Dover and Swale District Councils and created district specific versions of the magazine. See the cover copies of the magazines attached. We have asked

for feedback and will see how well the joint magazines are received by their readers.

However it became clear during this pilot that it is labour intensive to create District specific versions. It may be a better route for KCC to join forces in our magazine with other county wide public services like the Police; Kent Fire and Rescue and the NHS.

A reduction in the number of publications produced by KCC

We are working closely with the Directorate Resource Directors to reduce the number of publications KCC produces. We have created a publications spreadsheet which allows us to monitor publication activity. The information in the spreadsheet helps Resource Directors decide if a publication is really necessary and if it needs to be printed or can be published electronically. This is helping us reduce the amount we spend on publications.

Press releases which contain sound and video clips

Four press officers and one support officer have now been trained to use video cameras so that they can produce short film and sound clips to send out with the traditional press releases. These are usually around a minute in duration. Our thanks go to Kent TV for training the press officers.

To date we have issued six video press notices: two on Channel hop activities; a feature on our climate change picture competition; one on our social worker recruitment campaign in Boston; an interview with Rosalind Turner as part of the recruitment of two CFE Director posts and coverage of the delegation from the Chinese Guangzhou Municipality who visited KCC to learn how we run our personnel department.

We have carried sound clip interviews with students in our coverage of this year's A' level and GCSE results.

Use of social media by KCC

Social media is the collective name for a range of web based tools which are used for communicating and engaging with a range of people. The real value of social media is in the ability for individuals and communities to express their opinions, share thoughts and ideas, images and videos. The tools connect people to each other and allow conversations to happen (often in real time) without restrictions.

These tools present many opportunities for KCC as well as having some risks attached. There are many different social media tools and brands and they each have different purposes, audiences and ways to engage. To date we have only used one of these - Twitter.

Twitter

Twitter is used to send short updates (maximum 200 characters) to a group of followers. KCC has been using Twitter since April. By 15 September 2009, KCC had 687 followers of its Twitter site. The site has proved a useful way of making information available to the general public and to the media.

The first KCC Twitter update, or Tweet, took place in April and 302 messages have been posted so far. On 12 May, the advantages of Twitter as a communication tool to use in emergency situations became clear.

During the incident at a school in Minster, when a heating duct fell from the ceiling, Twitter provided a way for KCC to keep parents and media organisations informed of what was happening, to pass on reassurance and advice that people could trust. It also eased some of the pressure on the media centre as some of the dozens of phone calls that would have come in were answered by the hourly Twitter updates.

In fact, by using Twitter this way, The Guardian newspaper was able to cover the incident without making contact with the media centre – while still getting KCC's message across. The approach was also recognised in the Local Government Chronicle magazine, which highlighted the value of getting messages to the media and the public at the same time, rather than relying on one to tell the other.

Understanding our public – the Kent & Medway Citizens' Panel

In partnership with the Kent Messenger Group, KCC has established a new *Kent and Medway Citizens' Panel*, enabling us to seek the views of a large number of Kent residents aged 16 or over. The Panel marks a first in that it is the only citizens' panel in the country to be run jointly by a local newspaper and a local authority.

Last year two surveys were undertaken, the initial benchmark and recruitment survey and a subsequent snapshot survey. Results from these have been used to inform subsequent policy development, such as the *Backing Kent Business* and *Backing Kent People* campaigns. The Panel was also used earlier in 2009 to canvas the opinion of the public on KCC's ideas for the Sustainable Communities Act.

Membership of the Panel currently stands at around 700, which is still some way below the intended target of 5000 by 2011. KCC will continue to recruit new members in 2009/10. In the meantime we can survey up to 6,000 Kent residents as a result of our partnership with MORI who are developing the Citizens' Panel with us.

An interactive chamber

No action has been taken on this in the last six months. However we have discussed the idea of holding a public debate in the Council Chamber on a

subject of strong interest to Kent residents. If we proceed with this idea it would give us an opportunity to see if we can build in an interactive element i.e. ask people watching the debate to email in comments and questions. More work is needed on this idea.

