



## AGENDA

### ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Thursday, 27 September 2007 at 3.00 pm      Ask for:      **Christine Singh**  
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,      Telephone      **01622 694334**  
Maidstone

*Tea/Coffee will be available before the meeting*

#### **Membership (15)**

- Conservative (10):      Mr R A Pascoe (Chairman),      Mr M J Angell,      Ms S J Carey,  
Mr M J Harrison,      Mr C Hibberd,      Mr R L H Long, TD,      Mr R A Marsh,  
Mr R F Manning,      Mr M V Snelling and      Mrs P A V Stockell
- Labour (4):      Mr R Truelove (Vice-Chairman),      Mr T J Birkett,      Mr R J E Parker and  
Mr A R Poole
- Liberal Democrat (1):      Mr D S Daley

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

#### **A. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

- A1      Substitutes
- A2      Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for  
this meeting
- A3      Membership - to note that Mr M H J Angell has replaced Mr J B O  
Fullarton as a member of this Committee

#### **B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- B1      "Towards 2010" (Pages 1 - 32)
- B2      Response to the Questionnaire on Overview and Scrutiny (Pages  
33 - 44)

#### **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)*

***All timings shown on this agenda are approximate.***

Stuart Ballard

Head of Democratic Services  
(01622) 694002

**Wednesday, 19 September 2007**

*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.*

By: Keith Ferrin – Portfolio Holder, Environment, Highways & Waste

Roger Gough – Portfolio Holder Regeneration & Supporting  
Independence

Adam Wilkinson – Managing Director, Environment & Regeneration  
Directorate

To: E&R POC – 27 September 2007

Subject: *Towards 2010* – First Annual Report

Classification: Unrestricted

---

## **SUMMARY**

This report sets out the process for finalising the *Towards 2010* Annual Report prior to approval by County Council on 18 October and attaches an early draft of the report including the targets for which Mr Ferrin or Mr Gough are lead members.

## **FOR INFORMATION**

---

### **1. Introduction**

*Towards 2010* was formally launched in September 2006. Annual reports on progress will be discussed and approved by County Council each autumn.

### **2. Approval process**

The draft Annual Report will be discussed at Cabinet on 15 October prior to approval at County Council on 18 October.

A special meeting of all Policy Overview Committees has been arranged to enable Members to comment on the early draft prior to Cabinet and County Council.

### **3. Progress To Date and Performance Indicators**

The Annual Report includes a brief report on each of the individual targets setting out where appropriate progress to date and planned future action together with performance indicators where relevant.

### **4. Recommendation**

The members of the Policy Overview Committee Cabinet members are invited to study note the report and comment on the attached drafts.

Contact Officer:

Niel Caddick 01622 69(4254), [niel.caddick@kent.gov.uk](mailto:niel.caddick@kent.gov.uk)

This page is intentionally left blank

# **Towards 2010**

**September 2006 – September 2010**

**First Annual Report**

**Draft as at 6 September 2007**  
**(E&R submissions 17 Sept)**

<b>Target 1: Substantially increase the number of new jobs by increasing the number of companies investing in Kent and the number of businesses starting up or expanding</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Bryan Raine/Caroline Lwin

**Progress To Date:**

Creating new jobs, attracting new investment, supporting existing businesses to grow and encouraging new businesses to start are critical to creating a thriving economy for Kent.

We are actively engaged with regeneration delivery boards in Kent Thameside, Swale and Ashford on inward investment promotion and marketing activity. Locate in Kent (our inward investment agency) has undertaken weekly PR, editorial and press briefings including to Finance Direct Investment International (brings in direct foreign investment to Kent). This briefing included a familiarisation visit to key site locations in Kent.

We are actively working with district councils to secure government action to create opportunities in the wake of the planned loss of 400 manufacturing jobs in East Kent. We are also working with partners to bring London Array (off-shore windfarm) investment to Ramsgate. In terms of construction and maintenance this promises 600 short-term and 200 long-term jobs into the area.

KCC has established a Property Acquisitions and Investment Fund (Enterprise Fund) to purchase sites of key strategic interest to attract businesses to locate in Kent and stimulate job creation, e.g. Manston Business Park. It is proposed to also use the fund to forward fund provision of a new spine road at EuroKent Business Park. The road is necessary to unlock a significant source of employment potential in Thanet.

The securing of Assisted Area Status (see also target 2) for Thanet is recognition by the EU of the higher levels of deprivation in Thanet but also the potential development opportunities for larger companies to invest in the area.

Good progress has been made in developing overseas marketing strategies meeting with SEEDA's Head of Overseas Team to develop a joint North European Strategy. Contacts have been made with the Managing Director of UK Trade International to develop more effective working with them in overseas markets. Briefings arranged with East Coast US SEEDA representatives on marketing Kent as a business location to US companies.

Work continues to:

- Maintain an increase in quantity of projects whilst assuring the quality of the jobs being created
- Maintain a strong emphasis on marketing the county's growth areas particularly in East Kent and promoting the opportunities around the CTRL at Ebbsfleet and Ashford (both international and domestic rail links) as well as boosting the profile of Kent to businesses as a premier business location
- Develop a strong partnership approach with Locate in Kent (LiK)

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Number of jobs created/safeguarded (Lik)	2,958 (5,729 cumulative since 2005/06)	436 (balance of three-year target of 6,165 set in 2005/06)
Number of new companies investing in Kent	64	55

**Target 2: Concentrate on the regeneration of Kent's deprived areas and support business growth in these areas, seeking maximum funding from Government and the EU to support the necessary infrastructure, including roads, utilities, telecoms and other services**

**Lead Cabinet Member:**

Roger Gough

**Lead Managing Director:**

Adam Wilkinson

**Lead Officer:**

Theresa Bruton/ Mike Bodkin

**Progress To Date:**

Regeneration is a major priority for KCC. Working with partners has secured Assisted Area Status for most of Thanet and elements of Dover. This will enable the opening up of new funding opportunities to attract inward investment from companies already operating in these areas and to draw new businesses to the area.

KCC continues to support Enterprise Gateways providing advice and networking support to small and micro businesses. Gateways operate in Romney Marsh, Folkestone, East Kent and more recently in Swale. Subject to funding from SEEDA, construction of the new Folkestone Performing Arts Centre will also include a business centre for small start up businesses.

We are also supporting work with small and medium size businesses to ensure they can benefit from the 2012 Olympics via networking and training initiatives.

In March 2007, the CLG Local Government Committee Second Report on Coastal Towns was published. KCC helped influence many of its recommendations including:

- The need for Government to give focused attention for Coastal Towns and the adoption of a national approach to support these towns
- Taking action to reduce the number of out of area placements of vulnerable adults and children in coastal towns
- Reducing the volume and improving the quality of Houses of Multiple Occupancy

Kent is included in the eligible area for both INTERREG IVa (cross border) and IVb funding programmes. Working with partners in East Kent, KCC is helping to prepare a bid for INTERREG funding, via SEEDA to improve connectivity between Dover, Ashford and Canterbury rail stations. This will assist regeneration of East Kent by maximising the links to CTRL, which in turn, will facilitate continuing regeneration of Kent town centres. (For more details on town centre regeneration see target 3)

KCC is progressing a joint venture with Thanet DC focusing on Manston Business Park, purchased by KCC in 2006, involving the pooling of land holdings of both authorities to provide a driving force for regeneration in Thanet. Consultants have produced a masterplanning study for both Manston and Thanet DC's landholdings at EuroKent Business Park. The study has concluded that the developments can deliver considerable benefits to Thanet and the wider East Kent economy. SEEDA are providing funding, under Objective 2, to provide for a new Innovation Centre at EuroKent which will provide quality office space to support new business growth. Part of the funding will be used to support KCC-led access improvements to the site. The East Kent Access Scheme Phase 1 will be completed in the autumn and will also be a boost to the area, as will the development of Kent International Airport.

The new Sheppey Bridge has opened increasing access to job opportunities for residents. KCC has secured planning consent for Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road and £12m of funding has been obtained for the Queenborough and Rushenden Relief Road. The first stage lottery bid for the Swale Flying Start Project, to establish a museum to celebrate one of the first flights ever made, was successful and Swale Forward is now working up a second stage submission.

In NW Kent, the award winning *Fastrack* rapid bus transit system is now operating and in its first year of operation is showing that 19% of passengers are now using the bus instead of car. Construction work to extend the current route has now started on Thamesway and Everards Link Phase 2. Both these schemes are 100% funded by government grant of £13m. Development at The Bridge (Kent Thameside development on Dartford) has started, including The Nucleus, a brand new centre for scientific and knowledge-based businesses.

The development agreement for the Heritage Quarter scheme in Gravesend has been signed and DCLG have recognised KCC's investment in Gravesend Old Town Hall to bring it back into occupied use by awarding additional funding to help with the project. At Ebbsfleet, the first houses are under construction at Springhead and the masterplan for Station Quarter South has been submitted. Eastern Quarry has passed a significant milestone with the granting of planning consent by Dartford BC in July for 6,250 homes plus commercial and leisure development. Associated with this KCC and Kent Thameside (KTS) partners have secured new Government funding of £74m for strategic transport infrastructure in KTS. KCC is involved in the SUSCON Project (to set up a sustainable construction centre at Springhead, Gravesham). The project has strong support from the private sector, including Land Securities. A bid is currently being prepared to secure DCLG funding. If successful, the new centre will provide local job and training opportunities in a key growth area.

Progress on the Empty Homes initiative is recorded under Target 39.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 2005/06</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Net changes in employment floor space*	88,469m <sup>2</sup> *	

\*Covers Ashford, Dartford, Dover, Gravesham, Shepway, Swale and Thanet. Figure includes offices, research and development, professional services, light industry, general industry and vehicle repair, warehouses and warehouse storage. 2006/07 data is available in November 2007.



<b>Target 3: Support a programme of town centre regeneration</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Keith MacKenney/Katherine Putnam

**Progress To Date:**

Regeneration of town centres is important to improve economic and social viability. This target is focusing particularly on three coastal town centres in Kent – Dover, Margate and Folkestone.

KCC has agreed a public realm strategy for **Dover** Town Centre that identifies 9 projects, one of which is being led by KCC. It should start in 2007/08 and last over two years. A Dover Pride project led by KCC to refurbish Dover Priory railway station was completed in August 2007. This will provide the stimulus to see further physical improvements around and leading up to the station to the value of £2.8m. KCC is also a leading partner in the development of the Dover Sea Sports Centre, contributing £250,000 from its Regeneration Fund, towards the £2.5m project, which started construction in July 2007. Along with Dover District Council, the developer, SEEDA and English Partnerships, KCC has provided considerable input to improving the quality of proposed shopping development in the town centre. This helped SEEDA and English Partnerships secure funding of up to £10m in enhancing the physical quality of the development. KCC is working with South Kent College and the Learning and Skills Council to assess the comprehensive redevelopment of the Further Education College, a £25-£30m project, in the town centre to potentially include residential and commercial development. It hopes to have more detailed plans in place by end of December 2007 to take the proposals forward.

Progress has been made in **Margate** on the Turner Contemporary project and a development partner on the adjacent rendezvous site will be selected by December 2007 with the whole site scheduled to be built by 2010. See target 27 for more details. The Margate Rendezvous site development is part of a concerted approach to improving and developing the town’s eastern seafront from the Lido to the Harbour Arm. This also involves significant improvements in pedestrian connections between the Old Town and the seafront, a project that will attract more people and activities to the Harbour Arm are well advanced, and the future of the Theatre Royal is secure (see Target 25). KCC is leading on the development of both a public realm strategy and a related parking, access and movement plan that will take full account of the developments planned for the town.

