

**ENVIRONMENT, HIGHWAYS AND WASTE POLICY
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Thursday, 25th March, 2010

10.00 am

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

ENVIRONMENT, HIGHWAYS AND WASTE POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25th March, 2010, at 10.00 am Ask for Karen Mannering
Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Telephone 01622 694367
Maidstone

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the meeting

Membership (12)

Conservative (11): Mr C Hibberd (Chairman), Mr J R Bullock, MBE, Mr N J Collor,
Mr J Cubitt, Mr M J Harrison, Mr J D Kirby, Mr S Manion,
Mr R A Pascoe, Mr W Richardson, Mrs E M Tweed and
Mr M Whiting

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr M Robertson (Vice-Chairman)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

Item No

A. Committee Business

- A1 Substitutes
- A2 Declaration of interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting
- A3 Minutes - 22 January 2010 (Pages 1 - 6)

B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- B1 Cabinet Member's and Executive Director's Update (Oral report)
- B2 Financial Monitoring Report (To follow)
- B3 Kent Winter Service Review - December 2009 to February 2010 (Pages 7 - 18)
- B4 Public Transport Development (Pages 19 - 26)
- B5 Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2009 (Pages 27 - 34)
- B6 KHS Contracts - A Brief Overview (Pages 35 - 36)
- B7 Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS) - Presentation

C. SELECT COMMITTEE UPDATE

C1 Select Committee - update (Pages 37 - 38)

EXEMPT ITEMS

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

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

Wednesday, 17 March 2010

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

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

**ENVIRONMENT, HIGHWAYS AND WASTE POLICY OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 22 January 2010.

PRESENT: Mr C Hibberd (Chairman), Mr N J Collor, Mr J Cubitt, Mr D S Daley (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M Robertson), Mr M J Harrison, Mr J D Kirby, Mr S Manion, Mr R A Pascoe, Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr J R Bullock, MBE), Mrs E M Tweed and Mr M Whiting

ALSO PRESENT: Mr N J Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Austerberry (Executive Director, Environment, Highways and Waste), Dr L Davies (Director, Environment & Waste) and Mr R Hallett (Directorate Finance Manager)

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Chairman:-

- (a) referred to the recent bad weather and informed Members that a final winter service report would be submitted to the Committee in March; and*
- (b) reminded Members to submit items for the Agenda to Mr Hibberd.*

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2009
(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2009 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Cabinet Member's and Executive Director's Update (Oral report)
(Item B1)

(1) Mr Chard gave a verbal report on the following issues:-

- Winter Service
- Kent Permit Scheme
- Freedom Pass
- East Kent Waste
- Lower Thames Crossing
- Rail – Maidstone to Cannon Street

(2) RESOLVED that the update be noted and a copy circulated to Members of the Committee.

3. Financial Monitoring 2009/10

(Item B2 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mr Mike Austerberry, Executive Director of Environment, Highways and Waste)

(1) A detailed quarterly budget monitoring report was presented to Cabinet, usually in September, December and March, and a draft final outturn report in June. The reports outlined the full financial position for each portfolio and were reported to POSCs after they had been considered by Cabinet. In the intervening months an exception report was made to Cabinet outlining any significant variations from the quarterly report. The November exception monitoring report for 2009/10 was submitted for the information of POSC members.

(2) RESOLVED that the budget variations for the EHW Portfolio for 2009/10 based on the November exception report to Cabinet be noted.

4. Budget 2010/11 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2010/13

(Item B3 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mr Mike Austerberry, Executive Director of Environment, Highways and Waste)

(1) The Committee considered draft budget proposals for the Environment, Highways and Waste Directorate, with reference to the KCC published budget consultation paper issued on 5 January 2010. The report also provided a response to the issues raised at the Informal Member Group of this Committee, created in November 2009 to discuss detailed budget issues.

(2) Mr Chard and Mr Hallett introduced the draft Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan for the EHW Directorate. The total of the proposed savings and income generation required in order to meet the indicative cash limit for 2010/11 was £3.2m. The majority of the savings would come from improvements in highways procurement. There would also be staffing efficiencies; over £1m savings in Waste; and the ending of the 2010 target for the Clean Kent campaign.

(3) The gross savings were offset by the reversal of the capital/revenue swap on support for socially necessary but uneconomic bus routes. A further £0.04m of net income was to be generated by Country Parks in 2010/11 with additional increases in targets across the following two years. In line with the zero pay award for KCC officers for 2010/11, it was proposed that no inflation was added to highways fees and charges for the new financial year.

(4) There followed a question and answer session which included the following issues:-

- (a) support for socially necessary but uneconomic bus routes;
- (b) the modernisation and development of waste facilities;
- (c) staffing efficiencies in Highways, Resources and Planning through delayering and streamlining processes;
- (d) an extension to the Freedom Pass.

(5) During debate certain Members expressed their concern that the relative priorities the IMG placed upon the various services may not be representative of all Members' views.

(6) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the proposal **not** to add an inflation increase to highways fees and charges in 2010/11, be noted; and
- (b) the revenue and capital budget proposals, along with the responses made to questions from Members be noted.

5. Environment, Highways and Waste Half Year Business Plan Monitoring 2009/10

(Item B4 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mr Richard Hallett, Directorate Finance Manager, Environment, Highways and Waste)

(1) The report detailed the directorate's progress against the Business Plans during the period 1 April to 30 September 2009, covering achievement of performance against activity/projects and targets. Progress was presented to Cabinet on 30 November 2009.

(2) As part of the half-year monitoring, progress was checked against each of the 2009/10 Service Level Business Plans whereby most of the Projects, Developments or Key Actions were identified as 'on-course' or 'done and ongoing'. A copy of the Executive Director's Statement and half year monitoring report giving a summary of progress was set out in the Appendix to the report. The monitoring showed that 6% of the 2009/10 actions were not 'on-target' to complete this financial year and were listed with reasons and proposed actions.

(3) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the progress against Environment, Highways & Waste Service Level Business Plans for the period 1 April to 30 September 2009 be noted; and
- (b) a presentation and discussion relating to the freight structure be arranged for a future meeting of the POSC.

6. Equalities in Environment, Highways and Waste Annual Report

(Item B5 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; Mr Mike Austerberry, Executive Director (EHW); and Dr Linda Davies, Chair, Equalities Group (EHW))

(1) The report provided an update on progress with Environment, Highways and Waste directorate's work on Equalities and Diversity, in support of Kent County Council's ambition to achieve level 'excellent' in the Equalities Framework for Local Government (EFLG) by March 2011.

(2) A new Equality Bill, drawing together all previous Equalities and Diversity legislation was expected to receive Royal Assent early in 2010. The Bill aimed to provide straightforward practical guidance for employers, service providers and public

bodies. The EFLG which provided the detailed criteria to explain how local authorities should manage Equalities and Diversity issues had been published.

