

**REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Friday, 23rd September, 2011**

**10.00 am**

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone**







## AGENDA

### REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Friday, 23 September 2011 at 10.00 am**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County**  
**Hall, Maidstone**

Ask for: **Christine Singh**  
Telephone: **01622 694334**

*Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the meeting*

#### **Membership (12)**

Conservative (11): Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr N J Collor,  
Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr P J Homewood, Mrs J P Law,  
Mr A Sandhu, MBE, Mr K Smith, Mr M V Snelling, Mrs E M Tweed  
Mrs C J Waters

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

#### **Webcasting Notice**

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#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

#### **Item No**

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

- A1 Introduction/Webcasting
- A2 Substitutes
- A3 Declarations of Members' Interest relating to items on today's Agenda
- A4 Members are asked to note Future Meeting Dates for 2012

*(All meetings will commence at 10.00 am)*

Thurs, 19 January

Fri, 23 March

Fri, 22 June

Fri, 21 September

Thurs, 8 November

A5 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2011 ( 1 - 8)

## **B. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

B1 Presentations ( 9 - 44)

(1) **The Kent Rural Housing Protocol:** Tracey Kerly, Head of Customers, Homes and Property, Ashford Borough Council and Brian Horton, Strategic Housing Advisor, Kent County Council

(2) **Why Farming Matters:** Charles Tassell, Kent Chair, National Farmers Union

B2 Feedback from the Rural Visits ( 45 - 50)

B3 Financial Monitoring 2011/12 ( 51 - 56)

B4 Update on Strategic Projects ( 57 - 70)

B5 Connecting with Communities - 2010/11 Annual Report on Consultation, Engagement and Involvement Activity ( 71 - 82)

## **C. SELECT COMMITTEE WORK**

C1 Select Committee Update ( 83 - 86)

### **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  
(01622) 694002

**Thursday, 15 September 2011**

*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

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### REGENERATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 24 June 2011.

PRESENT: Mr M C Dance (Chairman), Mr M B Robertson (Vice-Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr N J Collor, Mr K A Ferrin, MBE, Mr P J Homewood, Mrs J P Law, Mr K Smith, Mr M V Snelling, Mrs E M Tweed Mrs C J Waters

ALSO PRESENT: Mr K G Lynes, Mr M A Wickham, Professor I Swingland

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms B Cooper (Director of Economic Development), Mr R Gill (Economic Policy and Strategy Manager), Mr R Hallett (Head of Finance and Resources - EHW), Mr M Bodkin (Head of Urban Regeneration), Mrs E Harrison (Rural Regeneration Manager) Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **77. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2011**

*(Item A4)*

Resolved that the Minutes held on 1 April 2011 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **78. Presentation - National/International Rural Regeneration perspectives by Professor Ian Swingland**

*(Item B1)*

1. Professor Swingland gave a presentation that set out the success he had in rural regeneration in Cumbria and Wales through local projects where crops were delivered and sold locally by self funding food co operatives, and responded to comments and questions from Members.

2. In discussion, the following points were highlighted:-

- a) farmers that received subsidies were happy to find a local market.
- b) the projects were driven by local people and offered the opportunity to promote healthier diets, cooking, and an opportunity to raise awareness with school children on local produce.
- c) The cooperative was a good example of the "Big Society". Kent already had similar organisation eg Produced in Kent; Action in Kent and Hadlow College.

3. The Cabinet Member, Mr Lynes agreed with the sentiment of the "Big Society" although the idea of a food cooperative was not a new idea the proposals that Prof

Swingland made were on a vast scale. He referred to SILK, which operated on a similar basis on a smaller scale. He considered that the proposals within the presentation could be discussed with Kent Rural PLC and the Food Sector Advisory Group. Prof Swingland advised that he would be happy to take part in any future discussions.

4. Resolved that the information set out in the presentation and given in the responses to Members comments and questions be noted and that the presentation notes be circulated to the POSC.

## **79. Food Sector Action Plan**

*(Item B2)*

*(Mrs E Harrison, Rural Regeneration Manager, was present for this item)*

1. Mrs Harrison introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from Members. Views expressed were as follows:-

- a) with pressure to reduce the carbon footprint, it was suggested that there could be work undertaken by “Produced in Kent” to promote produce grown locally being marketed locally and then any surplus being transported elsewhere.
- b) It was considered that KCC needed to spend less time planning and more time getting the job done.
- c) concern was raised that Kent’s “Garden of England” branding was being lost.
- d) there needed to be more national promotion of Kent’s produce eg Kent Strawberries at Wimbledon this year.
- e) with the changes in climate; Kent farmers could explore growing exotic fruits/vegetables.

2. RESOLVED that:

- a) the responses to the comments and questions by Members, be noted and;
- b) the progress on how KCC is working with industry partners to shape a food sector action plan for Kent, be noted.

## **80. Programme of Sector Consultations and Follow Up**

*(Item B3)*

*(Mr Lynes, Cabinet Member and Ms B Cooper, Director Economic Development was present for this item)*

1. Ms Cooper and Mr Lynes introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from Members. Points highlighted were as follows:-

- a) Members were welcome to attend the remaining four consultation events in the programme, the dates and venues to be confirmed.
- b) It was considered key to have networking between district and KCC planning officers.

2. RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to comments and question by Members be noted;
- (b) the progress on the sector consultations be noted; and
- (c) a further report detailing the programme of actions developed at the end of the consultation programme be submitted to a future meeting of this POSC.

## **81. Ambition Board**

*(Item B4)*

*(Mr P Carter, Leader of KCC, was present for this item)*

1. The Chairman advised that there was a proposal to have an Ambition Board and he wanted Members to have an early opportunity to have an input in shaping the Board's role.