The main obstacle to good communication with our residents

The greatest obstacle to good clear communication with our residents is the use of language by officers across KCC. Jargon, heavy use of acronyms and technical language are routinely used, even when we are communicating with the public. Let us give you one small example. An officer said vegetation had been installed. He meant trees had been planted.

A great deal of the material produced for the KCC website, for example, has an inward looking focus – the organisation explaining itself to itself. The website is our window on the world. It is where we tell Kent residents about the services we provide. Officers writing for the website need to put themselves in the shoes of the public and ask is this clear enough? Is this easy to understand and to use? Website material is written by officers from all the directorates. As stated before there are 8,000 pages and the communication and media team cannot check all these pages.

We held five workshops in June and July for the many colleagues at KCC who do some aspects of communication work. We made this point about use of language strongly and many colleagues agreed with our goal of making all communications – website pages and publications easier to understand. We will continue to challenge difficult and opaque language at KCC.

Attached:

Appendix One – the three phases of the website project

Three front pages of Around Kent autumn/winter 2009

APPENDIX ONE – the three phases of the website project

The website development will be completed in three phases.

Phase 1 will be completed by 2 November 2009 and will include:

- a contemporary and accessible design
- accurate and up-to-date information
- Kent TV film clips
- Interactive features - Bookmark your favourite pages, Your questions answered, subscribe to a page, searching for and posting events on the Kent TV events site

Phase 2 will be completed by 31 March 2010 and will include:

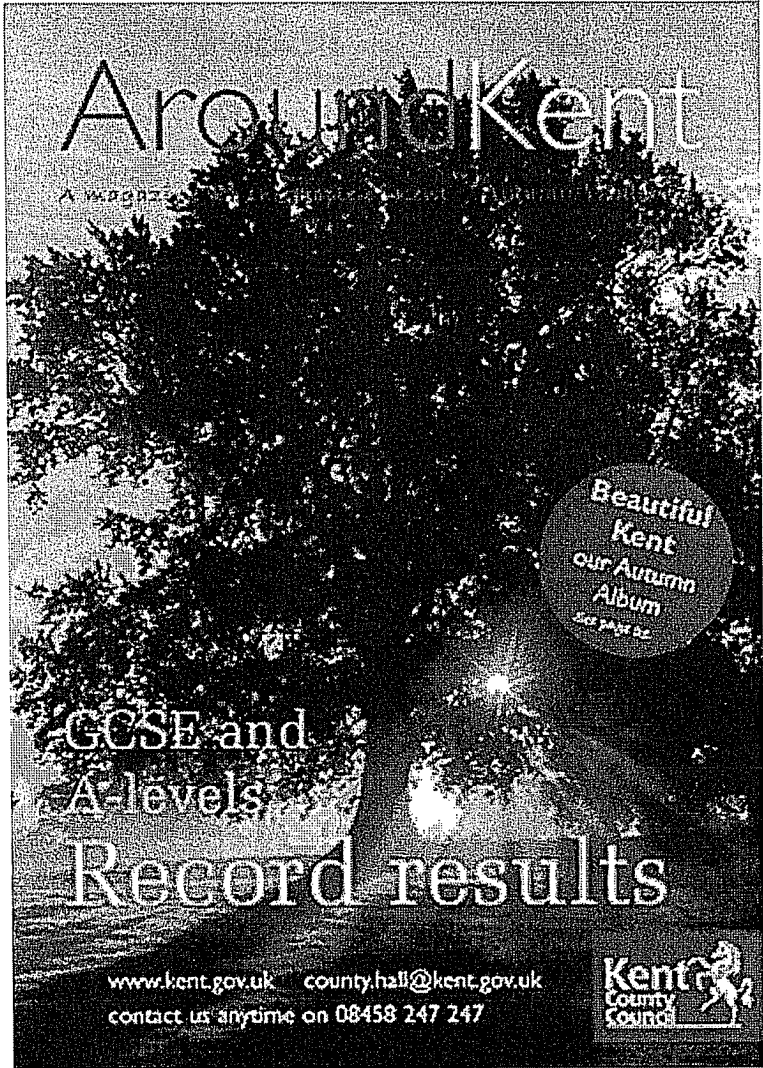
- New secure online card payments system
- Further development of the events page
- A new Find your nearest database listing the community facilities and services based around postcode or other location
- New search engine
- Better links to other public sector websites
- Exploring what we can do to enable people to customise parts of the website
- e-newsletters