(3) The EFLG was based on a wider definition of equality that moved away from a purely legalistic interpretation to a concept of equal life chances. It aspired to be simpler, smarter, proportional and more relevant than the previous standard. It was outcome-based, and recognised that:-

- equality was an issue for us all
- we don't all start from the same place
- to create a fairer society we needed to recognise different needs

Local authorities would be audited on the following five performance areas:

- Knowing your community and equality mapping
- Place shaping, leadership, partnership and organisational commitment
- Community engagement and satisfaction
- Responsive services and customer care
- A modern reflective and diverse workforce

(4) During debate Mrs Tweed referred to the Customer Impact Assessments which replaced Equality Impact Assessments in KCC, and asked how Kent Highway Services engaged with the elderly to meet their needs. This stemmed from concerns about the elderly being trapped in their homes during the recent snow, and although it was agreed that there was a social services aspect to it, the discussion led onto what else Highways did for this part of the community.

(5) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the content of the report be noted; and
- (b) the approach for embedding Equalities into the directorate's business, in support of KCC's corporate commitment to achieve level 'Excellent' in the new Equalities Framework for Local Government be endorsed.

7. Environment, Highways and Waste Risk Register 2010/11

(Item B6 – Report by Mr Nick Chard, Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste; and Mr Richard Hallett, Directorate Finance Manager, Environment, Highways and Waste)

(1) The report identified the strategic risks that were managed and controlled within the Environment, Highways & Waste Directorate.

(2) It had been agreed at a meeting of the Governance and Audit Committee on 5 March 2008 that in future years the risk registers would be considered by POSCs in the January cycle before being reported to the Governance and Audit Committee. The requirement to maintain risk registers ensured that potential risks, which might prevent the Authority from achieving its objectives, were identified and controlled.

(3) During 2010/11 the controls in the register would continue to be tested and checked in order of significance, and new actions monitored. Risk Management Plans would be developed for every risk within the Directorate rated as *High* (i.e. with

a score of 16 and above). The plans were a tool to be used by managers with their Services and Business Units to document and monitor actions for the high risks.

(4) RESOLVED that the Environment, Highways & Waste Directorate Risk Register, updated in September 2009, be noted and supported.

8. Select Committee – update

(Item C1)

Report by Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)

(1) Further to Minute 9 of 10 November 2009, the Membership of the Select Committee on Renewable Energy was Mr K Ferrin, (Chairman Elect), Mr R King, Mr C Hibberd, Mr C Smith, Mrs E Tweed, Mrs P Stockell, Mr D Hirst and Mr T Prater. It had been agreed that Ms Sue Frampton, the Research Officer supporting the review, would start preparatory work on developing the terms of reference and scope for the review. The Select Committee would start its work in January 2010 and submit its report to County Council on 14 October 2010. Regular update reports would be submitted to the POSC on the progress of the Select Committee.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

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From: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member – Environment, Highways & Waste

To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 25 March 2010

Subject: **Kent Winter Service Review – December to February 2010**

Classification: Unrestricted

1. Introduction

The past winter was the worst in the UK for over 30 years. This impacted on services and agencies across the country as well as in our region. This report sets out how key operators in Kent fared during the severe weather and the lessons learnt that will be used to improve services in the future. Opportunities for further debate will be detailed by the Cabinet Member for EH&W at the committee meeting.

2. Kent Highway Services

2.1 KHS has a Winter Service Policy and Plan which last year was approved by the EH&W Policy Overview Committee in September. These set out how KHS deals with keeping the highway network free from snow and ice.

3. Snow emergencies

3.1 The Winter Service Policy 2009/10 states:

'During prolonged periods of severe and persistent icing, or significant snow fall, delegated officers may declare an ice or snow emergency covering all or part of the County. In this event Community Delivery Managers will implement a course of action to manage the situation in either of these events'

3.2 Between December and February snow emergencies were called on three occasions. In addition, during this period there were many nights when road surface temperatures fell to below zero thereby necessitating the need to treat the primary and secondary routes. Details of the actions taken for each snow emergency are attached as Appendix 1

3.3 Specific actions were taken during the snow emergencies to ensure key routes were kept open. This included deploying a salting truck to both Bluebell Hill (A229) and Detling Hill (A249) and constantly patrolling these roads to keep them clear.

3. Salt bins

3.1 Salt bins are an important community resource and there are currently 1835 in place across the county. KHS currently pay for salt bins and place them safely in places that suit assessment criteria. There are local concerns about access to salt during bad weather and therefore a decision was made in January by the Cabinet Member that Members could use their Member

Highway Fund to pay for salt bins in their local areas. Proposals will be brought to a future meeting of this committee in respect of making further provisions for communities to access salt supplies during snow and ice conditions.

4. District council assistance

4.1 During the snow emergency in December problems were experienced in the clearance of town centre footways. This was addressed during the subsequent snow emergencies and contact was made with district councils and KCC Commercial Services requesting assistance. This proved to be very successful and resulted in many town centres being kept reasonably clear. Additionally Community Delivery Team Leaders in KHS used local district winter service plans to prioritise areas for action.

5. Salt

5.1 At the beginning of the winter season KHS had 20,000 tonnes of salt in stock which is the maximum that can be accommodated at the depots. In an average year we would expect to use about 13,000 tonnes so were well stocked. Orders were in place to automatically restock once the salt is used. Due to the national nature of the severe weather, problems with salt distribution became apparent early in the New Year. A national salt cell was set up by the Department for Transport to monitor the distribution of salt across the country. Additionally a Kent salt cell was set up for a few weeks in January with KHS, Medway Council and the Highways Agency. Salt usage is shown at Appendix 2.

5.2 Salt supplies from our main supplier, Salt Union, were limited. However other arrangements were in place for receiving salt from abroad and during January and February stock was received from abroad, along with limited supplies from Salt Union.

5.3 In order to conserve salt and to cope better with icy conditions, a decision was made in January to mix salt with sharp sand in a 50/50 mix and to use sand in salt bins. It was also decided that only sand would be used to treat footways in town centres. KHS did not run out of salt at any time and always had adequate supplies. The national salt cell issued weekly guidance on the conservation of salt and general guidance for highway authorities which were followed when appropriate.

6. Media

Many requests were received from the media for television, radio and newspaper interviews and this enabled us to get key items of interest to members of the public

7. Customer contact

Over 5000 enquires were received in our contact centre during December and January. Throughout the severe weather KHS had regular meetings and provided briefing notes to the contact centre to ensure that members of the public could be provided with up to date accurate information. Additionally the Traffic Management Centre was kept informed of actions being taken to clear the snow and ice and this information was put out hourly by the TMC.