2. The Leader, Mr Carter explained that a discussion had taken place at the Kent Economic Board where it was envisaged that the Ambition Board would have a membership consisting of County Councillors and officers that would review, on an annual basis, what had been delivered by the Kent Economic Board and KCC's role. The views expressed were as follows:

- a) it was considered that each of the groups/boards needed to produce a draft paper of where they were, where they are going, with a "master plan" for the many groups/boards so that they pull in the same direction. There was already a large hierarchy for Kent and Medway and it was about finding a niche for the Ambition Board in that existing hierarchy.
- b) concern was raised that there were already too many boards/ groups and that the hierarchy chain appeared complicated and needed to be streamlined.
- c) there was concern raised regarding each of the Locality Boards developing their own individual characters and what authority they had.

3. Mr Carter assured Members that there was already streamlining and rationalising being undertaken. He felt the question was whether an additional Ambition Board was needed. He envisaged that this Ambition Board would have a

light touch, with monitoring on an annual basis, to ensure that the groups/boards were functioning as they should and if not, making recommendations to be acted on accordingly.

4. RESOLVED that the answers to comments and questions by Members be noted.

## **82. Regional Growth Fund, Enterprise Zones and Local Enterprise Partnerships** *(Item B5)*

*(Mr R Gill, Economic Strategy and Policy Manager, was present for this item)*

1. The Leader, Mr Carter, introduced the report and with Mr Gill and Ms Cooper responded to comments and questions which included the following:-

- a) a view was expressed that Dungeness should receive the same attention as Pfizer with the economic impact it would have in the area and nationally. It was advised that when Pfizer made its closure announcement KCC commissioned an economic impact assessment requesting that it covered the triple shock of the impact of Pfizer, the public sector job losses across East Kent and Dungeness and this information has helped to inform the East Kent Growth Strategy. Shepway District Council had been successful in getting money from the Decommissioning Authority to look at the economic impact of the closure of Dungeness too.
  - b) it was considered that there needed to be closer working with the neighbouring counties Sussex and Essex. Mr Carter explained that the neighbouring authorities may not be in the same position as Kent in the detailed strategic thinking about the future but shared the same coastal deprivation issues from Clacton round to Newhaven. To have any impact there had to be collective pressure/influence on national government to stop the dumping of the most vulnerable young people and families out of London to coastal areas.
  - c) In response to what the current position was on Fort Halstead, Ms Cooper advised that 800 jobs would be lost over 2-3 years. There was a meeting to be held with Sevenoaks District Council to discuss the response. Sevenoaks District Council was keen to hear of KCC experience from Pfizer and KCC had already sent Sevenoaks the economic impact documents. A view was expressed that the future use of the site was important whether it would be used to provide employment or residential homes.
2. RESOLVED that the information in the report and the responses given to Members' comments and questions be noted and an update report be submitted to a future POSC meeting.

### **83. 21st Century Kent - Unlocking Kent's Potential**

*(Item B6)*

*(Mr P Carter, Leader of KCC and Mr M Bodkin, Head of Growth Areas and Development were present for this item)*

1. The Leader, Mr Carter, introduced the report and gave a brief presentation on the vision for Kent and the challenges and opportunities facing Kent to achieve this vision.
2. Mr Carter then responded to comments and questions, which included the following:-
  - a) referring to Land Securities and its proposed development of the Ebbsfleet Valley, a view was expressed that concessions on the Section 106 agreements would be difficult as there were commitments on significant infrastructure needs that were difficult to change. It was explained that KCC had been negotiating with Land Securities over the proposed re profiling of the contribution from the Eastern Quarry s.106 agreement. They had now entered more detailed stage and KCC was looking at how it could work flexibly with Land Securities to enable development to come forward in the short term but still provide the longer term certainty over the commitment on the infrastructure needed for Kent Thameside and wider development in Thames Gateway Kent.
  - b) it was asked whether there was agreement from the Borough Councils on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Kent and whether there could be strategic planning conformity. In response it was suggested that there needed to be a relationship with the districts, in part to assist KCC in planning the necessary infrastructure. With the ongoing economic uncertainty and fragile property market meaning that it was difficult to know when developers were going to develop, local authorities had to think differently and be more pragmatic.
3. RESOLVED that the information in the report and given in response to Members' comments and questions, be noted with thanks.

### **84. Update on Strategic Projects**

*(Item B7)*

*(Ms B Cooper, Director of Economic Development was present for this item)*

1. Director of Economic Development, Ms Cooper introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from Members. The following views were expressed:-
  - a) referring to the progress of "No Use Empty" it was suggested that more should be done in Kent, rather than spreading the good practise of NUE.

- b) it was advised that on page 33 Dover/Whitfield, Phase 1a received outlined planning approval by Dover District Council on 23 June.
- c) It was suggested that it would be useful for Members to have a summary of what assets and liabilities SEEDA had left. KCC made an offer to SEEDA to join the “Evergreen” model to put in its assets/liabilities. KCC would only pay on conferred considerations. The Treasury said that they would not accept conferred considerations, their preferred option was unless the local authorities wanted to buy them at full market value, no regeneration value, they would transfer those assets to the Homes and Communities (HCA). KCC concluded that it did not want to pay full market value for the regeneration sites. KCC had been advised that the assets/liabilities would transfer on 18 July to the HCA. KCC, the district councils and Medway Unitary have asked to have representation on the HCA Stewardship model to allow them to have a say.