KCC has committed £3.5m to establishing the **Folkestone** Performing Arts and Business Centre. It is working with Shepway District Council and the Creative Foundation on Tontine Street and Ford Street signal improvements.

We have also completed a major survey (in conjunction with District Councils) to understand retail patterns and consumer behaviour. This will better inform and support planning and scheme delivery in meeting this target.

Although this Towards 2010 target is focused on East Kent towns, action is also underway in North West Kent and Ashford. A recent example is quality development proposed in Gravesend Heritage Quarter. KCC is also working with Dartford BC to help develop a revised proposal for the town centre Lowfield Street development, the previous application having been rejected. In Ashford, extensive work is underway on the Ring Road and the New Town Bridge that will enable environmental enhancement of the town centre and support major retail and commercial investment

The town centre improvements have helped to raise land values in the towns, in turn encouraging private developers to invest in properties, including development of housing provision above existing shop units. Within the KCC-led Empty Homes Project, we are also pro-actively involving shop owners with vacant upper floors to develop them into new accommodation above the shops. (See target 39 for details on Empty Homes).

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base2006 calendar year</b>	<b>2007/08 Actual</b>
Town centre footfall:		
Dover	22,700	21,280
Margate	14,560	12,890
Folkestone	21,630	20,280

<b>Target 4: Support rural businesses and communities to build a strong entrepreneurial culture</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Stuart Gibbons

**Progress To Date:**

More than a third of Kent’s businesses are based in rural areas, employing over 110,000 people. Their success is crucial to Kent’s economy.

This target is embedded as one of the priority actions within the draft Kent Rural Delivery Framework which provides a strategic framework for action for all rural partners in Kent over the next five years. -to ensure Kent’s rural economy communities and environment continues to thrive.

The Kent Rural Delivery Framework and accompanying Rural Evidence Base will place Kent on a stronger footing for bidding into rural funding streams that are due to come on line later this year (LEADER, Rural Access to Services Programme). KCC is actively working with a range of partners to facilitate these external bids to maximise Kent’s bidding prospects.

The embedding of this Towards 2010 target within the Kent Rural Delivery Framework is also creating a stronger base to encourage partnership activity to deliver towards this target. Service Level Agreements with both Action with Communities in Rural Kent (the rural community council) and the Kent Association of Rural Retailers have been in place since 1 April 2007 to ensure that they report and encourage the activities supporting this target.

Current rural regeneration activities contributing towards the delivery of this target include:

- Training courses undertaken by Produced in Kent on marketing, website development and accessing public sector contracts
- Meet the buyer and networking opportunities for local producers
- Assisting land-based businesses to access planning and business advice through the Kent Downs Rural Advice Pilot Project
- Working with partners to deliver external funding programmes (LEADER +, Kent Rural Towns Programme & Rural Revival) that enable community-led regeneration projects to go ahead.

Planned additional activities to support this target include:

- Working with partners to develop two new workstreams to quickly respond to the Post Office Network Change proposals in Kent. The first will help rural communities to develop entrepreneurial community-led solutions, for example, help to establish community-owned shops. The second will provide business advice for rural retailers where post office closures could jeopardise future of their businesses.
- Working with the Kent Rural Board to examine new ways of encouraging more land-based businesses to develop more added-value products.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 06/07</b>	<b>Target 07/08</b>
Number of rural enterprises/individuals receiving advice (cumulative)	298	300
Number of partnership innovative projects/ initiatives instigated (cumulative)	15	17

<b>Target 6: Increase opportunities for graduates to work and live in Kent</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Bryan Raine/Caroline Lwin

**Progress to date:**

Kent's resident workforce has a smaller than average number of people with degrees. Three strands of work have started in relation to this target and there are close links with target 1 in terms of attracting inward investment to Kent, specifically those companies from the creative industries and science based sector within the wider Kent economy.

The three strands are:

- KCC has purchased data on graduate leavers from the Higher Education Statistics Agency. Analysis of these data will enable us to monitor the extent to which graduates are attracted to Kent at the end of their studies. The analysis will cover three specific areas:
  - University locations where Kent residents studied and where they located at the end of their studies
  - Where non-Kent residents, studying at Kent universities located to at the end of their studies
  - Original locations of current graduates living and working in Kent

Data will include comparisons to other local authorities. We will use the data analysis to determine specific actions to meet delivery of the Towards 2010 target.
- Following the data analysis stage, discussions with all Kent universities collectively (led by the University of Kent at Canterbury) will focus on actions they can take to promote employment and business opportunities in Kent to current undergraduates. A high level meeting between the Cabinet Portfolio holder for Regeneration and Supporting Independence, KCC Chief Executive, senior Regeneration and Economy staff and senior representatives of all the Kent universities is planned for November 2007. Opportunities for actions to help deliver the target will be an agenda item at this meeting.
- Developing proposals with a local marketing and communications company on ways to promote the scale of the current science and creative sector in Kent. This sits alongside work encouraging inward investment and promoting business start-ups in these sectors.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Percentage of people of working age living in Kent qualified to NVQ4+ (Source: Annual Population Survey)	24.0%	Available Feb 2008
	<b>2004/05</b>	<b>2005/06</b>
Graduate leavers now employed in Kent (Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) – data refreshed each August)	3646	3567

<b>Target 7: Fulfil Kent's potential as a premier tourist destination</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Fran Warrington

**Progress To Date:**

Kent needs to ensure it fully develops as a visitor destination, not just as a place to pass through. Delivery of this target and others including Kent TV (Target 24), the “What’s On in Kent” website (Target 21) and the new Kent Film Office (Target 8) will really help put Kent on the Map.

In March, the Destination Management System (DMS) within the Kent Tourism Alliance (KTA) website, went live enabling 24 hour, seven days a week (24/7) online booking. In May, this was launched by KTA as a hi-tech website that provides a one stop shop for visitors and residents planning a break in Kent – [www.visitkent.co.uk](http://www.visitkent.co.uk). It also provides 24/7 online booking for accommodation and showcases attractions in Kent. It’s a virtual shop window for the county, which allows local businesses to prosper and attract more people to Kent. Website hits in 2006 totalled almost 1 million (975,650), the highest year to date.

The CEO of KTA has led a campaign to negotiate with key strategic alliance partners to match fund KCC’s contribution to this target of £200k. To date this has resulted in a commitment of £1.25 m cash and a £1m in kind over 5 years from Southeastern trains to deliver a London-based short breaks and day visits campaign. Funds from other partners have also been secured, including EU Interreg cross-border funding for the London media campaign. Kent is also being marketed in London as part of the lead up to the 2012 Olympics with KCC support and backing.

KCC’s continuing investment in the visitor economy has gained support from the private sector. At the board meetings of the KTA in March, it agreed a £1.3 m budget for the 07/08 financial year, demonstrating the private sector's confidence in the KCC backed model. Helped by an investment of £75k to the Kent Tourism team, KCC is engaged in a programme of measurement and return on investment/impact modelling to allow all involved in developing Kent's visitor economy to ensure that resources deliver benefits and jobs. Roger Gough (lead Cabinet Member for this target) is an active participant in the agenda as Vice Chair of the KTA and is engaging in the development of the research and measurement agenda.

Kent Tourism has completed a two-year research project, in partnership with Cross-Channel operators, into the preferences of the county’s visitors from mainland Europe. This is now available to tourism, leisure and hospitality businesses across Kent to help them identify new markets and drive their businesses forward. Meanwhile, the Cruise Connection research into the economic impact of the cruise industry in East Kent has identified more ways local businesses can benefit.

KCC has continued expanding Pride in Kent – its customer service awareness campaign now running Shepway and Thanet with staff familiarisation visits and customer service training events highlighting the range of the local opportunities available to visitors.

On 31 March more than 10,000 people across Kent visited local attractions on Kent’s Big Day Out – the first of five such days scheduled in the run up to the 2012 Olympics. More than 90 of the county’s leading tourist attractions and destinations pledged their support and made free tickets available and plans are already in train for 2008. In Spring 2007, in partnership with Thanet District Council, KCC launched Europe’s first Greeters programme in the style of the New York Big Apple Greeters. Teams of well-informed volunteers will be available to give visitors a warm welcome to the area and talk about local areas of interest. The aim is to roll this programme out countywide ahead of the Olympic Games in 2012

Kent has a proven track record in hosting of world wide events including the recent Tour de France, in July 2007. The event provided a great opportunity to market Kent overseas and generated an estimated £37m spend in the local Kent economy.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Value of bookings made on Destination Management System website	New service	£25k
	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
Visitor numbers to top ten attractions In Kent (source VisitBritain)	3.68m	Available late 2007

<b>Target 8: Develop Kent as a major venue and location for film, television and creative industries to benefit the Kent economy</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Peter Gilroy	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Tanya Oliver

**Progress to date:**

Using Kent as a location for filming brings real advantages both economically and in raising its profile as a tourist destination.

Kent Film Office secured the filming of a major Channel 4 production, ‘Cape Wrath’, in the Maidstone and Malling area, which led to £2.5m direct spend into the local economy and the employment of 35 local people. The deal was secured against strong financial competition from Wales. This programme will potentially run for three more series bringing a further £7.5 into Kent if this happens. The two runners, part-funded by KCC as part of ‘Cape Wrath’, have since gone on to permanent employment.

Other Kent based filming opportunities have been secured. A small, independent, local East Kent filming company, Medb Films, produced ‘Ruby Blue’, starring Bob Hoskins, which was filmed in Thanet and Deal and is due for release during 2007. The success of this film will enable this company to expand and they are already looking for larger production premises in Thanet. Medb Films secured a three-picture deal and all will be shot in Kent. The latest, ‘The Calling’ started filming in August 2007, starring top actress Brenda Blethyn, and is due for release next year.

There have been other successes. A ‘Bollywood’ Film was shot almost exclusively on the Kent and East Sussex Railway bringing £16k investment into the Tenterden-based attraction. Tesco located their recent apple advert in a Kent apple orchard which helped secure the future of the community-owned orchard as the fee went directly to the parish. ‘The Other Boleyn Girl’, which will go on international release in 2008, has recently been filming in Kent and in partnership with the Kent Tourism Alliance, the Kent Film Office is establishing a ‘Boleyn Trail’ to attract additional tourism into Kent following the release of the film.

The Film and Television Board was established in 2006 and secured significant positive publicity for the Kent Film Office. It is championing Kent within the industry as a place to come and film and additional support is being sought from high profile actors with a connection to Kent.

The Kent Film Office brought £3m of direct spend into the county last year and dealt with over 250 enquiries from all over the world since it started in March 2006, making strong links with companies looking to film in Kent in the future. It has also received positive coverage in various media outlets, including the ‘Radio Times’ and ‘Variety’ magazine.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Direct spend into Kent via the Kent Film Office	£3m	£3m

<b>Target 9: Through our Kent Supporting Independence Programme, work towards reducing the number of people dependent on welfare benefits</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Peter Gilroy	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Pauline Smith

**Progress to date:**

Over 100,000 in Kent claim one of three major welfare benefits with some wards having over 40% of working age people on benefits and caught in the benefits trap.