8. Staffing

KHS staff were fully utilised during the winter emergencies as follows:

- Ringway staff put on 24 hour duty – 12 hour shifts
- KHS staff put on rota to work weekends
- All depots open and staffed 24 hours for duration of snow emergency

9. Future development of the winter service

9.1 KHS and the Cabinet Member for EH&W have received many comments from various stakeholders during the past few months. In addition to learning lessons from the past winter, KHS is keen to take on board any suggestions that could further improve the winter service. To this end a consultation process will be taking place commencing April 2010 (details at Appendix 3). The results of the consultation will be used to inform and improve the winter service policy and plan for 2010/11. Also the district Winter plans will be made available on line to county and district Members.

10. Southeastern

10.1 Snow disrupted rail services between 18 and 22 December, 6-9 January and 13 January due to severe snowy and icy conditions

10.2 Southeastern, along with other operators on the third-rail network is always susceptible to unreliability during very cold weather due to:

- icing on the conductor rail impeding acceleration
- points freezing
- need to reduce speeds and braking distances.
- batteries failure often with no heating or lighting and limited communication.

10.3 Performance on the High Speed Line for domestic trains was not affected severely due to power being delivered by overhead wires.

10.4 During this period of disruption, ice on the conductor rail caused some 100 instances where passenger trains were significantly delayed. The mean delay was 1 hour 20 minutes – the longest in Swanley seven hours. Problems were compounded by late running of trains causing displacement of crew and rolling stock

10.5 Network Rail and Southeastern do attempt to reduce problems by:

- use of conductor rail and points heaters
- Track spraying with de-icing fluid
- Running ghost trains before start of passenger services
- Adjusting the software of newer trains to reduce sensitivity to icing

10.6 During 6-8 January, Southeastern ran a reduced service – some 440 Mainline services compared to the normal number of some 870. This was directed by Network Rail in anticipation of adverse forecast of weather and

experience of the problems experienced on 18 December when multiple train failures left passengers stranded for long periods on freezing trains. The reduced service was to:

- Reduce the risk of passengers trapped in trains
- Enable following trains to stop in stations if service ahead has problems
- Provide a more reliable timetable
- Limit the number of points and junctions used
- Provide for the fewer passengers that want or need to travel

10.7 During this period, the delay minutes experienced in Kent on Southeastern were significantly less than those in Sussex and Wessex (operated by Southern and South West Trains). The worst affected Southeastern lines over this period were the Maidstone East and Hastings lines, with replacement buses on the Medway Valley Line used for part of 7 January

10.8 Network Rail and Southeastern are reviewing local performance during this time and there is a national review also taking place. These are likely to concentrate on the need to improve information to passengers in advance and during problem periods; the performance of the reduced timetable (robustness and overcrowding) and the need for more conductor rail heaters.

11. Eurostar

11.1 During the night from 18 and 19 December, five Eurostar trains failed in the Channel Tunnel. This caused the closure of the Tunnel to other traffic in both directions – freight and passenger shuttles and railfreight, with knock-on effects on the M20 and access to Dover. Eurostar services were suspended until a limited service was introduced on 22 December. The cause was ingress of snow into the trains which caused power failures

11.2 The cancellations of Eurostar trains over three days and the subsequent limited service afterwards caused severe delays and inconvenience to passengers and illustrated how unprepared Eurostar were to deal with the problem. Alternative travel arrangements (including coaches and ferries) took too long to organise and passengers were forced to stay in Eurostar terminals and Dover Docks Travel Centre whilst the backlog was dealt with. The numbers of foot passengers processed by DHB was around 20 times normal levels

11.3 An independent review made 21 recommendations to Eurostar to improve train reliability, improve arrangements for evacuation and rescue, and managing disruption and improving communication. The recommendations included:

- fitting improved snow filters to the trains
- covering sensitive electronic control systems and inductors to prevent condensation and pollution affecting signalling and data systems

- better communication (video links) between Eurostar and Eurotunnel Rail Control Centre
- better briefing of passengers when evacuation necessary onto Eurotunnel shuttle trains
- review need for more rescue locomotives to drag Eurostars to Ashford or Calais
- review need for Eurostar have longer battery life to maintain air conditioning
- review method of handling delayed and evacuated passengers at Ashford and St. Pancras with Network Rail and with SNCF and SNCB in France and Belgium
- Eurostar should improve communication with passengers at stations, on the internet (Facebook and Twitter) and to other operators and stations.

12. Eurotunnel

Problems started at Eurotunnel on 18 December before the Eurostar failures and the terminal was closed for an hour in the evening and was running a disrupted service until midnight, with freight only from 22.30. After the Eurostar failures, a limited shuttle car service did not start until 11am. The closure of the Tunnel stranded some 1,000 cars at Cheriton and 300 at Coquelles and caused cars and lorries to divert to Dover. Problems with shuttle services lasted until 21 December with rolling stock failures and crew difficulties.

13. Port of Dover

13.1 The Port of Calais was closed between 00.35 hours and 07.25 on 19 December for car traffic and until Sunday morning for freight. This, coupled with the complete closure of Eurotunnel, and the relatively high volume of traffic attempting to go back to the continent for Christmas caused very long queues on the A20 into Dover.

13.2 Traffic on Friday 18th reached back to the Cheriton interchange (Junction 12) in the evening but the Police did not invoke Operation Stack as they were concerned with safety. In the early morning of the 19th December, traffic stretched back to Ashford and Phase 2 Stack was finally put in place at 7.50am. Due to the high amount of tourist traffic attempting to cross the Channel, traffic on the A20 in Dover often stretched back right through the town, even though Stack was in place. Stack was stood down in the early morning of 21st December after over 40 hours.

13.3 These incidents have highlighted the need for a new contingency plan for when not only lorries but large numbers of passenger cars are caught up in Operation Stack.

13.4 KCC is to set up a high-level meeting with the Police, Highways Agency, Dover District Council, Eurotunnel, Dover Harbour Board and the ferry

operators to initiate an investigation on how such problems can be ameliorated in the future.

Contact Officers

Carol Valentine -Community Delivery Manager KHS – 08458 247800

Mick Sutch – Head of Planning and Transport Strategy – 01622 221612

Appendix 1

Snow emergency 1

During the week commencing 14th December 2009 the weather forecast indicated that there would be severe snow conditions in Kent. In line with our policy it was decided that a snow emergency be declared in West Kent where the worst of the weather was expected to be.