2. RESOLVED that the information in the report and given in responses to Members comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

## **85. End of Year Budget Outturn Report 2010/2011 (To Follow)**

*(Item B8)*

*(The Chairman secured the Committee’s agreement to consider this item as urgent business as the papers were not placed on public deposit with the required five days’ notice).*

*(Mr R Hallett, Head of Finance and Resources was present for this item)*

1. Mr Hallett introduced the report and responded to comments and questions by Members. Views were expressed as follows:-
  - a) The Committee agreed to the Chairman’s suggestion to a one off Member Budget IMG meeting be set up to discuss the budget within the remit of this POSC with an invitation extended to the Cabinet Member, Mr Lynes.
  - b) it was stated that the uncommitted underspend for the Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio would go back into the County Council budget.  
 Note: to clarify this point, technically the underspend will go into the Economic Downturn reserve in accordance with the recommendation agreed by Cabinet but as stated at the POSC meeting, it will not be available for general spend by the R&ED portfolio.
  - c) the format of the future finance reports should reflect the monies generated as well as the money spent, similar to the Sports Development Unit reports.

2. RESOLVED that:

- a) the revenue and capital financial outturn for 2010/11 including rollovers for committed projects and changes to the capital programme, be noted;
- b) the potential impact of variations since the 2011/12 budget was approved, be noted; and
- c) comments and guidance be given at a one off Member Budget IMG meeting to be set up by the Chairman with an invitation to the Cabinet Member, Mr Lynes on potential impact for 2012/13 and future years' budgets, be noted.

**86. KCC Performance Management Framework - Delivering Bold Steps**  
*(Item B9)*

*(Mr D Whittle, Policy Manager was present for this item)*

1. The Committee received a report that set out the current development of the performance framework for delivering 'Bold Steps for Kent' which would be submitted to the County Council for approval on 21 July.

2. RESOLVED that the steps being taken to finalise the performance framework be noted.

**87. Select Committee Work - Update**  
*(Item C1)*

RESOLVED that the information on the current Select Committee reviews set out in the report be noted.

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# Rural Homes: supporting Kent's rural communities

A PROTOCOL FOR DELIVERING  
AFFORDABLE LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING IN  
RURAL KENT



English Rural Housing Association





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## INTRODUCTION

*This Protocol has been developed as a direct result of a recommendation within the Kent Forum Housing Strategy, which identified a lack of affordability of housing in rural areas as a key concern for the County of Kent (including Medway). 85% of the land within Kent is classed as rural and 40% of the County's businesses are based in rural areas, so it is imperative that we get this right.*

*The focus of this Protocol is on rural affordable local needs housing, which is delivered via specific areas of land known as exception sites. The aim of the Protocol is to encourage a consistent, pragmatic approach to affordable rural local needs housing development across the County, to help to increase the delivery of such housing in rural areas and enable rural communities and businesses in Kent to thrive and prosper. It is intended to be used by local housing and planning officers, highway officers, Registered Providers, Parish Councils, landowners and local communities.*

*It sets out the process of delivering affordable local needs housing, potential obstacles and ways in which these can be overcome. It also contains a helpful list of practical "things to consider" for all the major partners involved in the delivery process and a sample housing needs survey.*

*The Protocol has been developed at a time of great change at the national level. The majority of the new proposals from the Coalition Government are still in the initial phases and this Protocol does not seek to second-guess the government's intentions.*



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## 1. Vision

Rural housing is a vital component of ensuring that rural communities thrive and prosper. The average rural house price remains substantially higher than the average urban house price – and the gap is widening. As a result, housing need, demand for housing advice and the number of households on housing register lists in rural areas has been rising.

Providing rural housing is about giving rural communities the opportunity to thrive and if necessary grow and develop. There is a strong link between housing and economic prosperity and sensible development can support economic growth.

Through this Protocol, we will work together to:

- 1) Ensure the **provision** of **high quality, affordable homes** that meet the needs of Kent's rural communities
- 2) Support and enable Kent's **rural economy** through planned and sustainable managed growth in rural areas
- 3) **Raise awareness** and **understanding** amongst rural communities, landowners and Members of rural local housing need and how it can be met
- 4) Ensure the provision of **support and advice** to rural communities about how to provide housing to local people
- 5) Develop and maintain a **consistent, proportional** and **efficient approach** to the **delivery** of affordable local needs rural housing across Kent
- 6) Develop new and innovative ways of **facilitating** the delivery of affordable local needs rural housing across Kent
- 7) Support and encourage local authorities to have robust **rural allocations** policies

We will do this by:

- Working together to **overcome** any organisational or policy **barriers** to delivery
- Developing and adopting commonsense and **pragmatic approaches** in relation to **design, quality, timescales, highways and planning issues** in affordable local needs rural housing applications
- Developing **best practice** for **housing need assessment** in relation to affordable local needs rural housing
- Encouraging each local authority in Kent to have an **exceptions site policy**



- Developing **best practice** to respond to **local people's need** through **allocations**
- Working with rural communities, Parish Councils and Local Members to **highlight** the opportunity for affordable local needs rural housing and demonstrate the **benefits** it can bring
- Ensuring we have an adequate independent **Rural Housing Enabling Service** within Kent

## 2. Why do we need a Rural Housing Protocol?

### 2.1 Background

85% of the land area of the County of Kent (including Medway) is classed as rural. With around 1 in 3 of its 1.3m residents living in a rural area, compared to 1 in 5 nationally and 1 in 4 in the South East, Kent has one of the largest rural populations of any county in England.

40% of the County's businesses are also based within rural areas, with the Kent rural economy estimated to be worth around £5.5billion.