Work has continued since August 2006 on the Kent NOW Programme to support long-term incapacity-based benefit claimants back to full-time employment in more disadvantaged communities. This programme is being run as part of The Kent Agreement (Outcome 15) and is running delivery services in Folkestone and surrounding areas, Maidstone, and North and East Kent (Dartford, Gravesend, Sheerness, Sittingbourne and Canterbury). These programmes provide return-to-work training and support, work experience placements, jobsearch skills and condition management. They incorporate a range of activities to encourage greater numbers of participants onto the courses, raise awareness of the programme within the communities they serve and develop effective programmes for the registered clients. They are being delivered in close partnership with Jobcentre Plus, district and borough councils, voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations, local GP practices, and KCC agencies amongst others.

Alongside these initiatives, KCC's Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) is managing a support project called the FAR Programme (Flourishing and Resilience) which is delivering emotional health, happiness and wellbeing training to claimants in Thanet and the areas listed above, with 105 individuals registered from this particularly hard-to-engage group. Each part of the Kent NOW programme is being evaluated independently by researchers from the University of Kent and the University of Bath to provide evidence for future policy development in Kent.

The Employability Steering Group, made up of staff from KCC, Jobcentre Plus, Kent Probation Service and the VCS, meets regularly to look specifically at initiatives that are running in partnership to combat dependency on welfare benefits in Kent. Significant work is taking place on supporting lone parents back to work through the 'Getting On' programme, a 12 week course that supports lone parents in making informed choices about their future and delivered in partnership with Children Centres and Jobcentre Plus. There is also an element of work experience with local childcare facilities, which has resulted in job offers. Jobseekers Allowance claimants are being supported through initiatives led by Jobcentre Plus.

SIP, working with Maidstone Borough Council and Kent Top Temps, is developing an innovative approach to helping benefit claimants back to work through the use of Internet technology. 'Slivers of Time' is based on the eBay model of an online market place, matching individuals who need to work odd hours around other commitments in their life, and organisations that need a pool of top-up workers at irregular times (e.g. caterers, retailers, local authorities). This is being developed in Maidstone, specifically targeted to those areas of the town where benefit claim rates are highest and is being funded by government at present and is incurring no cost to KCC or its partners. The scheme is up and running benefiting lone parents on Income Support, incapacity-based benefit claimants and others who find it hard to enter traditional employment markets.

Independent research has been commissioned by SIP to look at the services provided in Kent for people with alcohol/substance addictions. An ex-service user who is working closely with Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team (KDAAT) and other service providers around the county is carrying out the research. It is envisaged that the results of this work will provide evidence for future development of policies that will support people to move off benefit dependency (along with substance addiction) and into employment.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Aug 2006</b>	<b>Aug 2007</b>
Total average weekly benefit spend in Kent for IB/SDA, IS and JSA*	£6.58m*	Awaited

\*IB (Incapacity Benefit), SDA (Severe Disability Allowance), IS (Income Support) and JSA (Job Seekers Allowance)

<b>Target 30: Work towards introducing a Kent youth travel card entitling all 11-16 year olds to free public transport in the county, subject to the outcome of two district pilots</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Members:</b> Keith Ferrin/Mark Dance	<b>Lead Managing Directors:</b> Adam Wilkinson/Graham Badman	<b>Lead Officers:</b> David Hall/Ian Craig

**Progress to date:**

Peak hour congestion is an issue in Kent and, in addition, the cost of transport for young people and parents can affect the ability of young people to take part in events and activities across the county. KCC has decided to tackle this head on with the introduction of the groundbreaking Kent Freedom Pass initiative.

Kent Freedom Card passes have been snapped up by 11 to 16 olds in the three pilot areas in Kent - Canterbury, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells. Passes cost £50, to cover administration charges and set up costs, and offer unlimited travel on buses. The pilots started in June 2007 and are expected to last two years.

The scheme has already exceeded expectations with over 4,000 passes being issued by the start of the new school year.

The idea was originally suggested by Kent Youth County Council. A Local Government Chronicle article on 15 February 2007 said that “Kent’s plans form the most coherent response so far to last year’s Schools and Inspections Act which requires councils to do more to provide transport”.

Significant co-operation has been given by bus operators and all signed up to participating in the pilots. Early indications are that the pilots are proving to be highly successful.

The launch of the pass in June resulted in excellent positive print media coverage. Schools are very enthusiastic about the scheme and its benefits for encouraging greater use of public transport. A number have been keen to help identify where there is likely to be a need for increased capacity on the existing network, which has been very helpful. Additional capacity has been introduced on the routes expected to carry Kent Freedom Card pass holders and arrangements made which are flexible enough so services can be altered as required to address pressures on the network.

Early positive feedback from parents has been received demonstrating the beneficial impact that the pilot is having on young people’s lives. Publicity for the scheme is being arranged for the whole year to ensure that success stories are effectively communicated.

An evaluation of the impact of the pilots will take place by examining take-up, pass usage, impact on congestion and liaising with schools. This will enable early decisions to be made on a possible expansion to further pilot schemes prior to a full county roll out for all 11 to 16 year olds in 2009.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Number of 11 - 16 year olds issued with a Freedom Card (in pilot areas)	2,000*



<b>Target 31: Pilot staggered school hours to relieve rush-hour congestion</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Members:</b> Mark Dance/Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Directors:</b> Graham Badman/Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officers:</b> Ian Craig/Bjorn Simpole

**Progress to date:**

Tackling congestion is a priority to the people of Kent. This target is linked to the other major initiatives designed to reduce congestion in the county including the Freedom Card pilot in Canterbury, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge districts (See target 30).

Since September 2007, there has been a staggered hours pilot in at Hugh Christie Technology College, Tonbridge. This involves the sixth form students and a minority of year 11 students who are taking post-16 options early having a school day which starts later (10am – 11am) and finishes later (4.30pm – 5.30pm).

There have been certain complexities to overcome. The Hugh Christie college have been inventive in creating its own solutions to transporting pupils affected by the changes and entitled pupils are largely covered by the existing bus network – with year 11's able to benefit from the Kent Freedom Pass. Hugh Christie was a challenging school to pilot staggered hours given the wide geographical area it attracts pupils from and helpful lessons have been learnt from this experience when seeking to introduce staggered hours at other schools.

Discussions have taken place within each of the pilot areas to encourage schools to consider staggered hours. For secondary schools, post-16 and increasingly 14-19, collaboration is the major barrier which prevents schools from exploring the staggering of hours between schools. Feedback received indicates that the way forward should be based on the Hugh Christie model of staggering in an individual school between different year groups.

Work is ongoing to promote the concept of staggered hours to schools in the pilot areas for September 2008 implementation. At secondary level the success of staggered hours at Hugh Christie will be the driver for greater interest in such arrangements within the pilot areas and longer term across the whole county. It will be interesting to see the educational benefits of the scheme and how it has impacted upon pupils involved both educationally and in their personal lives.

Early indications were of a high degree of interest amongst primary schools of staggering their hours as a means of reducing the 'school run'. In the Canterbury area, particularly, a number of head teachers were keen on the idea of starting and finishing early and later in some cases. However, it has proved difficult to obtain agreement of their governing bodies to the proposed changes. There were a number of reasons for this; concern about parents choosing to move their child to a school with more conventional times, opposition from staff, impact on existing extended school arrangements such as breakfast clubs and that a degree of staggering of hours is already in place. In the context of current falling primary rolls there is a view that radically changing hours is a risk that is not worth taking. Further discussions will take place with schools in the pilot areas on a whole cluster approach to secure commitment to piloting staggered hours for September 2008. With time available for later implementation there will be opportunities to encourage school governing bodies to participate in the pilot.

<b>Target 32: Provide more car parking places in Kent and remove unnecessary yellow lines and bus lanes</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> David Hall

**Progress to date:**

Helping to deal with the frustration of finding sufficient car parking as well as congestion on the roads is the focus of this target.

KCC's own car parks at County Hall HQ in Maidstone (Sessions House upper and lower car parks and Invicta House multi storey car park) have been opened to the public for pay and display.

Discussions with parking providers have been held to explore the feasibility of pulling together on-land off-street parking and finding new spaces, with district councils closely involved.

Parking provision is being reviewed in Ashford, Tenterden, Canterbury, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Edenbridge and Westerham. Consideration is being given to a number of solutions relevant to the area including additional bays, multi storey car parks and resident preference parking. The potential for park and ride schemes is also being looked at, along with the identification of yellow lines that could be removed or have their waiting status changed at weekends.

For example, parking provision has been reviewed from Ashford town centre outward largely focused on the provision of resident preference schemes and the provision of additional bays. Parking provision in Tenterden is now under review and is the subject of extensive public consultation. As part of Ashford Futures a new park & ride service is proposed to be introduced in the town linked to *Smartlink*. 3 multi-storey car parks are also planned alongside new developments.

In Maidstone, reviews of residents parking schemes have been completed following public consultation in the north and south zones of the town. Some 30 additional bays have been introduced where yellow lines have been removed. Parking on single yellow lines is now permitted on Saturdays in around 60 streets. 850 additional parking spaces have been introduced in the town with the development of Fremlins. The potential for park & ride to the north of Maidstone linked to new development as well as rail stations is under investigation as part of wider efforts to tackle congestion.

With regard to bus lane provision, a section in Maidstone has been successfully removed as it did not meet the criteria (six buses per hour) and a review has been undertaken of all other sections of bus lanes in Kent. All meet the criteria set out in the Bus Strategy for Kent but new sections will be considered within this context.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Number of additional public car park spaces	New indicator	200
Kilometre length of unnecessary yellow lines removed	New indicator	10

<b>Target 33: Penalise contractors for unnecessary delays caused by road works and synchronise works to minimise disruption</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> David Hall

**Progress to date:**

KCC is pressing the government to introduce a permit scheme in 2008 for road and streetworks, which will enable significant penalties for non-compliance, including where their work causes disruption and over-runs. Preparatory work is underway to introduce a permit scheme as soon as the Traffic Management Act legislation is in place (expected April 2008). Authorities will have the power to levy fines of up to £2,500 a day as part of a hard-line approach.

In the meantime, all Kent Highway Services divisions are looking at over-runs and whether the site is still occupied resulting in a Section 74 claim against the utility as part of the inspection process. This applies to all works on the highway.

Where possible, work is synchronised by Kent Highway Services to minimise disruption. A recent example is the road works carried out at Sea Street, Whitstable which were completed in half the time by synchronising the work of five utility contractors.

The Considerate Contractor scheme was formalised in April 2007 and requires all contractors to comply with a code of conduct. The scheme has already resulted in improved relationships and dialogue between KCC, utility companies, the police and the Health and Safety Executive.

Kent Highway Services is investigating the use of IT planning software which can be used to demonstrate the impact of road works on traffic flows using simulation through mobile phone technology. This will link into the 'permit' scheme and assist in approving works on the highway.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Value of penalties issued to contractors causing unnecessary delay due to roadworks	£119,413	£120,000*

\* Traffic Management Act legislation not in place

<b>Target 34: Tackle urban congestion and reduce peak journey times between and within towns by 10% using methods such as intelligent traffic light management systems and congestion-busting teams</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> David Hall

**Progress to date:**

Congestion damages the economy, is annoying and harms the environment. KCC wants to combat congestion and this target is one of the methods to help deal with the issue.