To manage the situation the following actions were taken:

Salt

- The winter service policy was put into action and primary and secondary routes were salted
- Ploughs were fitted to gritter lorries to deal with deep snow
- Ringway deployed a full resource of drivers and vehicles
- KHS team leaders followed their own local district plans and instructed local action as necessary
- Salt was already on order for 400 tonnes for each of our seven depots
- Salt bins filled

Strategic Gold Command

- Problems were being experienced across the county with Operation Stack in place and a broken down train in the tunnel
- The Police set up a Strategic Co-ordination Meeting chaired by a Chief Superintendent
- KHS were represented on that group
- KHS led on a Bronze group to remove abandoned cars on Bluebell and Detling Hills on 18.12.09
- 19th December KHS staff assisted in providing welfare to people stuck in Operation Stack –under the direction of the Highways Agency

Staffing

- KHS staff detailed to work over the weekend to instruct local action to Ringway staff who were also working the weekend

Farmers

- Farmers contacted to plough their routes

Customer contact

- Contact centre short staffed on Friday 18th December due to difficulties getting to work
- Few calls on the Friday
- Most calls later on related to footway clearance and some specific areas that had not been salted including town centres

3. Snow emergency no 2

Severe winter conditions again hit the county in the week commencing 4th January and continued until 14th January. A snow emergency was called for the whole county on Monday 4th January. The key actions taken are outlined below:

Salt

- On 4.01.10 KHS had 7000 tonnes of salt in stock
- Due to the national nature of the weather it was decided by the Community Delivery Manager with responsibility for winter service (the Strategic Manager) that daily winter strategic meetings would be held for the duration of the snow emergency
- A decision was taken by the group to immediately take steps to conserve our salt supplies – by mixing salt with sharp sand in a 50/50 mix for use in salt bins a saving could be made
- During the week decisions were taken to:
 - Only use sand in salt bins
 - Use a 50/50 salt and sand mix on the primary and secondary routes (pure salt to be used in hazardous surfaces on key arterial roads such as A229, A249)
- Salt was on order with Salt Union and a foreign supplier
- Decision was taken not to give salt to other authorities – however as the situation worsened we supplied mutual aid to Medway Council and Sheerness Docks with the approval of the Interim Director of KHS
- 10th January decision taken to prioritise treatment in vicinity of
- secondary schools so that public exams could go ahead

Snow emergency no. 3

The third snow emergency was confined mainly to East Kent .At the start of week commencing 8th Feb following forecasts of significant snow fall pre-sanding of priority footways was instructed. Liaison with the district councils took place and 12 - 3 man district crews were used for priority footway treatment and clearing in Thanet. As snow started to accumulate all farmers with agreements in place were instructed to plough and keep clear their designated routes. They also assisted in areas off their routes as required. As and when primary and secondary routes were clear local action to problem areas was instructed such as steep gradients and areas where life and death situations arose such as the need for one resident to be visited with essential medical care and medication etc.

Regional Resilience Group

This was established on Tuesday 5th January and virtual meetings were held with local authorities across the region. Additionally the Police set up a Strategic Co-ordination Group in the same vein as the one in December. The Strategic Winter Service Manager represented KHS at both meetings

- Salt returns were made twice weekly to the resilience group and this will continue until further notice
- Government set up a national Salt Cell to monitor salt supplies across the country and to ensure that supplies were distributed in areas of greatest need
- Kent County Council were seen as being one of the better off authorities due to actions we had taken to conserve our salt supplies (we had reduced our usage by 50% a week and a half before being requested to do so by Government)

- A Kent salt cell chaired by KHS was set up as a Bronze group of the Strategic Co-ordination Group and this convened by audio conference on three occasions

Appendix 2
Salt usage

Based on the usage from previous years it is likely that we could use 35,000t of salt by the end of this season.

Salt Usage		
Year	End Dec	Season
2005/2006	4,171.36	12,296.88
2006/2007	1,147.04	9,197.88
2007/2008	9,058.35	17,752.07
2008/2009	7,874.68	24,289.21
2009/2010	13,689.84	

Average previous 4 seasons	5,562.86	15,884.01
2009/2010 above average	8,126.98	

Appendix 3

- Chief Executives of district councils
 - Structured interviews will be undertaken by Mori with Chief Executives or their nominated representatives
- Elected members – telephone interviews by Community Liaison Team Leaders and Officers
- District Members – on line survey
- Parish councils – on line survey
- Joint Transportation Boards- Winter service will be an item on the agenda and JTB members will have the opportunity to discuss and make recommendations to the EH&W Policy Overview Committee
- All responses will be collated and presented to the POSC in May and July

The independent polling organisation MORI will be commissioned to conduct the in depth interviews with Chief Executives and assess the results of the on line surveys.

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By: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member – Environment, Highways & Waste
To: Environment, Highways & Waste – Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25 March 2010
Subject: Public Transport Development
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This annual report informs members of the principal developments, funding arrangements and initiatives undertaken in the provision of public transport in Kent during 2009/10 and planned for implementation during 2010/11. This year's report also provides a summary of the principal legislative changes following the Local Transport Act 2008, and the bearing they are having on the delivery of public transport.

1. Introduction

- (1) Public Transport continues to go from strength to strength in Kent. The County Council has been at the forefront of developing and implementing new initiatives, with new Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) signed in Ashford and Dover and similar partnerships planned for Sevenoaks, Shepway and Swale. Passenger numbers have continued to increase year on year. In 2005/06 there were 45.7 million journeys by bus; in 2006/07 48.6 million; in 2007/08 51.7 million; and in 2008/09 55.2 million.
- (2) During 2009/10 a number of key initiatives such as Kent County Council (KCC) Kickstart funding have delivered new vehicles and service uplifts for the Ashford A-Line operated by Stagecoach and for some of KCC's supported bus routes. Further improvements are planned for 2010/11, and this report updates Members on progress.

2. Principal Developments

- (1) Quality Bus Partnerships

The Transport Act 2000 and the Local Transport Act 2008 provided for the establishment of Voluntary Partnership Agreements between bus operators, district councils and county councils (see section 4 – Legislation). These are generally known as Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs), and by the end of 2009 half the districts in Kent had QBPs – Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Maidstone, Thanet and Tunbridge Wells.

The new QBPs in Ashford and Dover were signed during 2009, each with the district council and Stagecoach in East Kent and the former including Ashford's Future Partnership Board. It is now intended to develop a Quality Network Partnership with bus and rail operators in Sevenoaks; a QBP in Shepway; and potentially a multi-operator QBP in Swale.

QBPs establish close working relationships between the parties to each agreement, and aim to improve the quality and reliability of bus services through the attainment of targets for punctuality, reliability, bus stop access and other improvements. Kent has been particularly successful at establishing QBPs and encouraging investment in Kent which has brought significant improvements in local bus services.

(2) Bus Stop Improvements

Kent Highway Services, in partnership with Arriva Southern Counties and Stagecoach in East Kent, has continued to implement a programme of improvements to bus stops throughout the county. This will eventually result in every urban bus stop being provided with a 24/7 bus stop clearway (to prevent unlawful parking), a raised boarder (wherever possible) to assist the mobility impaired, a clearly branded bus stop flag, and clear tailored timetable information for the routes serving the stop. It is planned to enter into a new Roadside Infrastructure Unit (RIU) contract to upgrade and maintain timetable information during 2010.

(3) Kent Freedom Pass

The Kent Freedom Pass scheme was rolled out countywide during 2009, and now provides free travel on most bus routes for all young people living in Kent and schooled in Kent in academic years 7-11 for an annual fee of £50. This innovative approach has seen a significant increase in bus passenger journeys by young people. There are currently over 21,000 passes issued and on average some 600,000 trips are made per school term month. It is intended to extend the scheme to pupils resident in Kent but schooled outside the county from April 2010.