Rural housing issues, therefore, tend to have a proportionately greater impact on Kent than many other counties – particularly when coupled with the County's proximity to London.

Recent trends have shown that Kent is moving towards an ageing rural population, with more middle age and fewer young people (15-29s) than the general population. Younger age groups and families are under-represented in rural communities and are being replaced by inward migration amongst older groups. This has implications for the continued sustainability of local rural services and businesses, as well as for the communities themselves.

### 2.2. The nature of the problem

The key problem is one of affordability. The average rural house price within Kent remains substantially higher than the average urban house price, meaning that people living in the rural parts of the County are unable to afford accommodation from the open market, i.e. through home ownership or private renting.

The availability of either affordable local needs housing or private rented accommodation within rural areas is relatively low. This means that there are few options for people living in the rural parts of the County to have their housing needs met locally. The result is that many of these people will move away from rural areas to places where housing is more affordable.



This creates a number of wider economic, social and environmental impacts, including lower paid workers not being able to live locally, young people being unable to set-up home close to their families and disproportionate numbers of older people living within rural communities.

Problems of delivery have also helped to prevent the provision of affordable local needs rural housing. A lack of suitable sites or landowners reluctant to release sites and often complex, intensive and costly planning and highways requirements for rural developments, combined with a dwindling public finance resource, are all common barriers to new housing provision.

In addition, local public opposition to new development can either block development completely or cause lengthy and costly delays to development.

However, these are barriers that must be overcome if Kent's rural communities are to survive. The impact of a lack of affordable housing on villages can be devastating as fewer rural residents are present to support local businesses and services.

### **2.3 Building thriving rural communities**

A thriving rural community is one with a good mix of residents, a sense of its own identity, strong social networks and good local amenities such as shops, schools and transport, which is able to provide local residents with the ability to access employment opportunities.

The *Living Working Countryside* Review identified that just a few affordable homes can help a rural community to thrive. Increasing the number of people living within a rural community helps to maintain local services, such as the school, the village pub and the local shop.

Affordable rural local needs housing can also help to maintain local businesses by providing both customers and employees, particularly for the horticultural and agricultural industries, which often struggle to accommodate their workers locally.

## **3. What is affordable local needs housing?**

Affordable local needs housing provides quality homes to people who have been priced out of the open market. This is particularly important in rural areas, where house prices are significantly higher than the national average but household incomes are lower.

Affordable local needs homes are provided by Registered Providers and most are either rented or shared ownership, where the occupier part-buys and part-rents the property.



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Local needs housing refers to housing that meets the housing needs of the local community and businesses. In rural areas, new affordable local needs housing is delivered through exception sites and is intended to remain for people with a proven connection to the local community in perpetuity (ie permanently).

#### 4. Who are the main delivery partners?

Partnership working is critical to the delivery of affordable rural local needs housing. To successfully complete a new rural development, the input of a range of different partners is needed, who all bring unique expertise and specialist skills to the table.

A summary of the main local partners involved in affordable rural local needs housing and their role and responsibilities are set out in the table below.

<b>Who are they?</b>	<b>What is their role?</b>
<b>Elected Members</b>	Elected Members provide local leadership on housing, acting as great ambassadors and advocates for new affordable rural local needs housing, particularly where there is concern amongst local residents.
<b>Parish Councils</b>	Parish Councils can initiate a housing needs survey where they have identified a potential need for affordable housing and can advise on possible sites for new development. They have a critical role in ensuring that the local community is involved and informed about the development process and can help facilitate communication between local residents, Registered Providers and council officers. They are also a statutory consultee within the planning process.
<b>Homes and Communities Agency</b>	The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is a Government body responsible for housing and regeneration across England. Rural housing is a one of their strategic priorities.
<b>Registered Providers</b>	Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing provide affordable housing to people at below market rents and include both not-for-profit Registered Providers and stock-owning local housing authorities.  RPs will commission the architect and construction company to design and build a new development and submit the planning application. The RP ultimately manages the affordable homes once they are built and occupied.
<b>Local Housing Officers</b>	Local housing authorities (Districts and Medway Council) have a housing enabling role and are responsible for making sure the needs of their rural communities are met. Officers will make sure a proposed development fits in with their overall housing strategy and can provide data to assess local need. They can help with