The Traffic Management Centre (TMC) is operational in Maidstone and linking with the police and Highways Agency. It gives advanced travel information, monitors traffic ‘blackspots’ and rephases traffic lights during the rush hour. The TMC demonstrates a beneficial impact on journey times in urban Maidstone through adjusting traffic light phasing to ease a build up of congestion. Consideration is being given to extending the role of the TMC beyond Maidstone to Canterbury and Tunbridge Wells. Measures to evaluate the levels of improvement are being established to enable its effectiveness to be quantified.

A programme of implementation is being finalised for variable message signs, a key method for disseminating information on congestion and incidents. Kent Highways Services (KHS) is funding a number of these variable message signs on the county road network. In parallel, Kent Police is introducing new ways of working with regard to incident handling, which will provide significant benefits in reducing delays. Work has also been undertaken in partnership with the Highways Agency, to develop key strategic diversion routes to be used following a motorway incident.

The Kent Traffic and Travel website has been developed for Maidstone to give live travel information on roadworks, congestion, bus arrival times and traffic webcams. It was launched internally for staff to use and give feedback and then publicly launched at the Kent Show in July. Information is now provided for Canterbury and webcams have recently been added for Tunbridge Wells, as part of the wider county roll-out.

KCC has been one of the first to subscribe to the ELGIN (Electronic Local Government Information Network) system which pinpoints roadworks on a map, names the contactor, states how long the works are scheduled and its traffic impact.

Positive discussions have taken place with the police on devolving some powers to congestion busting teams. Kent’s Chief Constable has agreed a delegation of powers through the Police Reform Act and a pilot is proposed for autumn 2007 using New Roads and Streetworks Inspectors as ‘Congestion Busting Teams’.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007 Target</b>
Percentage of residents experiencing daily peak time delays (Annual Tracker Survey)	43%*	43%

\* Sample size – 1,268 people

**Target 35: Work with bus and train providers and lobby government to improve public transport services in Kent**

**Lead Cabinet Members:**  
Keith Ferrin/Roger Gough

**Lead Managing Director:**  
Adam Wilkinson

**Lead Officers:**  
Mick Sutch/David Hall

**Progress to date:**

Good quality and reliable public transport is important. Since taking over the franchise in April 2006, South Eastern Trains has continued to improve punctuality and the number of complaints about the services has continued to fall. The number of complaints has fallen by 3% over the year and the punctuality figures were recorded in the four weeks up to 23 June at 94.4% arriving within 5 minutes of timetable.

Progress towards the introduction of CTRL Domestic Services remains on target with a test train arriving in August 2007 from Japan and depots at Ashford and Ramsgate scheduled for completion by April 2008. Full CTRL Domestic Services will start in December 2009, but an interim service on the CTRL only (i.e. from Ebbsfleet and Ashford stations) could start in June 2009. A CTRL DS summit meeting with Southeastern is being held in October which will be attended by leading KCC Members.

KCC has worked with partners including MPs, PEPs, district councils, SEEDA, neighbouring counties and passengers in an effort to retain a Eurostar service between Ashford and Brussels after the CTRL is opened in November. KCC will also work with Eurostar and others to maximise the future use of Ashford and Ebbsfleet Stations.

Quality Bus Partnerships across the county are improving reliability and quality with half the total bus fleet in Kent now being easy access, low floor entry. KCC has worked with bus companies on innovative schemes such as the Thanet Loop and the Kings Hill/West Malling station shuttle as well as *Fastrack* – KCC’s own ground-breaking scheme in Dartford and Gravesend which received a national award for excellence in June 2007.

KCC has successfully bid for central government or other sources of funding to pilot innovative routes, for example, the new Dover Deal Diamond, introduced September 2006. Better connections and reliable information have demonstrated 20% patronage increases year on year. The authority already works to ensure that in partnership with operators, bus routes link to rail stations wherever possible. KCC also works with operators to encourage joint ticketing and being able to purchase bus tickets before boarding the bus through the ‘plus bus’ scheme. Over 10,000 plus bus tickets were issued between April and September 2007. The County Council will work with operators to introduce smart card technology in 2008/09.

Web-based and real-time information systems are being used to provide accurate, reliable information on public transport in Kent.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007 Target</b>
Residents who were users in the last 12 months satisfied with local bus services (Annual Tracker Survey)	72%	72%
Percentage of mainline South Eastern Trains arriving within 5 minutes of scheduled time	89.3%	85%
Percentage of South Eastern Trains’ customers with opinion of overall journey of good or satisfied (Source: National Passenger Survey – autumn wave)	78%	Not set

<b>Target 36: Commission a joint feasibility study with Essex County Council into a third lower Thames Crossing</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Mick Sutch

**Progress to date:**

The existing Dartford Crossing will soon be totally inadequate to meet the needs of the UK economy and significant congestion already occurs on a regular basis due to the limited capacity through the toll booths and the tunnel and bridge crossings.

The tolls on the Dartford Crossing generate over £50m profit per year and coupled with charging lorries entering the country through the Channel Tunnel and Kent ports, could help pay for a new Thames Crossing downstream from Dartford (a Lower Thames Crossing)

Pressure by KCC on Government has led it to look at options for addressing traffic issues at the Dartford Crossing in the short, medium and longer term, including the possibility of a new crossing in the area. A draft brief is currently being considered by Ministers and it is hoped it will be commissioned soon.

KCC has discussed Government's draft brief with the Department for Transport, Essex County Council and Thurrock Council and has suggested that KCC should be represented on the Government's study's steering group.

KCC and Essex County Council (ECC) agreed to work together looking at the possibility of building a third crossing, where it could be sited and the benefits it might bring to the area. A brief for this study, which will be used to influence the Government's study, has been drafted and is currently being considered by Portfolio Holders.

<b>Target 37: Improve the way we repair roads and pavements</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Kim Hills

**Progress to date:**

Kent residents want well-maintained roads and pavements and KCC also wants to see the repairs done as efficiently and economically as possible to a standard that will last.

£5m has already been allocated for resurfacing footways and work commenced in May 2007. Clear targets are being set to ensure efficient planning of work.

The Highways Advisory Board has approved a dual carriageway policy to ensure all maintenance on high speed roads is carried out in an inclusive manner so that one advertisement will publicise all works on dual carriageways detailing the works involved, the restricted movements and associated timescales.

KCC's Cabinet has approved an additional £5m specifically for repairs to high profile footways across the county. Of this, £2m will be used this financial year. To date, 80% of this year's footway schemes have been designed and provided to the construction arm of Kent Highway Services (KHS). Programming of the work is taking place and KCC is confident that it will be able to deliver all the schemes this year.

KHS is engaged with specialist contractors to improve the speed and quantity of pothole and road edge repairs on rural roads. This will see a specialist machine, called Jetpatcher, laying up to 16 times more material per day than is currently achieved with traditional methods. In addition, extra pothole crews are being deployed in urban areas, along with a clearer ordering of work, to ensure that repairs to potholes are made with a permanent repair within three to five days of the report, giving a better service to the public.

The implementation of hand held computers for highway inspectors is being progressed to enable defects on roads and pavements to be reported, programmed and completed with greater efficiency and with less manual data handling.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Percentage of emergency repairs completed in 2.5hrs	98.3%	99.5%
Percentage of hazard repairs completed in 5 days	98.3%	95%
Net satisfaction of residents with condition of roads in Kent (Annual Tracker Survey)	+5%	+10%

<b>Target 38: Maximise the use of previously developed land</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Richard Feasey

**Progress to date:**

People in Kent are concerned about the government's housing growth agenda and the loss of 'greenfield' space. Adoption of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan in July 2006 embeds a 70% target for the use of previously developed land in the statutory development plan for Kent and provides the framework within which proposals are developed at a local level through Local Development Frameworks.

Though Kent continues to meet and exceed the Structure Plan target in the context of rising overall levels of housing development both in terms of actual and planned developments, the challenge is to sustain this should not be underestimated especially given the higher national and draft regional targets for housing.

During 2006, KCC made strong representations to government on the development of a national planning policy for housing (PPS3). It focused specifically on the potential weakening of the priority attached to brownfield land through the operation of the 'sequential locational test' and downgrading of the role of windfall sites, that are overwhelmingly focussed on brownfield sites, in assessments of future land supply for housing.

Through its representations to the Examination in Public for the South East Plan held in late 2006, KCC sought to strengthen the regional policy framework towards the use of previously developed land including the introduction of sub-regional targets. KCC has also sought to secure a level and distribution of housing provision across Kent that reflects the pattern of opportunity provided by the re-use of previously used land through its representations on housing provision. Our views were endorsed by the Examination Panel in respect of the distribution of housing provision on previously developed land in North Kent in particular.

KCC has improved intelligence relating to Previously Developed Land by strengthening its work with districts and introducing new electronic systems.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2005/06</b>	<b>2006/07 Actual</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Percentage of housing completions on previously developed land	76.6%	Available Nov 07	75% <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source Strategy and Planning Business Plan



<b>Target 39: Bring back into use the large number of empty homes in Kent</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Susan Pledger

**Progress To Date:**

Empty properties are a waste of resources, devaluing surrounding properties and attracting anti-social behaviour.

The Empty Property Initiative has been developing two distinct, but mutual areas of work to achieve the target. The first involves partnership working with the four east Kent Districts – Dover, Shepway, Swale and Thanet to facilitate their work to bring empty properties back into use. The second involves encouraging existing owners to act regarding their empty property and help prospective owners acquire and refurbish empty property.

During the early stages a significant lack of financial resources was identified as a key element that hindered the Districts in their empty property work. In response KCC has made available £5million of capital funding that is being used on three main issues:

- Firstly, to develop an empty property loan scheme to facilitate the refurbishment of empty properties. To date over 30 loan packs have been sent out and work is being carried out with applicants to produce full applications for approval.
- Secondly, to support enforcement work in the districts. At the start of the project a skills gap was identified in the districts in their ability to deliver the full range of enforcement options available. KCC has provided training around these skills which are now being actively used. KCC funding will also be used to provide financial assistance to the Districts in conjunction with these enforcement activities. To date this funding has not been called upon as owners invariably have taken positive action themselves in response to the instigation of formal proceedings by the Districts.
- Thirdly, direct acquisition by KCC. KCC will be purchasing a number of empty properties for refurbishment and resale and is in the process of identifying suitable properties, with a focus on the key regeneration areas within the four Districts.

KCC is also looking to encourage owners to act positively and bring their empty property back into use through the provision of useful information. Key to this has been the development and launch of the *No Use Empty* website, [www.no-use-empty.org](http://www.no-use-empty.org), which has been well received by both owners and local authority empty property professionals. Marketing and publicity has been used to highlight the issue of empty properties and encourage owners to contact the Initiative. However where owners prove uncooperative the above partnership schemes with Districts can be used to ensure the property is brought back into use.

Enabling prospective owners to acquire empty properties for refurbishment is a further area being developed. KCC has established there is a buoyant market for suitable properties for refurbishment. By making empty property lists available and putting prospective purchasers in contact with owners it is engaging this active market to increase the numbers of empty properties returned to use.

Work is also underway to roll out this successful programme to other interested districts.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Number of empty properties brought back into occupied use	172	158

<b>Target 40: Ensure that new housing developments include the right infrastructure and local facilities and cater for a mix of age groups and incomes</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officers:</b> Richard Feasey/Nigel Smith

**Progress to date:**

Housing development in Kent needs to match what people require, both now and in the future. KCC seeks developer contributions for residential development and acts as an interface between service providers' strategies and actual development.