Phase 3 will start from 1 April 2010 and be part of the web strand of the Gateway programme and will include:

- Ability to track online the progress of faults reported to the council
- Single registration - asked once to register on site for more personalised information and specific services
- Better links with key national websites - DirectGov, NHS Choices and Business Link

16 September 2009

This page is intentionally left blank



Around Kent

A magazine celebrating the county's history, culture and scenery

Beautiful Kent
our Autumn
Album
SEE PAGE 22

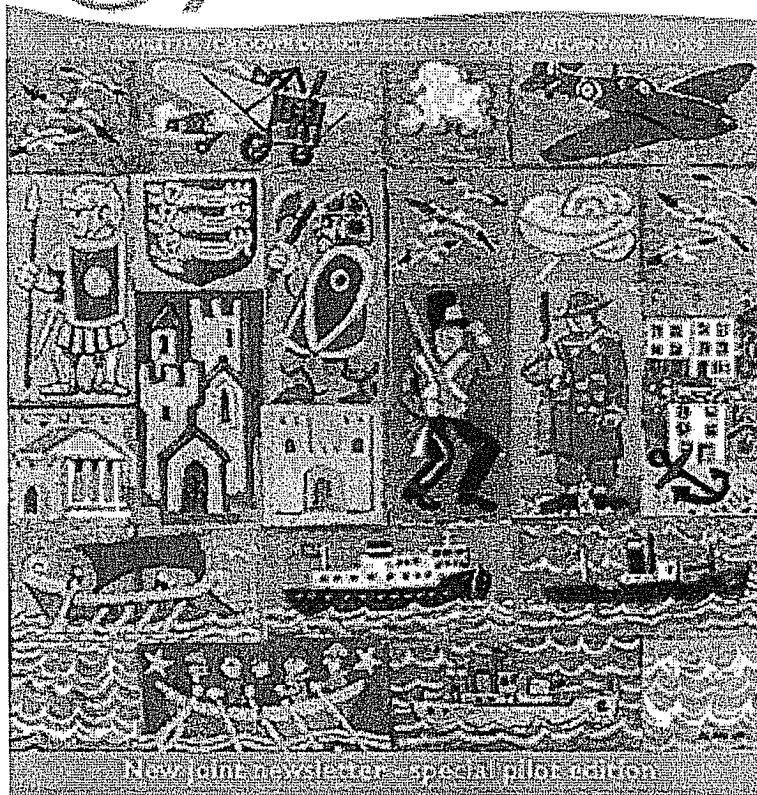
GCSE and
A-levels
Record results

www.kent.gov.uk county.hall@kent.gov.uk
contact us anytime on 08458 247 247

Kent
County
Council

Dover District Council and Kent County Council

@ your service



New joint newsletter special pilot edition

Incorporating Kent County Council's Argus&Kent pages



InSide Swale and Around Kent

A magazine for the people of Swale

Local Services Do It Online
 GCSE & A Levels - record results
 Have you registered to vote?
 Where to go and what to see

Swale
 Borough Council

A Kent Swale Borough Council and
 Kent County Council magazine

Kent
 County Council

By: Alex King, Deputy Leader

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee – 25 September 2009

Subject: Potential to Refocus and Restructure the Overview and Scrutiny Function

1. Context

This paper represents current thinking from a variety of sources to develop a recommendation to full Council in October. The paper needs to be seen in the context of:

- a) the emerging Strategy for Localism for the County Council and the various models and Frameworks for Localism being established across the County in conjunction with our Partners;
- b) the development of the Member role(s) and County Council's application for the South East Employers Organisation Member Development Charter;
- (c) implementation of the recommendations arising from the Informal Member Group: Member Information;
- (d) the opportunities, working in partnership with Borough/District colleagues that may exist to pool the resources supporting Overview and Scrutiny across the County and to agree shared work programmes on issues which will add value without duplication to the communities which we all serve;
- (e) the emerging scrutiny roles for which legislation/regulations have been published including Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships; and
- (f) the scrutiny of the public sector bodies advocated in the consultation document "Strengthening Local Democracy".

2. Overview and Scrutiny – the Key Challenges

(1) As the Strategic Authority for Kent the County Council has a unique community leadership role. The challenge to Members is to:-

- Lead the provision of public services in the area;
- Engage with local communities, tiers of local government and stakeholders;
- Define with them the future of the locality; and
- Achieve the strategies and visions which people agree.

(2) That is what the best Councils are doing and their legitimacy for the future will derive from their role as democratic bodies.

(3) All Members of all parties, not just the Executive, have a role in community leadership.

(4) Scrutiny was initially seen to provide challenge to the Council's own service performance. That remains one aspect of the role, but much of the most effective work of scrutiny bodies has involved engagement with the wider community and across all public service issues. It is now incumbent upon the County Council to develop imaginative forms of engagement, to involve local people, service users and others in scrutiny. This is a wider conversation that scrutiny can lead across the county.

3. Challenges

(1) The challenges are as follows:-

- Widening the engagement and understanding of elected Members in effective Partnership working;
- Bringing the knowledge of local issues and communities which elected Members have to service providers involved in Partnerships;
- Holding the leadership of Strategic Partnerships across the public sector including local authorities to account.

(2) Effective Overview and Scrutiny must contribute to effective Partnership working. This can be done through:-

- Using scrutiny projects to bring Partner organisations together to find new ways of working jointly to tackle important local problems (*a good example of this was the work of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the summer of 2008 which facilitated a discussion between the Acute Hospital Trust, the Primary Care Trust, Dover District Council and the County Council to look at what could be the best outcome for Dover residents in terms of future healthcare provision*);
- Raising the profile of scrutiny and its work priorities to enhance public understanding, and recognition – which has been described as 'championing the people of Kent'; and
- Building alliances with the Executive and other stakeholders to gain support for recommendations (*another good example is the work of the previous Council, the Select Committees on Autism Spectrum Disorder and Alcohol Misuse where all the Partners that had contributed to the recommendations which were not wholly in the gift of the County Council's Executive to deliver, were brought together before the Select Committee report was published to support the recommendations and take ownership for their delivery*).

(3) It is important that the overview and scrutiny process adds value working towards positive recommendations and improvements and ensuring that it concentrates on what only scrutiny can do. It is not about duplicating the work of

Regulators and Inspectorates. It is also about identifying the key issues behind the statistics – *e.g. widening the conversation to engage local people, service providers, neighbourhood users, communities, and the elected Members, verify problems, and develop ideas on how problems can be solved.*

4. Statutory Requirements

The County Council must have:-

- (a) one scrutiny committee responsible for the scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and operating a “call in “ procedure;
- (b) a statutory Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee which encompasses Adult Social Care as well as NHS matters (*in the autumn it is understood that statutory guidance for local authorities and the NHS will be published setting out how overview and scrutiny of health services can be improved*);
- (c) at least one Committee must be designated as the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny on Committee (*these new powers which came into force on 1 April 2009 currently sit with the Communities Policy Overview Committee and are shortly to be the subject of some discussions on how it will operate with the Kent and Medway Police Authority*); and
- (d) statutory co-optees as required, primarily Church Diocesan representatives and Parent Governors who serve on the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and the education related Policy Overview Committees.