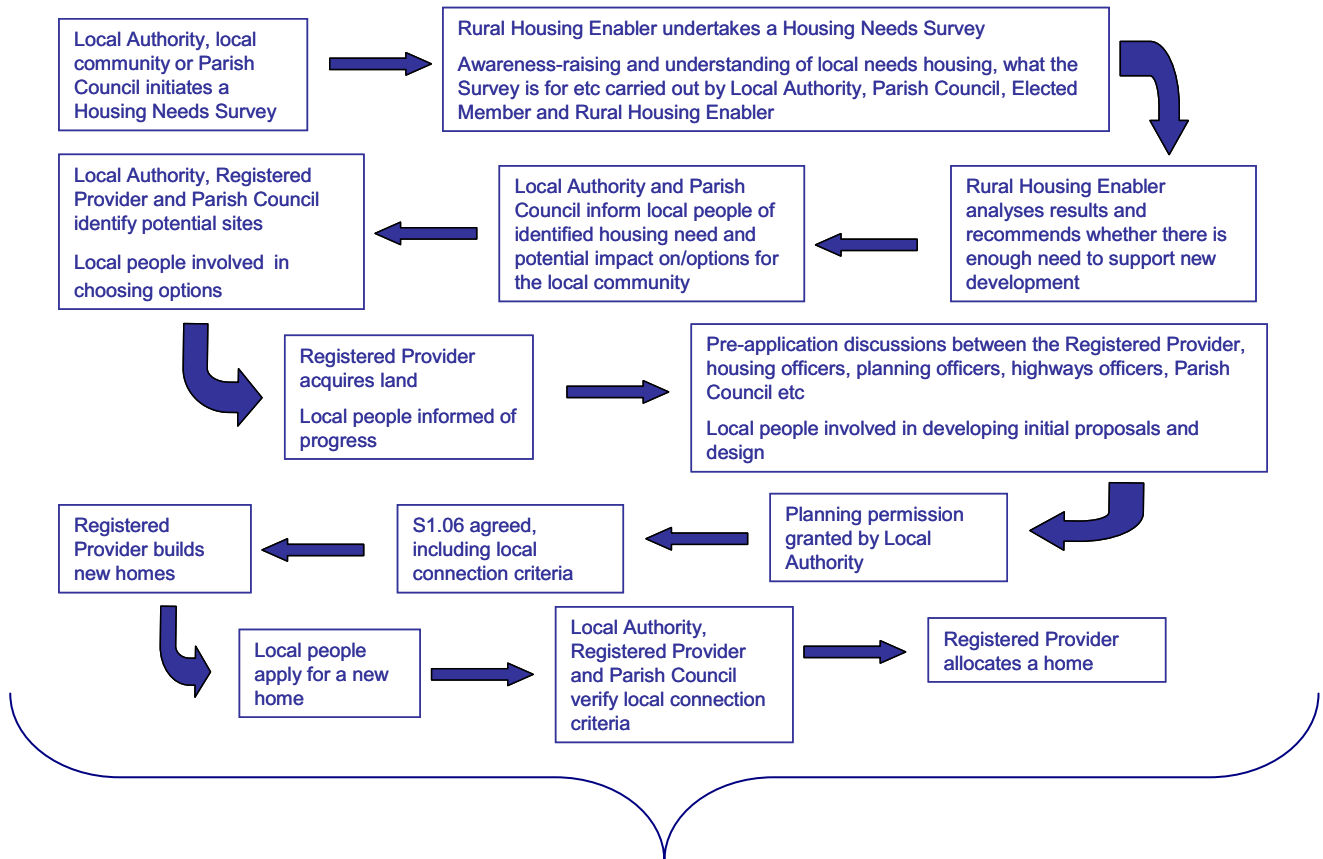
	engaging the community and promoting the benefits of development to local residents. They also advise on the allocations process.
<b>Local Planning Officers</b>	Local planning officers from Districts and Medway Council can provide pre-application advice on potential sites, design and quality of proposed developments. They also process the final planning application.
<b>Highway Officers</b>	Highway officers from Kent County Council and Medway Council provide advice on transport accessibility, highway safety, layout design and quality and parking requirements for new developments. They should be consulted with early on in the development process to identify any potential issues with proposed sites. Where new streets are to be created, highway officers can also advise on the procedures for them to become maintainable by the highway authority.
<b>Rural Housing Enabler (RHE)</b>	The RHE service is provided within Kent by Action with Rural Communities in Kent. The RHE has a crucial role in helping Parish Councils and local housing authorities assess housing need within rural communities. They can also act as a fully independent and impartial advisor and negotiator between different parties, and can help with engaging local residents in the development process.
<b>Landowner</b>	The owner of land identified as a potential site has a crucial role to play in releasing that land for development. Landowners can range from local individuals to Parish Councils, District and County Councils and land-owning institutions such as universities and the Church of England.
<b>Environment Agency</b>	The EA is a Government body which aims to protect the environment, manage water resources and protect communities from flooding risks. They should be consulted with early on the development process to identify any potential issues or concerns, particularly with proposed sites.



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## 5. Process map



Ashford Borough Council

Local family move in



## 6. Engaging with the community

A key part of making any affordable rural local needs housing scheme a success is to engage positively with the local community.

### 6.1 Raising awareness

Local residents are often understandably concerned about the potential impact of new development within their village or rural community. Raising awareness within the community of the local need for affordable housing and the potential positive impacts it may have on the lives of local people, such as enabling families to live close to each other or local amenities to remain open, can help to alleviate concerns and minimise opposition.

Providing local people with the opportunity to register their interest in an affordable home if a development should take place and encouraging them to register with their local housing authority's Housing Needs Register will also help to reinforce the message that any future properties will be for the benefit of the local community.

### 6.2 Early and continuous involvement

Dialogue with local communities should begin at any early stage, before development has been agreed and local people should be kept involved in decision-making and informed of progress throughout the development process.

Engaging early, consulting on potential sites, initial proposals and building design and quality in an open and transparent manner will help to build trust amongst local residents and a feeling that they are part of the process and not having development "done to them".



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In Newington in Shepway for example, a local drop-in session was held when the housing needs survey was first issued to local residents. That allowed the local authority and Parish Council to start promoting the idea of affordable local needs housing and what it could do for that community and ensured that local residents understood what they survey was about and what they were being asked. In Sevenoaks, a public meeting was held in Knockholt where local residents were invited to help identify potential sites for a proposed affordable local needs housing development.

Holding an information day or other type of community event once plans of the development are available is a good way of getting community feedback on the proposals and can help to alleviate any misconceptions about the proposed development, such as who it is for, how big it will be and what the likely impact will be on the community.



For example in Smarden, a village information and consultation event was held in the village hall. Publicised locally, the proposed plans were made available for feedback, representatives from English Rural Housing Association, Smarden Parish Council, Ashford Borough Council and the Rural Housing Enabler were available to answer questions, and residents were able to leave comments for consideration. The event also gave those interested in applying for one of the homes the opportunity to find out more about how to register an interest.