Adoption of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan in 2006 secured a robust policy framework as statutory planning policy to ensure that requirements for local community services are identified within new residential developments. It also ensures that developments do not proceed until the basis of funding for these services has been identified and agreed.

KCC's Cabinet approved the 'Developer's Guide' in March 2007. The guide is a policy-supporting document for the 'Vision for Kent' and provides a policy base for developers' contributions for community infrastructure when determining planning applications. It covers transport, primary and secondary education, libraries, adult education, youth and community and, for the first time, adult social services which includes older people and people with learning and/or physical difficulties.

The guide will be implemented through the monitoring of Local Development Frameworks, which must make reference to it, and through responses to government policy development. Submissions have already been made to Ashford and Maidstone core strategies and to supplementary planning documents issued by Canterbury and Dover districts. Additionally, KCC made representations at the Ashford Core Strategy examination in public held in June/July 2007 giving detailed evidence to support KCC's interests to ensure that the proposed Ashford Tariff took sufficient account of future provision of services provided by KCC for Kent residents.

The planning consent achieved recently for the future development of Eastern Quarry, Dartford, for example, will secure (through its Section 106 (S106) agreement) over £100 million for community and transport infrastructure needs over the next 20 years.

KCC is also working in partnership with district councils to ensure this target is reflected in local planning policy and decisions. They are using the 'Kent Design Guide', which reinforces the need for balanced communities and re-states the focus on 'lifetime homes'.

KCC has also submitted representations to government on the proposed Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) to ensure that site provision and access to PGS funds that are returned to local areas for social and community facilities is maintained under current PGS arrangements and the revised scope of S106 agreements. This is of particular significance in two-tier local authority areas.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Total value of developer contributions secured for new developments	£9.6m	£12.0m

**Target 42: Reduce the impact of KCC's buildings and vehicles on the environment, including trialling the use of bio-fuels and other new technologies**

<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officers:</b> Mike Austerberry/Carolyn McKenzie
---	--	--

**Progress to date:**

This target is a measure of KCC's own corporate environmental performance and currently focuses on the largest parts of the authority's eco-footprint - carbon dioxide emissions, water use and waste. It links with Target 41 which monitors the environmental impacts of the construction of new buildings. KCC recently established a Sustainable Estates Group to oversee corporate environmental policy on carbon management, water, waste and construction.

KCC's target is to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 10% by 2010, rising to 20% by 2015. A carbon management programme has been developed to deliver these reductions and now forms part of KCC's Climate Change Action Plan. The existing Energy Loan Fund was boosted this year with further funds to enable it to support the asset replacement programme and renewable energy projects. Completed projects include the installation of lighting controls in several schools and Invicta House at County Hall, Maidstone, as well as improvements to a number of school heating systems. These have so far saved over 300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Future improvement projects already planned will save a further 500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. A further 20 schools are expected to benefit from wind turbine or solar photo-voltaic renewable energy projects in 2007/2008.

This target currently includes only emissions arising from energy consumption in KCC buildings and KCC is committed to including other sources from 2008/09 onwards, including emissions from street lighting and traffic signals, business miles, commuter miles and waste. Our priority for this year is to improve our monitoring processes and baseline data arrangements. Overall carbon emissions have risen in the last year. However, through our co-ordinated Climate Change Action Plan and the programme of work (including revising policies, practices, training and communicating to staff) to widen the achievement of the ISO 14001 environmental management standard from a few units and directorates to all KCC, significant reductions will be made.

A target is set to reduce water consumption by 7.5% by 2010, rising to 15% by 2015. Work is underway to improve our monitoring of water use, and pilot projects have been implemented to improve water efficiency in KCC buildings (eg PIR sensor taps/urinals and low flush toilets). Part of the additional funding agreed for the Energy Loan Fund will enable us to deliver more of these water efficiency projects as part of a KCC-wide Water Action Programme.

KCC has greatly improved recycling facilities for its own sites and over the next 3 years there will be a significant reduction in KCC's own waste going to landfill.

KCC commercial vehicles currently run on a 5% biodiesel fuel mix which should increase to 30% biodiesel content during 2007/08. The practicality of collecting waste oil as a raw material for bio-diesel has been examined and the study concluded this is not feasible. Options to manufacture and supply bio-diesel and other non-food-crop biofuels in Kent are being explored.

<b>Measurable Indicator (s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2010 Target</b>
Percentage reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> from energy use in KCC buildings and schools since 2004	0% reduction on 2004 levels <sup>2</sup>	10%

<sup>2</sup> 2006/07 data approximate, still awaiting confirmed final figures, but there will be no reduction on 2004 levels and an increase since 05/06. This is because of rising energy consumption by IT systems and schools have counterbalanced the significant energy savings made elsewhere.

<b>Target 43: Expand the Clean Kent programme to tackle the top 20 fly-tipping hotspots and increase the capacity to prosecute fly-tipping offenders</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Carolyn McKenzie

**Progress to date:**

Flytipping and roadside litter blight parts of Kent’s countryside. Clean Kent is a multi-agency programme focusing specifically on delivering real improvements as set out by the Kent Agreement and Towards 2010 through raising awareness, community action, education, and enforcement.

Key to the continuing success of Clean Kent has been its high profile media campaign using television, radio, billboards and newspapers aimed at turning around accepted roles and behaviours. In February 2007 the campaign ‘Changing Views’ using the classic soundtrack ‘Oh What a Lovely War’ and ‘Goodbye’ reinforced the message that Kent is saying goodbye to graffiti, fly-tipping and litter. A roadside litter campaign in partnership with the Highways Agency was particularly successful. Future campaign messages will also include dog fouling, fast food, and smoking litter.

Community involvement is crucial. The Community Payback Scheme gives the public an opportunity to identify areas that need cleaning up through an online nomination system. Offenders then carry out the clean up as compulsory unpaid work, which is part of their sentence. The Community Payback scheme is an excellent example of partnership in action involving the Kent Probation Area, HM Prison Service, KCC and the Clean Kent Campaign and Charlton Athletic, to co-ordinate opportunities for offenders to contribute in a positive way to Kent communities.

Innovative education initiatives have been designed to underpin key messages and involve important sectors of the community such as schools, businesses and landowners. Engaging 12-14 year olds (a peak age range in youth offending statistics) has been a priority. This has involved theatre style presentations with young offenders recounting real-life experiences and young people debating the issues. It is expected that this project will be rolled out to all secondary schools by the end of 2009.

Business engagement through a multi agency partnership with the Environment Agency’s BREW Programmes has also produced some very positive results. Using tactics such as free breakfasts, over 70 businesses have already been given advice in order to increase their compliance with legislation. This project is being replicated across Kent, targeting areas with high levels of fly tipping. In addition, Clean Kent and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty teams have joined forces to provide practical help and funding for private landowners who suffer fly-tipping, and enable successful prosecution of offenders. Activities include the provision of preventative security measures such as gates, bunds, and covert cameras to discourage illegal activity.

Underpinning all Clean Kent Activity is a stronger action on enforcement. KCC, Kent Districts and the Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) are taking an innovative approach, combining resources to provide three specifically targeted teams to enable a more efficient and cost effective approach to investigations, clean-ups and prosecutions to reduce fly tipping, littering and graffiti across Kent. This approach has been strengthened further through KCC’s Analysis and Intelligence Team who are currently developing a GIS-based fly-tipping system to identify the key hot spots in Kent, provide real intelligence for prosecutions and better performance measures.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Percentage of residents who think Kent is a clean county	59%	78%*
Number of loose rubbish fires	1,755	2,297*
Number of fly tipping incidents	27,854	30,272*

\*Long term targets set in 2004 for the initial Clean Kent programme within the Kent Agreement which concludes in March 08

<b>Target 44: Establish a Global Centre in Kent that will lead the world in developing crops to provide energy, medicines and other products</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Stuart Gibbons

**Progress To Date:**

KCC wants to play a part in transforming rural economies in the developing world through the development of non-food crops whilst ensuring Kent farmers and landowners use the growing of these new crops to benefit their businesses.

Three strategic documents are in now in place - a Strategic Plan, mainly targeted at public organisations and academia, a promotional leaflet, targeting at industrial end-users, and a three-year Business Plan, with attached budgets.

The Global Centre's key stakeholders and Inception Team have met on several occasions with Imperial College, the Food and Agriculture Organisation and United Nations representatives, to identify and establish future aims. This includes securing £0.5 million, which will enable the Centre to get its first three years under way. The source of this funding is going to be the private sector or rapid action grant making bodies. Securing funding is critical to success of this target and if this is not in place by December 2006, the work cannot continue in its present form.

The stakeholders have been using their contacts to raise awareness, putting the case forward to a range of businesses and commercial leaders. Kimberley Burge consultants, part of the Inception Team, applied for funding for the Knowledge Network Project, one of the centre's main inception projects, from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Challenge funds, aiming to use the whole procedure as a platform for generating interest in the emergence of the Centre.

The Global Centre will be established either as a trust deed or a company, with a clear decision leadership structure and an increased number of high profile advocates on the board. The Centre's initial trustees are Lord Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, Lady Phyllis Sondes (Lees Court Estate), Cliff Spencer (Springdale Group), and Amir Dossal (United Nations Fund for International Partnerships).

**Target 45: Protect and enhance Kent's ancient woodlands and improve access to countryside, coast and heritage**

**Lead Cabinet Member:**  
Keith Ferrin

**Lead Managing Director:**  
Adam Wilkinson

**Lead Officer:**  
Judith Feline

**Progress to date:**

Pressures from development, climate change and changes in land ownership make long-term land management more difficult. KCC, Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) unit and the Forestry Commission identified the purchase, breaking up and resale of woodlands (wood lotting), particularly of ancient woodlands, as an important issue which may be threatening the landscape quality and biodiversity of the woodlands within the AONB and elsewhere in Kent. The AONB commissioned a study by consultants, Land Use Consultants (LUC), with financial contributions from KCC and other partners, to investigate the extent of wood lotting in Kent, the positive and negative impacts, and to identify best practice in terms of management and controls. The survey stated that of the 47,719 hectares of woodland in Kent, 3.7% (1,774 hectares) had been identified as lotted, being lotted, or potentially lotted. A draft report has been issued and some of the key findings include:

- The picture is quite mixed with some woodlands showing severe damage occurring, but elsewhere lotted woodland showing no signs of damage
- Most owners have generally benign objectives for their woodland but this still leads to development (sheds, fencing, and clearings) and a lack of management
- A key issue is the legacy of lotting, as seen at Cobham and Bredhurst where there is dereliction and lack of single ownership leading to illegal and inappropriate actions by others, for example, fly tipping, damage by 4x4 motorbikes etc
- The existing planning process can be effective but is laborious and expensive and variably applied.

A steering group, led by Kent Downs AONB unit, with representatives from KCC, the Forestry Commission and others, is now looking at the report to propose and agree recommendations for action which may include a more proactive approach to woodland management and action plans.

KCC commented on the proposed Local Development Frameworks for Ashford and Tunbridge Wells, to seek to protect the biodiversity, landscape and heritage of those areas. Work is continuing on revising the ancient woodland inventory for Tunbridge Wells and initiating a new inventory for Ashford.