(4) KCC Kickstart

The principle of pump-priming existing bus services to improve the quality of service has been adopted by KCC, with over £1.6m of capital funding for the provision of new vehicles in 2009/10. These were provided for the Ashford A-Line operated by Stagecoach, and for some of KCC's supported bus routes operated by Eastonways Coaches in Thanet, by Kent Coach Tours in Ashford, and on the new E-line route in Ashford.

(5) DfT Kickstart

The Department for Transport (DfT) invited bids from local transport authorities for its new Kickstart funding scheme early in 2009. KCC submitted two bids: one in partnership with Arriva Southern Counties and Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust for West Kent, and one in partnership with Stagecoach for East Kent. The County Council was promised that the result of the submissions would be notified by September 2009, but despite numerous requests no information has been forthcoming. While KCC welcomed the opportunity to bid for Kickstart funding from the Government for significant improvements to inter-urban bus routes in West and East Kent, the delay – and possible cancellation – of this funding by the DfT are regarded as completely unacceptable.

(6) Smartcards and Real Time Information (RTI)

KCC is working in partnership with the Kent bus operators to roll out new Electronic Ticket Machines (ETMs) with Smartcard readers and GPS/GPRS transmitters on all service vehicles. This project will generate significant benefits to passengers and bus operators, including reduced bus stop dwell times, more effective delivery and administration of concessionary travel schemes including those for senior citizens and Freedom Pass holders, and enhanced information on patronage, network performance and the identification of incidents and congestion.

It is hoped that a pilot scheme will be launched in partnership with Stagecoach in 2010 for Freedom Pass holders, subject to roll out of the new ticket machines by operators. An improved system of RTI is replacing existing displays in those parts of the county which have RTI installed at present, and it is planned to expand the RTI coverage as and when resources allow.

(7) The Kent & Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme

KCC has continued to provide additional funding to sustain the Kent & Medway Concessionary Travel scheme for over 60 year olds, as well as for disabled people and their companions. This has enabled pass holders to travel from 9.00 am instead of from 9.30am, on which time the Government's funding is based. KCC is preparing to take over responsibility for the administration of the scheme from the district councils in Kent with effect from April 2011 following an announcement by Government in December 2009.

(8) Rail Services

Southeastern launched the full timetable for its new High Speed services linking Thant/Canterbury and Dover/Folkestone with Ashford, Ebbsfleet, Stratford and London St Pancras on 13 December 2009. The new High Speed services have been generally well received, with little evidence of resistance to the premium fare and significant loadings on both peak and off-peak services.

In response to the introduction of High Speed services, KCC developed, in partnership with Southeastern and other stakeholders, a Station Travel Plan (STP) for Ashford. This forms part of a National Rail Station Travel Plan Pilot, sponsored by the DfT and ATOC (Association of Train Operating Companies) where Kent were successful in bidding for Ashford to participate as one of 31 stations from across England and Wales. The Travel Plan was launched during summer 2009, and has been held up as a model for promoting sustainable travel to other stations in Kent. KCC received an award for the Ashford STP at the Annual Rail Business Awards ceremony in London as an example of excellence in encouraging modal shift from car to bus and cycle for journeys to and from Ashford station.

In order to improve bus/rail interchange, KCC, in partnership with Southeastern, is delivering bus information display boards at most of the High Speed rail stations in East Kent. These will provide essential information on local bus routes, and direct passengers to the nearest bus stops where bus timetable information will be available.

However, the introduction of High Speed rail services has been very costly in terms of its detrimental effect on the residual timetable for the Mainline services to and from London Charing Cross and Cannon Street. KCC has received many concerns from MPs, Members, passenger groups and individuals, and these will be raised with Southeastern at their forthcoming stakeholder meeting in March 2010.

The following table lists the principal issues on each rail route and the date on which they were raised:

ROUTE	ISSUE	DATE
Ashford-London CX	Reduction of frequency from 4 tph to 2 tph and slower service as now stops all stations Ashford-Tonbridge	13.12.09
Tonbridge-Ashford	Gap in service between 1551 and 1621 resulting in long wait for children returning from Tonbridge schools	06.01.10
Sandwich/Deal/Walmer to Dover/Canterbury	Reduction in CX trains between East Kent stations and Dover and need for easier access to Canterbury	12.01.10
Ashford-Maidstone East	Loss of fast peak-hour trains between Ashford and Bearsted results in missed connections at Ashford and lengthy journey times	05.02.10
Maidstone East and West Malling-London	Withdrawal of shoulder-peak Cannon Street service results in lengthy journeys to Victoria and inadequate service to Blackfriars	05.02.10
Medway-London Victoria	Reduction of off-peak service to 1 tph at Sole Street	22.02.10
Ashford-Thamet	Journey speeds on the Ashford - Thanet route, including Manston Parkway Station (KCC working with Network Rail to improve timings)	22.02.10

KCC continues to support two Community Rail Partnerships (CRP) which cover rail routes in the county: the Kent CRP which covers the Medway Valley Line between Strood and Paddock Wood and SwaleRail between Sittingbourne and Sheerness; and the Sussex CRP which covers the Marshlink Line between Ashford and Hastings and the Uckfield Line between Uckfield and Oxted. Officers in the Sustainable Transport team attend CRP meetings, and the County Council provides financial support for each partnership.

3. Sustaining Kent's Tendered Network

- (1) KCC has a clearly established member approved policy to determine the provision of financial support for socially necessary public transport services. This states that the cost of any such service should not exceed £3 per passenger journey, and that the journey should provide access to one of the following services which could not otherwise be attained: education, employment, health care, or essential food shopping.
- (2) About 20% of the scheduled bus routes in the county are provided with revenue support. Tenders for these services are awarded in accordance with Best Value principles. In 2009/10 the revenue support for these services has been provided by a combination of KCC funding (£5.3 million) and the DfT's Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) (£2.2 million), with an estimated 4.9 million passenger journeys being made in the current year. During 2010/11 it is anticipated that the supported bus network will be sustained at the present level. The Competition Commission is currently carrying out an investigation into the local bus industry. In the provisional work of the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), KCC came out very well indeed, with a high level of bids per tender, a very low number of commercial services withdrawn which then required subsidy, and a very low number of tenders with only one bid.
- (3) KCC also supports nine Kent Karrier services, which provide a combination of dial-a-ride and fixed routes for disabled people and for those living in rural areas away from bus routes. One of these, operating in North-West Kent, incurred a very high level of subsidy, and from 2010/11 will have its level of service reduced so that it is comparable with the other Kent Karrier services.