5. Emerging Scrutiny - Scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Partnerships

- (1) Cabinet Members will be aware that the County Council’s role in the scrutiny of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership is currently in the Communities Policy Overview Committee.
- (2) Ongoing discussions are taking place with partner organisations to identify how this might be delivered effectively across the democratically elected sector.

6. Consultation - “Strengthening Local Democracy”

- (1) The first draft of a response to the consultation launched by Local Government Minister John Denham, on Strengthening Local Democracy has been considered by the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee at its meeting on 9 September 2009.
- (2) When launching the consultation, Local Government Minister John Denham, made reference to the proposal to give authorities greater scrutiny over:-

- Police strategies in Local Authority areas
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Local Authorities’ delivery of high quality education provision
- Probation Authorities
- Job Centres Plus
- Utility companies
- Young People’s education and skills issues

(3) As a consequence, bodies external to the scrutiny authority could be compelled to have regard to the recommendations of the scrutiny committee.

(4) This does present the real opportunity to pool all Overview and Scrutiny resources across the public sector and establish an independent body to scrutinise the decision makers of all these public sector bodies.

(5) The public will have the right to appeal to a scrutiny committee if they do not like the response to a petition

(6) A report on a process for written petitions and electronic petitions is to be the subject of a report to the Selection and Member Services Committee on 13 October and to the County Council on 15 October 2009. Every local authority is required to have a process for e-petitions. It will be important that the Cabinet, Chief Officer Group and the Head of Communications and Media Centre are fully aware of the petitions which have been logged and their closing dates and the mechanisms for responding to the petitioner(s).

(7) There is in a two tier area an opportunity for a petitioner to a Borough/District Council who remains dissatisfied with the response to refer the matter to the County Council. How this can best be organised is to be discussed with Borough and District Council colleagues at a meeting later on this month.

(8) The Strengthening Local Democracy consultation document also suggested:

- (a) duty could be placed on local authority Chief Executives to ensure that Committees have adequate resources to carry out their work;
- (b) that the Chairman of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee might be given the authority commensurate with a Cabinet post - *for example Essex County Council have created a lead role for one of their Scrutiny Chairmen who chairs not only a Scrutiny Committee but also the Scrutiny Board (which comprises all the Scrutiny Chairmen and Area Forum Chairmen). The Scrutiny Chairmen have a designated room and the culture in Essex County Council has shifted to one of parity of esteem for scrutiny with the Executive. It was also evident from a discussion I have had with the Chairman of the Scrutiny Board that the culture of Essex County Council has changed and scrutiny is seen as an effective mechanism by the Council and Executive in adding value and outcomes for the residents of the County. Members may wish to consider whether the new model for Kent's Overview and Scrutiny function should strengthen the role of the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee to 'gate keep' and commission work for the Scrutiny Committees; and*
- (c) there is also a suggestion that as part of the support required, Committees may call on expert advice from the public.

7. Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

(1) At the meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 21 July the Committee asked for a report back at its 23 September meeting on a range of issues including:-

- (a) exploring how many authorities undertake pre-scrutiny;
- (b) greater use of the media in helping to inform scrutiny;
- (c) co-opting representatives to add rigour and robustness to the Overview and Scrutiny process; and
- (d) the potential to strengthen the information made available to Members through the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

(2) A number of local authorities responded to our request for information on pre-scrutiny. The responses indicated that the process we have for operating the existing Overview and Scrutiny structure of Committees is not dissimilar to the process described by other authorities as pre-scrutiny.

Forward Plan of Key Decisions

(4) One issue which may warrant attention is the possibility of strengthening the information in the Forward Plan of Key Decision and ensuring that the agenda setting process for each of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees takes this into account.