### **6.3 Who should be involved?**

Parish Councils are key to engaging with the local community. Local housing authorities and Registered Providers should work with the relevant Parish Council to identify who should be engaged with and the best method for reaching as much of the local community as possible. The Rural Housing Enabler can also help to facilitate communications with local people.

Elected Members will also have a pivotal role to play here, by visiting the parish and talking to local residents, attending Parish Council meetings, attending local consultation events and positively promoting the new development and its potential benefits within the local media and to other elected Members.

### **6.4 Neighbourhood planning**

The move towards localism will see an increase in community-led planning at the local level, enabling parishes to set out their own local development priorities, in consultation with local residents, within the Neighbourhood Plans.



More than 100 parishes in rural Kent and Medway have already commenced or completed preparation of their own community-led plans to set a range of social, economic and environmental priorities for the future. A majority of these plans have identified provision of affordable housing as a priority and led to further community-led work on the development of local needs housing in particular. Two examples of this, which are at differing stages of progress, are Bridge and Preston. In each case Housing

Needs Surveys have been conducted following completion of a community-led plan, and Registered Providers appointed to help take forward schemes.

It is therefore critical that local housing authorities engage with Parish Councils and local communities in the preparation of these plans, to ensure that where a need or potential need has been identified, affordable local needs housing is highlighted as a priority within the Neighbourhood Plan. Authorities can either do this directly or through the use of an independent service such as the Rural Housing Enabler service to help facilitate discussions, particularly with community groups.



## 7. Identifying need

The first step to providing new affordable rural local needs housing is to establish what the housing needs are of the local community within the relevant parish.

### 7.1 Understanding local need

Any new housing provision should be suitable for the local community and meet the needs and aspirations of people who live there. Rural housing development should be tailored to the requirements of local people and local housing authorities and Parish Councils should ensure they understand the needs of the local community.

### 7.2 Collecting information

The process for identifying need should be evidence-based. Some of this can be gathered by looking at the local housing authority's Housing Register or District-wide data that may have been collected.

A very valuable source of evidence is information provided direct by local residents about how many people are in need of affordable housing within the parish, what type of housing they need, what they can afford and how many residents would meet the required local connection criteria (see 8.6 below) to be allocated a home once they were built. It is also a good idea at this stage to gain some understanding of the likely support within the community for affordable local needs housing.

This information can then be used throughout the development process to help Registered Providers ascertain how many houses to build within a development, what type of properties would be in demand, whether rental or shared ownership properties are most appropriate etc.

This can then be used in support of planning applications.

This information is normally collected through a Housing Needs Survey. A suggested example is attached at **Annex B**, although the exact questions to be answered will be determined at a local level. Some local housing authorities facilitate a rolling programme of surveys to keep such information current and up-to-date. In Ashford, for example, the local housing authority decided to undertake a refresh of a Housing Needs Survey when a proposed development was challenged, to prove that there was still a current need for the new homes that development would provide.



English Rural Housing Association



### 7.3 Who should be involved?

The Parish Council, local community or the local housing authority can initiate a Housing Needs Survey, if they think there is a potential need for affordable rural housing within a particular area.

It is very important that the survey process and subsequent analysis are unbiased and carried out by an impartial party. The survey must be robust enough to support any future planning application if there is found to be a need to be met. In most cases the survey and analysis are undertaken by the independent Rural Housing Enabler (RHE), who will normally recommend whether there is enough evidence of local housing need to support an affordable local needs housing development in that parish.

## 8. Making it happen

### 8.1 Identifying sites

Once a housing need has been identified within a parish, a suitable site needs to be found to build the required new homes. The Rural Housing Enabler and the Parish Council can help here to identify potential sites through a table-top search and then a walk around the parish, often with the local housing and planning officers and the Registered Provider if they are already engaged. Where appropriate, the Rural Housing Enabler can either talk to the landowner direct of a potential site or advise the Parish Council on how to secure the release of the land.

Local planning and highway officers can also help by providing pragmatic advice on the general suitability of potential sites, without requiring Registered Providers to carry out detailed and costly scoping work on all potential sites, such as habitat surveys, at this initial stage.



### 8.2 Acquiring land

Acquiring a site for development is often one of the trickiest aspects in delivering new housing in rural communities, as land is rarely openly available and private landowners are often reluctant to sell for housing development.

Where there is a need to be met, local authorities should consider whether they or their public sector partners have suitable land within the relevant parish that could be used for housing development.

#### 8.2.1 Incentives

In some cases where the suitable land is in private hands, the landowner will agree to make some land available for affordable development to help their local community. Where landowners are more reluctant, local authorities and Registered Providers should consider the



use of incentives, such as nomination rights for a small percentage of the properties, to get the landowner to release the land. These could be particularly attractive for local businesses that own land and require accommodation for their workers.



Such an arrangement has experienced success in 2 schemes in Essex: Hatfield Broad Oak, where a landowner directly nominated a retiring farm worker for a shared ownership property and Uttlesford, where the landowner was able to nominate 3 families for first letting/sale. In both cases, the nominations still had to meet local connection criteria.

Where there is robust local evidence to show that rural affordable housing need is not being adequately met and insufficient land is being made available to acquire, local authorities may wish to consider implementing a departure from policy to allow for a proportion of development within an exception site (see below) to be permitted for open market sale, whilst the rest remain as affordable local needs housing. Authorities would need to set stringent conditions around this to ensure that open market development in rural areas is carefully controlled. Example criteria could include requiring a certain high percentage to be affordable local needs housing, only allowing this to occur on sites on the edge of communities, limiting it to sites of a certain size or only allow the open market properties to be sold once the affordable units are fully occupied.