The Countryside Access Improvement Plan, a key document in how KCC will manage Kent's Public Rights of Way (PROW) network, has now reached its final draft, following extensive consultation with users, partners and the public. It has highlighted what people think should be the priorities for the management of the network and will be the basis of KCC's policy on PROW for the next 10 years. The final consultation period ends on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 and the final Plan will be produced in November 2007 (in accord with the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

In 2006/7 we removed 445 stiles from Public Rights of Way in Kent and replaced them with kissing-gates and gates. This is helping to make the network more accessible to a wider range of users. We are currently exceeding our annual target of 200 removals per year and this will contribute to the improvement of our Best Value Performance Indicator on the accessibility of the network (BVPI 178). A Ploughing and Cropping campaign is being run in Mid and West Kent this year to improve accessibility to the network, and follow-up in East Kent is planned following last year's campaign.

The 'Explore Kent' website was nominated for an e-government National Award 2006 in the 'Local e-government excellence: Team' category. All nominations were described as being 'the best of the best' at providing on-line services to customers. Developments are continuing on the website and will include podcast audio walks, 360° panoramic views of one of our country parks, articles on issues of interest and details of guided walks.

KCC launched a new guidebook to the Saxon Shore Way, providing an overview of this popular route as well as maps and guides to eight short circular walks at Rochester, Oare, Grove Ferry, Sandwich, St Margaret's Bay, Lympne, Hamstreet and Stone-in-Oxney. Further guidebooks are planned.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Number of stiles removed from the public rights of way network	445	200
Percentage of public rights of way signed and easy to use (BVPI 178) (5% random sample)	67.4%	70%

<b>Target 46: Lobby Government, the water companies and developers to ensure that house building programmes do not threaten Kent's water supplies</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Roger Gough	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Alan Turner

**Progress To Date:**

Drinking water is not an unlimited resource. Households use 75% of it and so improved water efficiency in homes would relieve some of this pressure.

KCC's Water Policy was adopted in December 2006. Progress on the specific actions within the policy are detailed below:

**Water Policy Action 1: Spotlight on Kent's water companies**

- Water companies are now starting their planning for the period 2010 – 2015 and January 2008 is the best opportunity to influence this.
- A workshop with the Environment Agency is being planned for November 2007 and a meeting with water companies will take place in January 2008.

**Water Policy Action 2: Lobby for investment in infrastructure**

- Water infrastructure provision was covered in the South East Plan Sub-regional strategies to which KCC had significant input, including making representation at the Examination in Public.
- Meetings have been held with Mid Kent Water to try to progress new infrastructure and to stress the importance of demand management.
- The Bewl-to-Ashford pipeline is under construction.
- KCC is influencing a Water Cycle Strategy for Kent Thameside.
- Within the Ashford growth area KCC is lobbying for adequate investment in wastewater treatment to secure future improvements in river water quality.

**Water Policy Action 3: Pilot and roll-out water-saving technology**

- KCC organised a major seminar held in March 2007 to disseminate results of water-savings demonstration to major housing developers and local authorities.
- KCC is also working with Hillreed Homes and Mid Kent Water to trial a water-saving tariff on a new housing development in Ashford. This is the first of its kind in the UK and it is progressing well. The demonstration and trial have won several awards and the overall work programme won a national commendation in March 2007.
- KCC has successfully lobbied government on the Code for Sustainable Homes, the tightening of Building Regulations in relation to water efficiency and on the future changes to the Water Fitting Regulations.

**Water Policy Action 4: Wider use of water-saving technology**

- A conference presentation was given on water saving for businesses and commercial users in February 2007.
- KCC is leading the development of a 500 home pilot project in Ashford to retrofit water saving measures into existing homes.

**Water Policy Action 5: Water conservation campaigns**

- An Ashford Water Festival was held in May 2007 to raise awareness of the importance of water conservation.
- KCC is currently working with partners to determine the best to approach public campaigns in the future.

**Water Policy Action 6: Reduce KCC's water consumption**

- It is intended that £200k of the £1m Energy Loan Fund (see target 42) will be made available for water reduction measures for all of the KCC estate.



Direct payments are being actively promoted leading to a significant increase in take-up. The Kent Direct Payment Scheme provides a quality service to individuals who choose to employ personal assistants and it has developed some excellent DVDs as a training resource, to give real examples of how direct payments have been used to improve the quality of an individual's life. These examples are also available on the Kent Direct Payment Web-site. Currently 60% of direct payment recipients choose to employ staff and many people who initially used agencies are transferring to the employment option.

The Kent Card is a key innovation which was launched in March 2007. It offers major opportunities to enable people taking up Direct Payments to use the card flexibly to pay for services. The Kent Card will be well placed to bring together other sources of funding into an individual budget using the card for purchases. Central government and other local authorities have shown an interest in the Kent Card. Recently, KCC and the Royal Bank of Scotland hosted an event to present the card to interested parties. The card is being developed in partnership with older and disabled people.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>2006/07</b>	<b>2007/08 Target</b>
Older people helped to live at home per 1,000 population aged 65 and over (PAF C32)	75.1	76
Number of people receiving Direct Payments	1,389	1,650
Number of people supported through TeleCare	643	1,500 by 2010
Number of people supported through TeleHealth	160	1,000 by 2010

<b>Target 59: Work with our partners to reduce the number of deaths and serious casualties from road accidents</b>		
<b>Lead Cabinet Member:</b> Keith Ferrin	<b>Lead Managing Director:</b> Adam Wilkinson	<b>Lead Officer:</b> Caroline Bruce

**Progress to date:**

Kent County Council takes its responsibility to cut the number of deaths and serious injuries (KSIs) on Kent’s roads very seriously. Through a second Public Service Agreement (PSA2) with Government, it is working with key agencies such as the Police and other emergency services to bring forward the Government target of reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured on Kent’s roads by 40% to 2007 from 2010. The County Council is confident that this will be achieved although this not a foregone conclusion.

The County Council’s approach to reducing KSIs has been to integrate the known benefits of education, enforcement, engineering and evaluation. A programme of countywide publicity campaigns, pro-active press features and public engagement projects using Road Safety Officers have proved effective. Work with Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue to identify shared priorities and work on joint initiatives has led to innovative ways of interfacing with people who are most likely to be killed or seriously injured. For example, an education scheme for drivers caught speeding has demonstrated a 90% success rate in terms of re-offending. Education campaigns in Kent’s schools have proved particularly effective in demonstrating to young people the dangers of inappropriate speed.

Beyond PSA2, the County Council must stay focussed on reducing KSIs to ensure that it once again meets the Government target in 2010. We will continue to strengthen links with key agencies and ensure that the method for identifying appropriate crash remedial measures is improved through more accurate and consistent crash data recording and better prioritisation of schemes through use of the innovative assessment tool PIPKIN (Prioritising Investment Programmes on the Kent Integrated Network).

The County Council is working closely with Parish Councils in reviewing speed limits on all A and B class roads in Kent. This will result in significant improvements to “village gateways” together with signing and a more consistent approach to speed limits across the County.

Additional work has been carried out to reduce the risk of corporate manslaughter prosecutions to KCC including a new system introduced to improve asset management that improves highway safety.

<b>Measurable Indicator(s)</b>	<b>Base 2006</b>	<b>2007 Target</b>
Number of road accident casualties – Killed or seriously injured (excluding Highways Agency roads i.e. motorways)	559	536

By: Paul Carter, Leader of the Council

To: Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee –  
27 September 2007

Subject: RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON OVERVIEW COMMITTEES

---

## Introduction

1. (1) You will be aware that in July I commissioned a questionnaire of all Policy Overview Committee Members. A copy of the analysis of the questionnaire, which you have already seen, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

(2) Members will be aware that the questionnaire asked a range of questions regarding the powers of the Policy Overview Committees and how well those powers were used together with some more specific questions around the venue for the meetings, whether Members felt adequately trained, whether sufficient information was made available in between meetings etc.

(3) The powers of the Policy Overview Committees are set out on page 5 of Appendix 1 to this report.

(4) Since the Cabinet government was introduced across the political spectrum Cabinet Members and non-executive Members have had concerns about the effectiveness of Policy Overview Committees.

(5) When I became Leader I made it clear to Cabinet Members and Chief Officers that they must ensure that their diaries are kept clear to attend meetings of the Policy Overview Committee to which their portfolio reports. This has not always been possible but Cabinet Members and Managing Directors are now committed to ensuring that this is the case for the future. Many non-executive Members feel that the Cabinet is becoming remote from the non-executive Members and as a consequence non-executive Members feel less well informed. Non-executive Members also find that it is difficult to hold the Cabinet Members to account or to review the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets.

(6) However, it is also fair to say that non-executive Members of the Council have not made the best use of the wide ranging powers of the Policy Overview Committees (page 5, Appendix 1). Members' responses to the questionnaire made it clear that the Policy Overview Committee which exercises the powers to the greatest extent is the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee and the least is the Children, Families and Education Policy Overview Committee.

## **Specific Concerns from the Questionnaire which need Addressing**

(1) Not surprisingly, the power to appoint Select Committees and Member involvement in Select Committee processes is welcomed. Select Committees are one of the successes of Cabinet government. These Committees have added value and made a significant impact to County Council policy, for example the recent report on Home to School Transport, Climate Change, Transition and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

(2) It is fair to say that these important pieces of work are not always given the recognition and media coverage they deserve with the focus primarily on the Executive which can undervalue the role of these non-executive Committees.

(3) One of the specific concerns raised in the responses to the questionnaire is that there is too much officer input into the Policy Overview Committee process and meetings and insufficient time allowed for Members to ask questions. Members will also have received a questionnaire from the political group whips and this too highlighted the need to provide the opportunity for Members to ask questions of the Cabinet Member(s).

(4) Another power of concern to the Policy Overview Committee Members was that they felt that they did not discharge as well as they could scrutinising the performance of other public bodies in Kent.

## **How can the Policy Overview Committees be strengthened and made more effective?**

(1) The potential workload of the Policy Overview Committees is huge – so how can we ensure that the right balance is achieved in keeping Members informed to address the perception of remoteness from the Cabinet and focusing the agenda on outcomes which add value to the Executive and Council?

### *Forward Work Programme*

(2) Key to the success of the effectiveness of the Policy Overview Committees is identifying a focused Forward Work Programme in addition to the generic items already in all Policy Overview Committees work programmes, e.g. Medium Term Plan and Budget, Annual Plan, reviewing the performance on the achievement of 2010 targets to name but a few but performance management in its broadest context which should be a fundamental component of a Policy Overview Committees work programme.

(3) The work programme needs to focus on specific areas which are topical so that non-executive Members have an opportunity to contribute before policies are finalised.

(4) An area for future inclusion in Policy Overview Committee work programmes will be how the targets in the Kent Area Agreement are being achieved. The Committee are reminded that there is a uniform approach to the way that the agenda planning and Forward Work Programme is currently approached. On a two

monthly cycle the Chairman and spokesmen of the Committee meet with the Cabinet Member(s), Lead Members and Managing Directors to share information and plan future agendas.

(5) These meetings are set for a year in advance and the above Members and officers all have these dates in their diaries.

(6) What might strengthen this process would be:-

- (a) the Chairman and spokesmen of the Committee being more proactive in inviting Members of the Committee to identify potential issues for inclusion on the agenda;
- (b) a more rigorous process by us as Cabinet Members in identifying from our work programme how the Policy Overview Committees could be involved; and
- (c) whether any of the above are related issues which could be dealt with through a more local body such as a Local Board or, in cases of multi-agency work a Joint Board or Forum.