4. Legislation

- (1) This year's report provides a summary of the principal legislative changes following the Local Transport Act 2008 and the bearing they are having on the delivery of public transport. This new legislation has developed the original powers contained in the Transport Act 2000, and provides three distinct levels of agreement to facilitate partnership between bus operators, district councils and local transport authorities (LTA) as set out below.

Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA)

- removes OFT power to impose fines on bus operators
- encourages agreements with more than one operator (e.g. Swale)
- can now include LTA setting of maximum fares

Quality Partnership Schemes (QPS)

- can now include, in addition to VPAs, LTA setting of frequency, timetable and maximum fares
- determines LTA obligations (e.g. bus stop clearways)

Quality Contracts (QC)

- individual quality contract board determines operator, route, timetable and fares: removal of competition

- (2) At present KCC has six Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP) and all of them are VPAs. Details of these, and of plans for new partnerships, are set

out in section 2 above. The most likely beneficiaries of the new legislation will be the existing Fastrack service in Dartford and Gravesham; the emerging Smartlink bus service in Ashford; and the proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme in Dover. All of these schemes could potentially benefit from a Quality Partnership Scheme (QPS), which would enable KCC, the district council(s) and the chosen bus operator to enter into such a statutory partnership.

- (3) A QPS would give KCC the power to set the frequency, route, timetable and maximum fares for the service(s) included in the QPS, although the guidance from the DfT suggests a partnership approach with the chosen bus operator rather than unilateral determination of these by the LTA. KCC would also have statutory obligations, such as the provision of clearly defined infrastructure works such as bus shelters, bus stops, clearways and raised boarders. Each individual QPS could be tailored to the particular needs of each scheme, with for example a requirement for KCC to provide RTI at all bus stops serving the route(s) concerned.
- (4) There are no plans to develop Quality Contracts (QC) in Kent, the concept for which is based on the non-competitive regulated bus network in the capital that is determined by Transport for London.

5. Conclusion

- (1) KCC has continued to make significant investment, through both funding and personnel, in the creation of good quality public transport services throughout the county. The County Council is committed to attaining modal shift from car to public transport, by enhancing the provision of bus services and by improving access for all. Wherever possible KCC will make use of the new powers contained in the Local Transport Act 2008 to enhance the quality of the partnerships between the County Council and its stakeholders.
- (2) Recent initiatives such as the development of Quality Bus Partnerships, the countywide roll-out of the Freedom Pass and the planned introduction of Smartcard will continue to deliver sustainable transport options throughout the county, thus improving the quality of life and ensuring a first-class public transport service for the residents of, and visitors to, Kent.

6. Recommendation

Members are requested to note the report.

Background Documents: The following background documents have been used in the preparation of this report:

Kickstart Bus Funding Competition 2009 – Guidance on the application process (Department for Transport, January 2009)

Local Transport Act 2008 - Improving local bus services: Guidance on Voluntary Partnership Agreements (Department for Transport, February 2009)

Local Transport Act 2008 - Quality Partnership Schemes: Statutory guidance to English local transport authorities and metropolitan district councils (Department for Transport, March 2009)

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From: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member – Environment, Highways & Waste.
 Caroline Bruce – Interim Director of Kent Highway Services

To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 25 March 2010

Subject: **Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2009**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Inform Members of the key results of the 2009 Resident, County Member, District Member and Parish/Town Council Highway Tracker Survey. The full survey report is over 200 pages long and available on the KCC website

Introduction

1. Satisfaction surveys, to gauge perception of the highway service have been carried out since 1987. The 2009 survey was carried out in November and December and included seeking views from residents, County Members, Parish/Town Councils and for the second time, District Members.
2. The survey is conducted by an independent market research company called BMG and a summary of the results are presented in this report. This information will be used by the Director and Senior Management team to identify actions to help improve service delivery.
3. A total of 1,209 face to face interviews were carried out on a representative sample of Kent residents with approximately 100 interviews in each of the twelve Districts, reflecting the age, gender and economic status,. This sample size gives a +/- 2.78% accuracy for results at a County level and +/- 10% accuracy at a District level.
4. In addition to residents views the same survey questions were asked of all County and District Members and Parish/Town Councils. A total of 60 County Members responded (a response rate of 71%), 178 District Members replied (a response rate of 30%) whilst for Parish/Town Councils a total of 147 completed the survey (a response rate of 48%)
5. The questionnaire comprised over 40 questions, ranging from satisfaction with the condition of roads, pavements, streetlights and local bus and train service, the most important and most in need of improvement to the services KHS provides, through to views on congestion, accessibility to local services and vulnerability when using the highway

6. Results are reported by 'Net-Satisfaction'. This is a figure calculated by taking the % of people who are dis-satisfied with the service from the % who are satisfied. This gives a true reflection of the service and a balance between those happy, those un-happy and those who are not sure.

The 2009 survey results

7. The key headline from the survey is the continuing improvement in the public's perception of pavements and streetlights with a slight dip in roads caused primarily by dissatisfaction with the condition of country lanes and residential roads. However for the fourth successive year there are more residents satisfied than dissatisfied and the last two years results are shown in Table 1 below (see all years results in Appendix 1)

	% of residents who are . . .							
	Satisfied		Neither satisfied or dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Net satisfaction	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Condition of roads	54%	53%	21%	16%	25%	32%	+29%	+21%
Condition of pavements	51%	53%	21%	18%	28%	27%	+23%	+26%
Streetlights	63%	67%	19%	15%	18%	16%	+45%	+51%

Table 1

8. The other key headline is the difference in perception between residents and County Members, District Members and Parish/Town Councils. There are still more elected members dissatisfied with the condition of roads and pavements but there has been a very significant and positive improvement in County Member and Parish/Town Council satisfaction (over 20% improvement in net satisfaction) and in particular with streetlights, where for the first time, both groups are more satisfied than dissatisfied with this service. District Members appear the least satisfied with little change in last years results again with the exception of streetlights. These results are set out in Tables 2, 3 and 4 in Appendix 2.
9. There has been some very positive improvements in County Member and Parish/Town Council perception of the service provided to them by the Community Liaison teams with 8 in 10 Members registering satisfaction and 6 in 10 Parish/Town Councils.
10. Overall 79% of residents were aware of Kent Highway Services prior to the interview. Whilst 26% were aware of the single 08458 247 800 number to call KHS only 7% have contacted KHS to report a problem or seek information (down from 14% last year).