This could have the benefit of both unlocking sites where a landowner is reluctant to release the land (due to the higher value of the “open market” part of the site) and minimising reliance on grant, by enabling the sale of the open market homes to effectively cross-subsidise the building of the affordable local needs homes. Such an approach has been taken by several local housing authorities in the South West of England, who have had a chronic shortage of affordable local needs homes and land being made available.

### 8.2.2 Exception sites

Even where new land has been made available for development by the owner, this may still not be possible as so much land within rural areas is considered “out of bounds” for new market development, being either Green Belt or within a designated Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

One way of enabling development in such areas is through the use of a **rural exceptions site policy**, a planning policy which allows for planning permission to be granted where a need has been demonstrated, the homes provided will all be affordable and reserved for local people in perpetuity. These are normally found on the edge of, rather than in centre of, established communities.



The importance of a well-designed exceptions site policy to delivering affordable rural local needs housing is referenced in Planning Policy Statement 3 and was highlighted by DTZ in the evidence base developed for the Kent Forum Housing Strategy. It is therefore recommended that local authorities with Kent and Medway that have rural areas have a rural exception sites policy within their local planning policies.

As exception sites are areas of land where no other development except local needs housing is permissible, the value of land within exception sites is normally lower than that of land where open market development is permissible, helping to keep costs down and making development on the sites viable.

Local authorities, Registered Providers, Parish Councils and landowners should therefore work together to ensure that the value of exception sites reflects the circumstances under which the land can be brought forward for local needs housing and that the price of land is kept at a sensible level.

Whilst it is not realistic to try and set a standard value for exception site land, there is a need to avoid escalating land values so that development of rural affordable local needs housing schemes does not become unaffordable.



English Rural Housing Association

### **8.2.3 Other alternatives**

Although beyond the scope of this Protocol, in some cases it may also be possible to deliver affordable housing in rural areas on land which is not part of an exception site, for example as part of a larger mixed-use development. Although this does not have to meet the exception site requirements of local connection criteria and remaining for local people in perpetuity, it would be possible to attach similar conditions to properties to enable them to be inhabited by local people. For example, a new scheme could have a Local Lettings Plan that tied-in with the relevant local authority's local connection criteria.

### **8.3 Planning permission**

Planning permission is granted by the local planning authority, with the assessment of the application carried out by local planning officers.

Design, layout and accessibility requirements are sometimes criticised for being costly, unrealistic and disproportionate to the size of the schemes being developed. Affordable rural housing schemes mainly comprise of small developments with few houses on pockets of land. Whilst it is right that these should be of good design and quality and in keeping with the local surroundings, a balance needs to be struck.



Local authorities can assist by adopting a pragmatic approach to planning requirements by ensuring that they are proportionate to the size of the proposed scheme.

Similarly, design requirements should be practical and take into account the potential cost of any aesthetic conditions placed on the property. For example, a development in Stone was required to put chimneys on all the properties, despite adjacent properties within the village not having chimneys, entailing extra costs for the Registered Provider involved. A more pragmatic approach was taken in Smeeth and Smarden, where a cheaper synthetic alternative to wood was approved for use as weatherboarding on the outside of the new properties due to its very similar appearance to the real thing.



**Stone**



**Smarden**

English Rural Housing Association

Accessibility and infrastructure requirements should take into account the rural nature of the proposed site and not require urban-style development within village settings. Good examples include Broomfield, where a lit pathway was run behind an existing hedgerow, thus retaining the roadside hedge and the rural feel of the area from the road. However, some rural developments have suffered from “over-engineering”, for example in Biddenden where the properties had very conventionally urban footpaths, kerbs and roads, which are a bit out of keeping with the open green space surrounding it.



**Biddenden**



**Broomfield**



#### **8.4 Working together and local leadership**

Ironing out these issues through joint working at the pre-application stage can save a lot of time and prevent potential delays during the planning application process by ensuring that the planning application submission is fit for purpose.

It is recommended that when developing the initial proposal, a roundtable discussion is held between the major players to discuss the proposal and deal with any potential issues, particularly around access and design, before the planning application is submitted. As well as organisations involved in the delivery of the specific site, such as the Registered Provider, highway officers and local authority housing and planning officers, this could include representatives of the local community, such as Parish Councillors, to ensure that local people's views are taken into account and any concerns dealt with.

Local authorities may also wish to consider operating a regular roundtable of professionals involved in the overall delivery of affordable local needs housing within their area, to enable any strategic issues to be identified and dealt with in a joined-up pragmatic manner. Such an approach has met with considerable success in Ashford.

Elected Members can also play a crucial role in removing blockages to development by engaging with other Members and senior managers where negotiations at officer level have stalled or reached an impasse.

#### **8.5 S.106 agreements**

Once planning permission has been granted for a new affordable rural local needs housing development, a s.106 agreement is agreed between the local housing authority and the Registered Provider. This ensures that the housing built on the development remains affordable and for local people from within the rural community in perpetuity. It will also set out the local connection criteria that are used to allocate the housing once completed.

Some local housing authorities, such as Ashford Borough Council, include a draft s.106 agreement alongside the request for planning permission, to speed up the planning application process and help enable decision-making.

#### **8.6 Local connection criteria**

A recognised local connection is established by assessing an applicant for housing against locally-determined criteria. It is important that these criteria are robust and enforceable to ensure that new housing will only be allocated to local people in need.