### *Information*

(7) Often the Policy Overview Committees are used as a platform for Cabinet Member(s) and the Managing Director to share information but is this the most effective use of a Policy Overview Committee's time with such a demanding workload? If we are looking at Member briefings outside of the Policy Overview Committee then often attendance is poor so what can we do creatively to address this imbalance?

(8) How can we bring the plethora of information together in one place so that the information a Member has access to is succinct, readable and if the Member wants to delve further there is a link to further reading? Do we make best use of the Information Point? The Member survey recently undertaken by the political whips has suggested making greater use of the Information Point and re-launching this service. Arrangements are being made for a Member User Group to be established and this will be considered by the Selection Committee at its meeting on 10 October 2007 but with a suggested term of reference of making the Information Point the focal point for disseminating information based on best practice elsewhere.

### **Conclusion**

(1) Cabinet Members are committed to attending meetings of the Policy Overview Committees and being held to account for the decisions and actions we are taking and for the balance of responding to Members questions being made by ourselves and not by the Managing Director or the staff.

(2) Also acknowledging that the work of the Policy Overview Committees is enormous we will be ensuring that our contributions to your work programme are tightly focused and we would welcome your input and advice into the issues that we are dealing with.

(3) Appropriate, relevant, interesting agenda setting is vitally important to the POC process.

Background Information: *None*

### Survey for KCC Members on Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The purpose of the survey was to take stock on how Members feel that Overview and Scrutiny Committees have performed, and to identify potential areas for improvement. The survey was distributed on 2 July 2007 with a deadline for responses of 13 July. A total of 31 responses were received, the last on 24 July, representing a response rate of 50% of Members who sit on Policy Overview Committees.

#### Q1 Members were asked which of the following Policy Overview Committees they sat on and responded as follows

Adult Services POC	8
Children, Families and Education POC	11
Communities POC	7
Corporate Services POC	5
Environment & Regeneration POC	9
TOTAL	40

In KCC's Constitution there are eight powers for each Policy Overview Committee.

Power 1 is to assist and advise the Council, the Leader and the Cabinet in the development of the Policy Framework.

Power 2 is to review the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets.

Power 3 is to require the Leader, Cabinet Members and officers to attend before it and answer their questions.

Power 4 is to review or scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in Kent, invite reports from them and request them to address the Committee about their activities and performance.

Power 5 is to question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

Power 6 is to conduct research, community and other consultation about service performance, policy issues and possible actions.

Power 7 is to appoint Select Committees (with the legal status of Sub-Committees) to conduct reviews with the same powers as the main Committee.

Power 8 is to make reports and recommendations to the Council, the Leader, the Cabinet or any other Council Committee arising from the exercise of the preceding terms of reference or affecting Kent or its inhabitants within their allocated areas of responsibility.

## Qs 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16

Members of each Policy Overview Committee were asked to indicate how much they consider each of the powers is exercised.

In the following table a score has been given for each power and each POC representing Members' responses weighted to take account for whether each power was exercised fully or not at all. A score of 1.00 indicates that all Members responded that the power was exercised fully at that particular POC. A score of 0.10 indicates that all Members responded that the power was not exercised at all at that particular POC.

Power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
POC								
AS POC	0.62	0.60	0.58	0.40	0.40	0.58	0.88	0.49
CFE POC	0.38	0.48	0.30	0.28	0.38	0.51	0.68	0.48
CMY POC	0.57	0.71	0.65	0.37	0.40	0.54	0.63	0.58
CS POC	0.64	0.64	0.76	0.24	0.40	0.44	0.32	0.36
E&R POC	0.54	0.45	0.52	0.50	0.44	0.52	0.50	0.44
Mean	0.55	0.58	0.56	0.36	0.40	0.52	0.60	0.47

For each power the figure highlighted in green indicates the POC where it is exercised to the fullest extent and the figure highlighted in red indicates the POC where it is exercised to the least extent.

The power that Members feel is exercised to the fullest extent overall is Power 7 – appointing Select Committees - at Adult Services POC.

Power 7 has the highest average score meaning it is exercised more than any other power at all the POCs, on average.

The power that Members feel is exercised to the least extent overall is Power 4 – reviewing or scrutinising the performance of other public bodies in Kent - at Corporate Services POC.

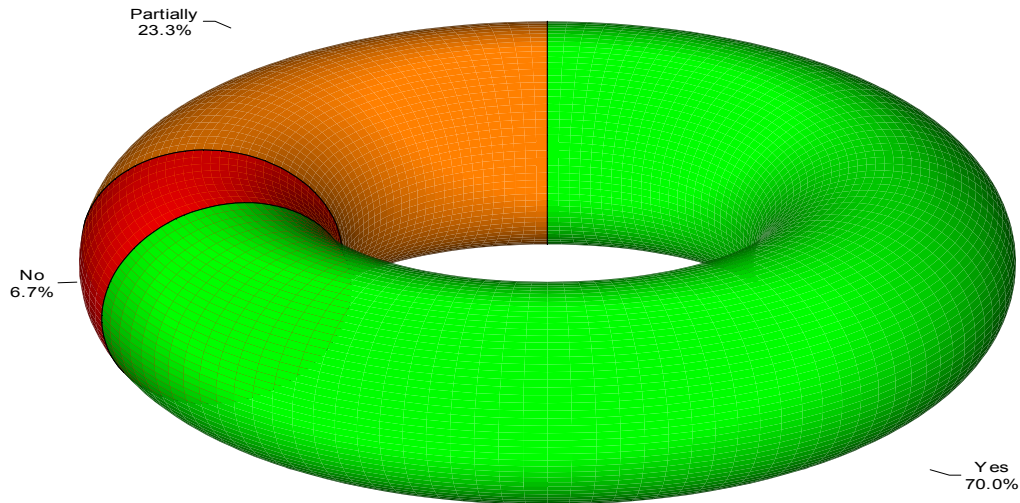
Power 4 has the lowest average score meaning it is exercised less than any other power at all the POCs, on average.

The POC that Members feel exercises the powers to the fullest extent overall is Adult Services.

The POC that Members feel exercises the powers to the least extent overall is Children, Families & Education.



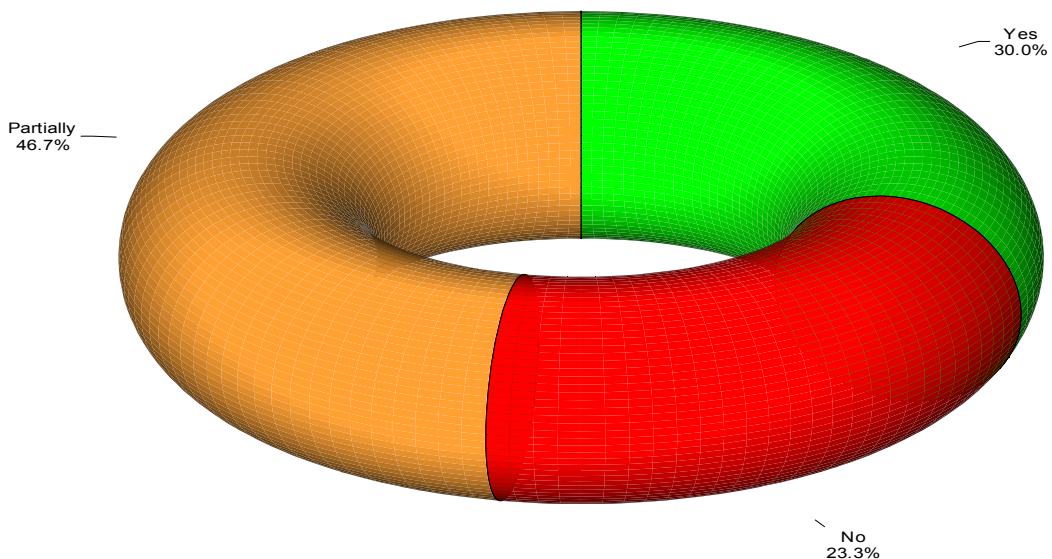
**Q18 Members were asked whether they had all the skills necessary to be an effective Member of a Policy Overview Committee.**



70% of respondents believed that they have all the skills necessary to be effective Members of Policy Overview Committees, compared with 7% who do not have all the skills and 23% who have some but not all of the skills.

Nine Members gave follow up responses. Three felt they had enough skills and a further three felt they could learn more and improve. Two Members identified the problem of time as a barrier to obtaining skills and also obtaining information from officers.

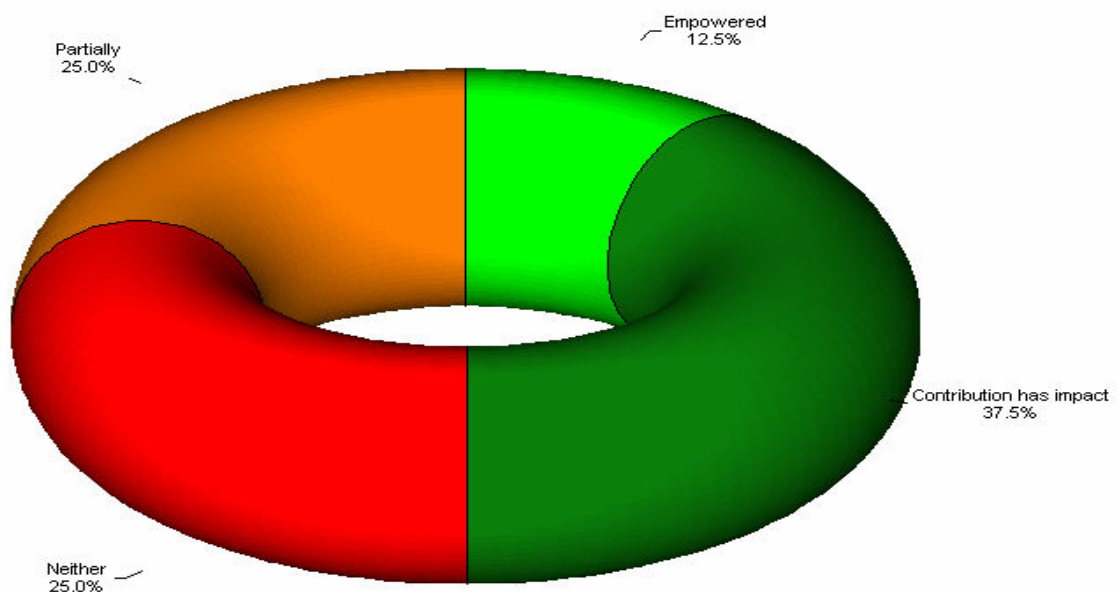
**Q19 Members were asked if they believed that they can influence policy and the decision making process.**



30% of respondents believe that they can influence policy and the decision making process, compared with 23% who do not and 47% who believe their influence is partial.

13 responses were given to exemplify the answer that influence was partial. Of these four indicated that they had little or no influence and two questioned whether Members of POCs are listened to. One commented that it was difficult for POCs meeting four times a year to keep up with the agenda of Cabinet which meets every six weeks.