Co-optees

(5) One view from Cabinet and the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee is that one of the ways of strengthening an Overview and Scrutiny process might be to have a pool of experts, advisors, representatives of organisations, voluntary sector or the public to call upon to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a specific issue. If this is decided by the County Council as an appropriate way forward the challenge will be to establish an independent/impartial mechanism on how this can be achieved. Discussions have taken place with the Appointments Commission, Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and the South East Employers Organisation to see if they can assist but it seems unlikely. It has also been suggested that other South East county authorities who are also exploring this role to strengthen Overview and Scrutiny may be willing to establish a mechanism to support our respective overview and scrutiny processes.

(6) Members will be aware that the County Council process for establishing a Select Committee already includes consideration of the appointment of a co-opted expert/advisor who will be able to assist the Select Committee.

(7) Members will also be aware that Durham County Council have established from 1 April 2009 an Overview and Scrutiny structure which includes a scheme of co-option. Ongoing discussions will continue with Durham to assess how successful this scheme of co-optees has been.

Rapporteurs

(8) Members have expressed a wish in developing a rapporteur scheme whereby an elected Member(s) with a specific interest takes ownership for a piece of work, undertakes the research themselves and prepares a report. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee have expressed a wish to pilot a rapporteur scheme.

Involvement of the Media/Press in Scrutiny

(9) Members will be aware that the County Council has agreed a protocol for publicising and launching Select Committee reports (attached as an Appendix to this report).

(10) However, one of the issues which arose at the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 21 July 2009 was utilising the media and press more effectively. Having spoken to the Member who raised the issue the suggestion made is that when the Overview and Scrutiny Committees have identified their work programme then working with the Communication and Media Centre the views of the public should be sought through a formal process.

(11) Taking this one stage further it should be possible for the public to email in questions they would like asked as the meeting is progressing. This is an exciting proposal and would need careful consideration on how it is implemented/moderated. Members views are sought.

8. Policy Overview Committees

Members are reminded that the County Councils current Overview and Scrutiny process gives non executive Members the ability to assist the Cabinet with Policy Development. At agenda setting meeting Members can make use of the Forward Plan to put an item on the POC agenda, also there is the opportunity for Cabinet Members to make the POC aware of developing policy areas which the POC could have an input into. Any Member may give notice that they wish an item to be considered at a POC meeting. It is important that Members make effective use of these powers to add value to the work of the County Council for the benefit of all Kent residents.

9. Duty to Involve

There is a correlation between the legislative framework around the "Duty to Involve" with the "Place Shaping Agenda", the development of the website, the concept of a "Virtual County Hall", (Kent Space- making Kent Work for You) (a concept whereby communities of interest through Social Networking find the County Council), the Citizens Panel, the Consultation Strategy, petitions and e-petitions, the emerging localism strategy which are all mechanisms, sources of information and evidence which can help to inform the Overview and Scrutiny function.

10. Timetable

(1) To meet the timetable for a report on the structure of the Overview and Scrutiny function to the County Council on 15 October 2009 I set out below a list of meetings which would give the opportunity to the majority of Members to contribute to this discussion.

Environment, Highways & Waste POC - **15 September**

Communities POC - **17 September**

C, F & E POCs - **18 September**

Adult Social Services POC - **22 September**

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - **23 September**

Regeneration & Economic Development POC - **24 September**

Corporate POC - **25 September**

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - **2 October**

County Council - **15 October**

11. Recommendation

Members views are requested before Cabinet Members make a recommendation to County Council.

Paul D Wickenden
Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager
01622 694486
paul.wickenden@kent.gov.uk

Kent County Council

PUBLIC RELATIONS PROTOCOL FOR SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEWS AND REPORTS

This protocol has been written as a basis for all communications between Select Committee Members and the media. It will ensure that the corporate communications team is able to maximise opportunities for scrutiny to publicise its work and promote the transparency of the Council's decision-making process.