11. Of those who had contacted KHS 67% were satisfied with the response with 28% dissatisfied.
12. Residents rate road repairs and reducing congestion as the top **most important** KHS services whilst County Members, Parish/Town Councils and District Members all rate road repairs and cleaning drains/stopping flooding as the most important.
13. Residents state that the KHS services that **most need improving** are repairing roads and pavements whilst County Members Parish/Town Councils and District Members all feel it is repairing roads, pavements and cleaning drains.
14. In terms of congestion 31% of residents feel they are affected by peak time congestion on a daily basis which is slightly lower than the 2008 survey.
15. Responses to ways of alleviating congestion, as in previous surveys, centred around greater restrictions on roadworks and staggering school opening times.
16. In all 60% of residents use a car to travel to work with 48% using one on a daily basis. It was recognised by 46% of respondents that KHS encourages residents and businesses to adopt green forms of travel. Cheaper fares and more accessible public transport fares were the two strategies most likely to change people's use of the car to travel to work.
17. In all, 53% of the public have used local bus services in the past with 80% of users satisfied with the service overall. Cost, cleanliness and comfort were reasons for dissatisfaction.
18. There were 59% of residents who have used the train with 79% satisfied with the overall service provided. Cost, cleanliness, punctuality and frequency were the main reasons for dissatisfaction

Further Information

19. The tracker survey report is very large and contains much more detailed information along with an executive summary of key issues by BMG. A full copy of the report will be available on the KCC website.

Conclusion

20. The annual tracker survey provides a wide range of information to help shape and improve highway service delivery. Members are asked to:
 - Note the progress being made in public perception of the highway service.
 - Work closely with officers to continue to improve the service as seen through the eyes of Members and Parish/Town Councils

Background Documents: None

Other Useful Information: None.

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Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2009

Table 1 -Residents - Satisfaction with the condition of roads in Kent – year-on-year comparison

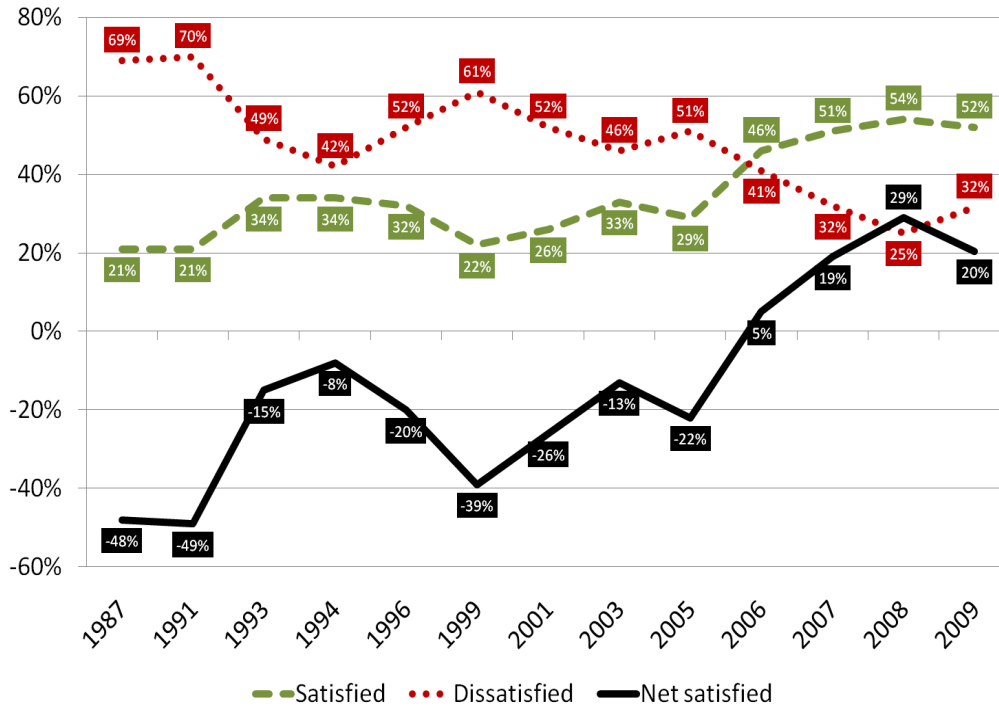


Table 2 - Residents - Satisfaction with the condition of pavements in Kent – year-on-year comparison

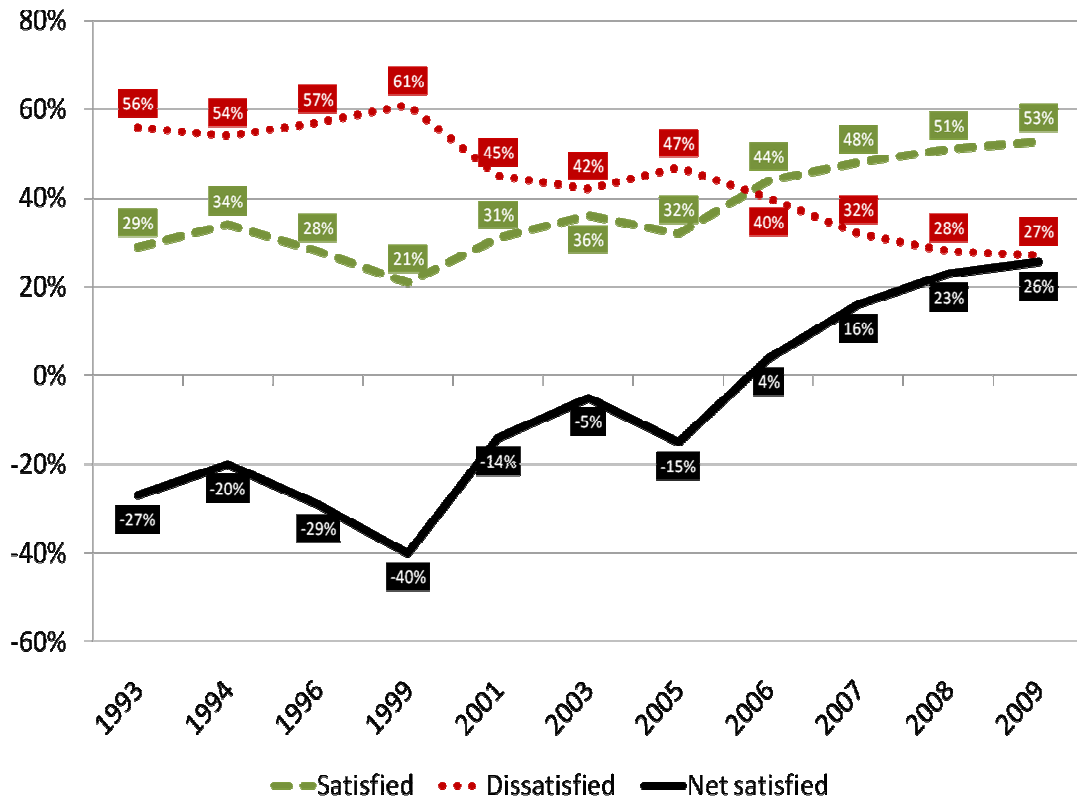
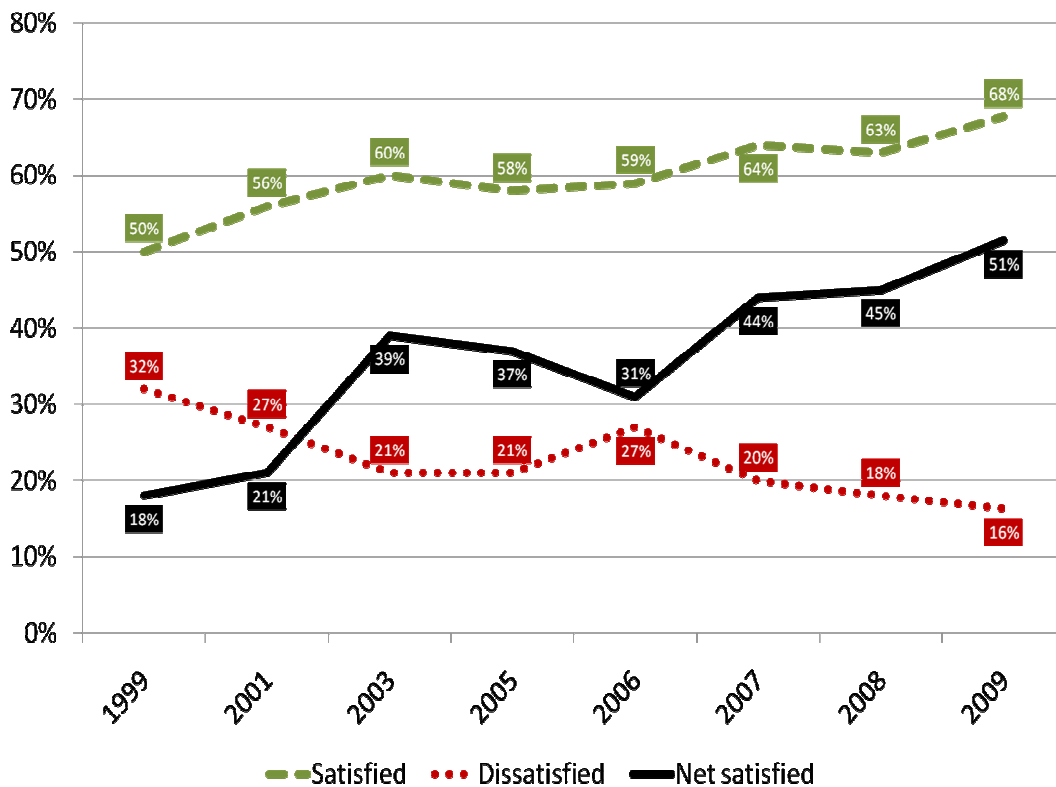