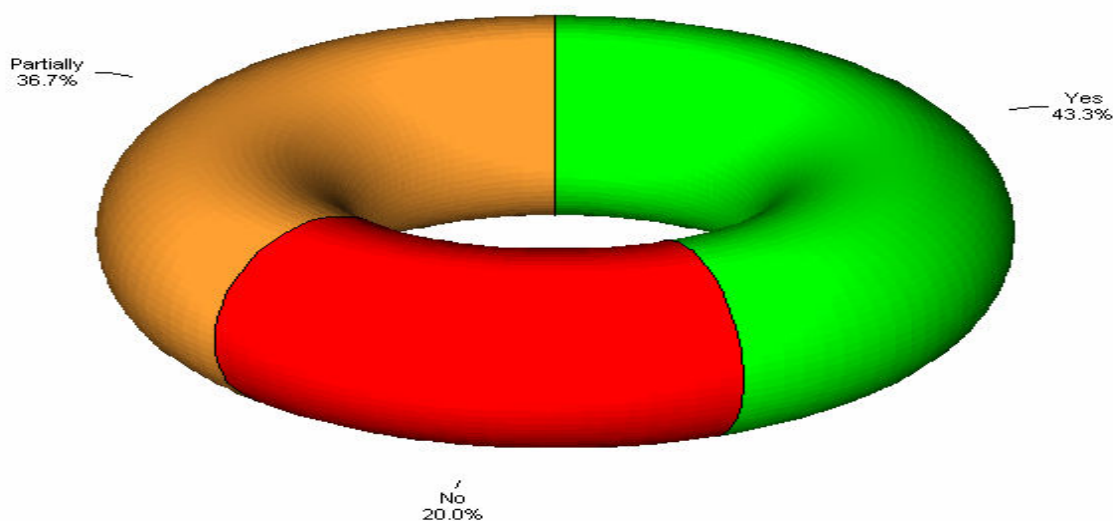
**Q20 Members were asked if they felt empowered and that their contribution to a Policy Overview Committee had an impact.**



13% of respondents feel empowered and 38% feel that their contribution to a POC has had an impact, whereas 25% feel neither empowered nor that their contribution has had an impact and 25% consider their contribution and impact has been partial.

10 responses were made to support the answer that Members' contribution and impact has been partial. One indicated that policy had been agreed when an issue arrives at POC. Another wondered whether the opinion of the minority group was taken into consideration. Two responses consider that POCs are too weak in comparison with the Executive and a further one suggested that POCs could achieve so much more.

**Q21 Members were asked if they believe that items on the agenda for a Policy Overview Committee are the most appropriate.**



43% of respondents feel that items on the agenda for their POC are the most appropriate, whereas 20% do not agree and 37% consider their agenda items are only partially appropriate.

12 responses were received explaining the view that agenda items were only partially appropriate. Two mentioned the need for POCs to monitor budgets. One suggested that POCs should examine the Annual Report, but at an appropriate time. Two commented on the vast range POCs have to cover and one suggested that the agenda of CFE POC was far too crowded making it difficult for Members to absorb all the reading and make a detailed contribution as the business is hurried on. One response reiterated the view that Members should have input into agendas.

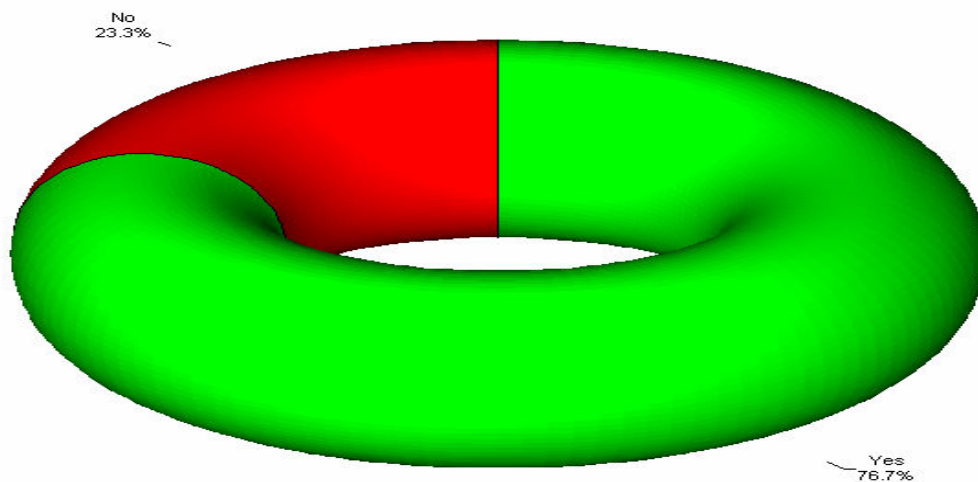
**Q22 Is the balance right between the time officers speak at POCs and the time Members have to ask questions**

	<i>Too much officer time</i>	<i>Just right</i>	<i>Too much Member time</i>
Adult Services POC	55%	44%	0
Children, Families and Education POC	66%	33%	0
Communities POC	29%	71%	0
Corporate Services POC	25%	75%	0
Environment & Regeneration POC	50%	50%	0

For none of the POCs did Members think they had too much time to ask questions. For two POCs – Corporate Services and Communities - the majority of Members agreed that the balance of time was just right.

For Children, Families and Education and Adult Services POCs a majority of Members indicated that there was too much officer time. For Environment & Regeneration POC Members were equally divided between too much officer time and just right.

**Q23 Members were asked if they welcome the opportunity of holding POC meetings outside strategic HQ when appropriate.**

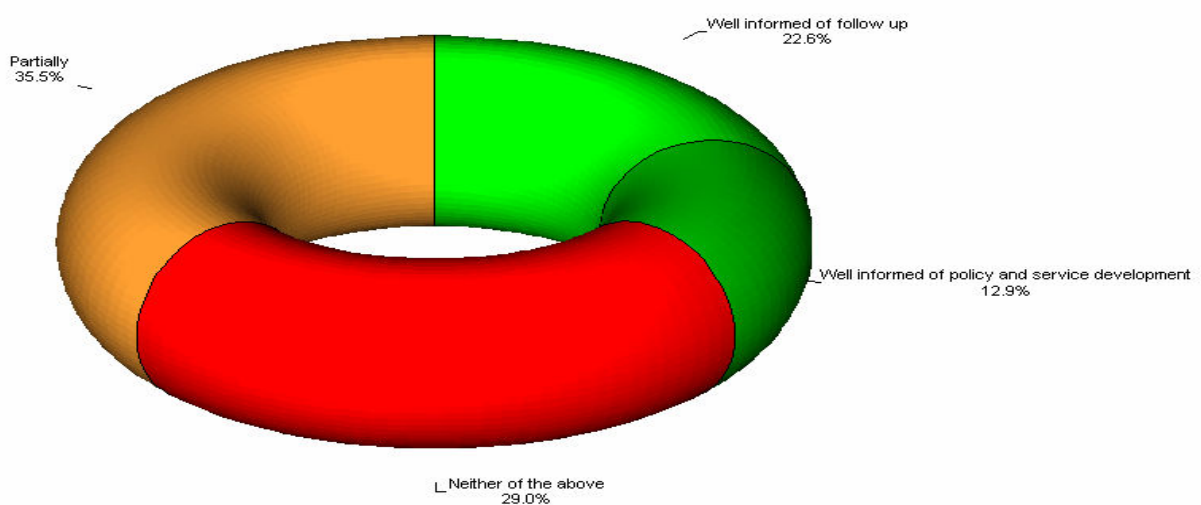


77% do welcome the opportunity but 23% do not.

**Q24 Members were asked if external agencies be invited where appropriate.**

100% of the 29 responses agreed that external agencies should be invited to POCs where appropriate, with none disagreeing.

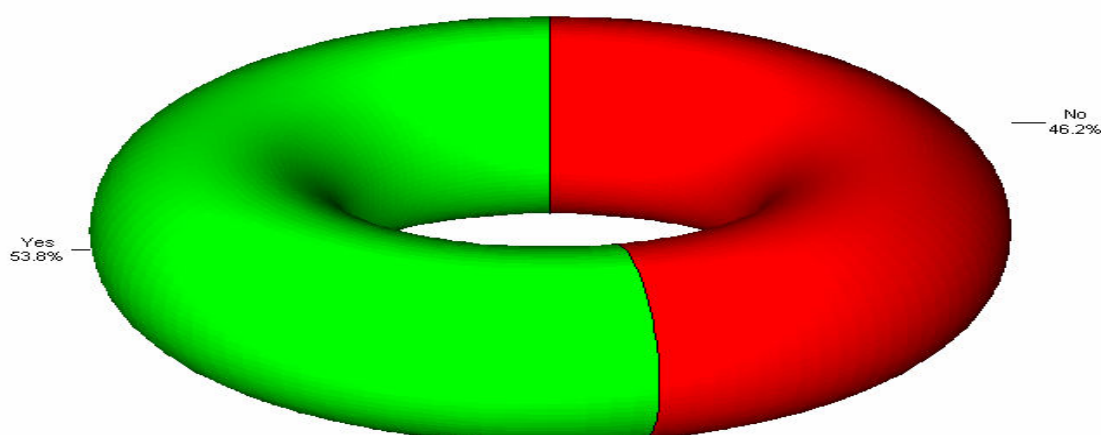
**Q25 Members were asked if they are you kept sufficiently well informed of follow up and of Policy and Service Developments in between meetings.**



23% responded that they were well informed of follow up and 13% were well informed of policy and service development. 36% considered they were partially informed but 29% were not well informed of follow up or policy development.

12 responses were received explaining the response partially. Four responses suggested that follow up did not happen at all or too infrequently. Two indicated that follow up was particularly important because POC meetings are so far apart. One response was that the best information was provided by Members' Information sheets from the library service. Another response was that information on policy development needs radical improvement.

**Q26 Do you think that changing Member roles could help POCs achieve tangible outcomes from their meetings?**



54% consider that changing Member roles could help POCs achieve tangible outcomes from their meetings, whereas 45% do not.

15 responses were received to the question on how Member roles could be changed. Three responses were that the question was not understood, although one suggested changing the Chairman from time to time. One response said that POCs should take a more strategic approach and should not be a forum for Members to raise local issues that they have nowhere else to raise. Two responses mention POC Members influencing the agenda. A further suggestion was that there should be an agreed definition of what the Member role on a POC was.

**Q27 Members were asked what works best with the Policy Overview Committees at the moment.**

20 responses were received and of these eight mentioned the flow of information. Three mentioned constructive cross party working. One mentioned the ability to pose questions generally and one cited questioning the Executive. One response indicated that the relationship with officers worked well with POCs.

**Q28 Members were also asked what has worked less well with the Policy Overview Committees.**

19 responses were received. One of these, that there was a limited agenda with little time for debate and too much for presentation, summarised the views expressed in about half of the responses. However, other responses indicate enjoyable and worthwhile meetings and identify that improvement will centre around agenda items and timing of debate to influence outcomes.

**Q29 And finally Members were asked for any other comments they would like to make.**

19 responses were received to this also, ranging from the opinion that POCs are wasting people's time to the view that the POCs are immensely valuable. Two comments were made that all day meetings are not a good idea. One comment was that Children Families and Education POC covers such a wide topic span and should have sub-committees to examine all the parts of its important and fast moving agenda. Other responses indicated that POCs should look at budgets more than once a year, that scrutiny should be part of POC's role, that Cabinet Scrutiny should have been included in the survey and that POCs need their own research capability.