- All actions should be in accordance with the letter and spirit of the DCLG Code of recommended practice on local authority publicity.
- Media activity should be co-ordinated through the corporate communications team who will make arrangements and ensure that the appropriate Members are put forward, rather than Select Committee Members approaching the media direct to discuss the topic review.
- The Select Committee Chairman should be the official spokesperson for the review report, unless another more suitable spokesperson has been identified by the Chairman.
- Chairmen of Select Committees will be expected to attend or have attended media training.
- There is potential, on rare occasions, for conflict between scrutiny and cabinet on issues. Maintaining the professional reputation of the council in the eyes of the public is paramount and conflicting statements may make the council appear inept or divided. Care should be taken, on all sides, to avoid this situation from arising. But in such circumstances Corporate Communications would present factual information to the media fairly representing both the Scrutiny and Cabinet viewpoints.
- The corporate communications team should be advised of any media enquiries received by Select Committee Members to offer guidance and help if required and to monitor responses.
- Press releases for Select Committees will be drafted by a member of the corporate communications team, in consultation with the Research Officer for the review and approved by Select Committee Chairman, in consultation with the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager.
- Press releases will be fair and representative of the views of the Select Committee. They may include the views expressed in minority reports if those views differ from the main report.

- The media are invited to attend all formal meetings of Select Committee unless matters of an exempt nature are to be discussed.
- When the report of the Select Committee is ready to go into the public domain a member of the corporate communications team, in consultation with the Research Officer to the Select Committee drafts a press release. Where possible the press release should include input from a third party who has been involved with the review. The Press release should be approved by the Select Committee Chairman (with the nominated official spokesman, where appropriate) in consultation with the Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager. An embargoed copy of the press release should be sent out with an electronic copy of the report, to the media a day before the public domain with an embargo on it. There may or may not be a press conference but the Chairman, relevant members make sure they are available for interviews.
- Corporate Communications officers are permitted to refuse to prepare press releases, deal with media enquiries or arrange media interviews in the following cases:
 - (i) If the press release or enquiry is political in any way.
 - (ii) If the information in the press release is deemed libellous or malicious
- Corporate Communications officers will not organise interviews between media and individual members of the Select Committee unless there is explicit agreement by the Select Committee Chairman.
- Press releases will not be issued as a matter of course after Select Committee meetings simply to record the proceedings. Post-meeting publicity will, however, be given where there is good reasons for doing so e.g. to promote opportunities for public consultation.

By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee
25 September 2009

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on the process for approving a Select Committee topic review work programme.

Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme

1. (1) As part of the July cycle of POC meetings Members were asked to submit suggestions for topics for Select Committee topic reviews.

(2) The suggestions received will be subject to an assessment process, part of which will include seeking the comments of the Directorate and Cabinet Members, in order to assist the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee (POCC) in agreeing a work programme that adds value for the residents of Kent. The POCC will be meeting on 16 October 2009 to consider all suggestions for topic reviews and the proposer will be invited to the POCC meeting to put forward their suggestion supported by officers from the Directorate and if appropriate the Cabinet Member. Any Member who would like to have more information about the assessment process or requires a copy of the form should in the first instance contact Denise Fitch who supports this POC.

(3) The Committee are reminded of the recent decision of the County Council that once a Topic Review has been included in the Work Programme as agreed by the POCC the detailed terms of reference for each review will be developed by a cross party Member Group (one from each Group) for approval by the Select Committee.

(4) Following the last meeting of this Committee a number of suggestions were put forward by Members, assessment forms are currently being completed for topic reviews on Developer Contributions and Intergenerational Interaction (both of which may fall partly within the remit of other POC's).

(5) Following the meeting of the POCC on 16 October 2009 Members will be informed of the agreed Select Committee topic review programme and specifically progress with any topics included which fall within the remit of this POC.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the process for agreeing a Select Committee topic review programme.

Denise Fitch
Tel No: 01622 694269
e-mail: denise.fitch@kent.gov.uk

Background Information: *Nil*

This page is intentionally left blank