Table 3 - Residents - overall satisfaction with the condition of street lighting in Kent – year-on-year comparison



Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2008

County Member satisfaction with roads, pavement and streetlights

	% of County Members who are . . .							
	Satisfied		Neither satisfied or dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Net satisfaction	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Condition of roads	13%	22%	19%	23%	68%	55%	-55%	-33%
Condition of pavements	16%	28%	21%	24%	63%	48%	-47%	-29%
Streetlights	33%	73%	29%	12%	38%	15%	-5%	+58%

Table 2

Parish/Town Councils satisfaction with roads, pavement and streetlights

	% of Parish/Town Councils who are . . .							
	Satisfied		Neither satisfied or dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Net satisfaction	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Condition of roads	8%	28%	12%	1%	80%	71%	-72%	-43%
Condition of pavements	11%	20%	37%	38%	52%	42%	-41%	-22%
Streetlights	27%	46%	55%	42%	18%	12%	+9%	+34%

Table 3

District Members satisfaction with roads, pavement and streetlights

% of District Council Members who are . . .								
	Satisfied		Neither satisfied or dissatisfied		Dissatisfied		Net satisfaction	
	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009	2008	2009
Condition of roads	11%	12%	16%	18%	73%	70%	-62%	-58%
Condition of pavements	8%	8%	19%	23%	73%	69%	-65%	-61%
Streetlights	27%	36%	34%	40%	39%	24%	-12%	+12%

Table 4

From: Nick Chard, Cabinet Member – Environment, Highways & Waste
Caroline Bruce – Interim Director, Kent Highway Services

To: Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee (25 March 2010)

Subject: KHS Contracts: A Brief Overview

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: A position statement on the current KHS contracts including current contract remits and relevant timescales.

Overview

The KHS Alliance delivers services to the people of Kent through 4 main organisations; Ringway, Jacobs, Kent County Council (KCC) and Telent. Individual contracts exist between KCC and these three private sector organisations.

Current Position

Contractor and consultancy contracts were re-tendered in 2006 and although some market testing is currently taking place, highway services are primarily delivered through the three countywide term-service contracts shown below:

Contract	Provider	Overview of services	Annual Value
Highway Term Maintenance	Ringway	Reactive repairs and routine minor maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ potholes and patching ○ winter service ○ streetlighting ○ gully cleansing ○ lining and signing and maintenance/improvement schemes up to £1 million	£60m
Consultancy	Jacobs	Specialist advice and top up design support	£13m
Traffic Systems	Telent	Routine maintenance of traffic signals and systems	£1.4m

Timescales

The contracts have an initial 5 year term to 2011 with possible annual extensions to 2016. The contracts do not have any work load guarantees and all have a 12 month termination notice clause.

Recommendations

The Committee notes the above information and that further information will be provided to Members in due course.

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By: Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager

To: Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee
25 March 2010

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on the progress with the Select Committee on Renewable Energy and invites suggestions for future Select Committee topic reviews.

Select Committee: Renewable Energy

1. (1) The Select Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Keith Ferrin (other members Mr Charles Hibberd, Mr David Hirst, Mr Richard King, Mr Tim Prater, Mr Chris Smith, Mrs Paulina Stockell and Mrs Elizabeth Tweed) held its inaugural meeting in January 2010. This Select Committee is piloting a different style of working and has gathered written evidence prior to agreeing its list of oral witnesses. This mirrors the way that Parliamentary Select Committees carry out their work.

(2) Visits have been arranged for the Select Committee to Beaufort Court in Hertfordshire, a low carbon building which is designed to be entirely self-sufficient in heat and power from on-site renewable energy installations and to a conference entitled 'Keeping the Lights on' at Pines Calyx, St Margaret's Bay in Kent, which has achieved a similar zero carbon profile. The Select Committee will be meeting on 31 March 2010 to review the written evidence received and agree its list of witnesses. Hearing sessions will be held during April, May and the first week of June. The Select Committee will be submitting its final report to the County Council in October 2010.

(3) Regular update reports will be submitted to this Policy Overview Committee (POSC) to keep Members informed of the progress of this Select Committee.

Suggestions for Select Committee topic reviews

2. The Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 24 February 2010 received an update on the current Select Committee topic review programme. Although resources to support reviews are all currently allocated, there would be the potential to start new reviews in November 2010 and January 2011. It was agreed that Members would be asked to consider whether there are any topics that they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review programme. If Members do have any suggestions could they contact the Democratic Services Officer for this POSC.

Recommendation

3. Members are asked to note the update report.

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Background Information: *Nil*