It is recommended that the following 3 minimum criteria are used:

- 1.** Length of time resident in the Parish
- 2.** Employment within the Parish
- 3.** The need to live in the Parish to give care or support to immediate



Individual local housing authorities will set the specifics relating to these criteria, such as the length of time required and the definition of “immediate”. Local housing authorities may also set additional local connection criteria, such as the importance of an applicant’s job to the local economy.

Examples of potential local connection criteria can be found within **Q.15** of the sample Housing Needs Assessment Form at **Annex B**.

### **8.7 Advertising and allocating the new homes**

When the new affordable local needs homes are nearly complete, they can be advertised to local residents both within the parish and through Kent Homechoice, the Kent-wide Choice-Based Lettings system.

Homes will be allocated by the relevant local housing authority to people who are registered as being in housing need and who are able to prove a recognised local connection with the relevant parish.

Once an application has been received for an affordable home, the Parish Council should be consulted on and provide information to the local housing authority or the Registered Provider verifying an applicant’s local connection.



Ashford Borough Council

## **9. Implementation**

### **9.1 Governance and monitoring**

It is the intention that this Protocol will be adopted by all District authorities in Kent and Medway Council. It will be owned by the Kent Housing Group (KHG) on behalf of the Kent Forum.

Monitoring of the Protocol against the criteria set out below will be undertaken by the Housing Strategy and Enabling Sub-Group (HSEG) of the KHG. HSEG will report detailed monitoring to the KHG Executive Board and provide regular briefings on progress to the whole KHG.

This will be reported back to the Kent Forum by KHG as part of the overall monitoring of the Kent Forum Housing Strategy.

### **9.2 Monitoring criteria**

The intended effect of the Protocol is to increase the overall amount of affordable rural local needs housing delivered across Kent and Medway.



A baseline of affordable rural local needs housing delivered across Kent and Medway has been undertaken, which has shown that around 17% of identified rural housing need has been met over the last 4 years. The aim of this Protocol is to narrow the gap between need and delivery over the next 4 years.

To assess whether this is being achieved, and establish where any potential blockages may be, the Housing Strategy and Enabling Sub-Group will monitor the following:

1. Number of housing needs surveys undertaken
2. Number of planning consents for affordable rural local needs housing given
3. Number of affordable rural local needs houses completed
4. Length of time taken to get from survey to completion
5. Number of planning refusals and reasons given

### **9.3 Post-occupation surveys**

Once schemes are substantially complete and occupied, surveys of residents' opinions, experiences and travel habits, carried out by Kent Highway Services, will help to establish whether aims and objectives have been met. They will also contribute towards achieving even better developments in the future. It is particularly useful to compare residents' opinions about design and layout quality with professional assessments.

### **9.4 Review**

The lifespan of this version Protocol is 4 years. A formal review of the Protocol and its effectiveness will be carried out by Housing Strategy and Enabling Sub-Group (HSEG) on behalf of KHG in 2015.

If necessary, the Protocol will then be refreshed by HSEG to reflect changes in policy and procedure and any recommendations from the review.





## **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

This provides a summary of useful things to consider for the various players involved in delivering affordable rural local needs housing. This is not intended to be an exhaustive checklist but to act as a reference guide through the development process.

### **1. Elected Members**

- Have you engaged with the Parish Council and/or the local community where the development is proposed?
- Have you promoted the benefits of the proposed rural housing development within your ward?
- Have you highlighted your support for proposed rural housing development within your ward to other elected Members?

### **2. Parish Councils**

- Have you considered affordable rural local needs housing within your local community-led plan?
- Have you had a housing needs assessment undertaken in your parish within the last 2 years?
- Have you engaged with your local residents on the potential positive impacts and benefits the proposed development will have on your parish?
- Have you encouraged local people in housing need to register with the relevant Council?
- Have you provided information to local residents about how to apply for affordable local needs housing and advertised new available homes appropriately within your parish?
- Have you helped the relevant Council to confirm applicants' local connection to your parish?

### **3. Registered Providers**

- Have you selected the most appropriate site for affordable rural local needs housing development based on planning officers' advice?
- Have you worked closely with the relevant Parish Council and considered their views in designing the proposed development?
- Have you consulted with and reflected the views of residents of the relevant parish on the proposed development before submitting a planning application?
- Have you ensured that the design of your proposed development is appropriate for and in keeping with its potential surroundings?
- Have you engaged positively with relevant housing and planning officers and highway officers in the pre-application stage to ensure your application is fit for purpose?
- Are you keeping the relevant Parish Council up-to-date on the progress of the housing development?



- Have you ensured that the relevant Parish Council is advertising the new homes within their parish?

#### **4. Housing officers**

- Is rural housing specifically referenced within your Local Housing Strategy?
- Have you had input into the development of your parishes' community-led plans?
- Have you engaged with the Rural Housing Enabler service?
- Have you encouraged rural Parish Councils to undertake a housing needs assessment?
- Have you provided Parish Councils with the necessary skills and training to support the delivery of affordable rural local needs housing?
- Have you promoted the potential benefits of affordable rural local needs housing to your Members with rural wards?
- Have you engaged with the Parish Council and/or local community as soon as a need has been identified?
- Have you involved the Parish Council and/or local community in the identification of potential sites and Registered Providers to develop the sites?
- Have you ascertained whether the site/ scheme is referenced in your Local Investment Plan?
- Have you contacted the owner of potential sites to ascertain the likelihood of being able to purchase the required land?
- Have you established whether your Council owns any land that may be suitable to meet identified affordable rural local housing need?
- Have you engaged positively with the developing Registered Provider, highway officers and your planning officers in the pre-application stage to ensure the final application is fit for purpose?
- Have you supported the Parish Council and developing Registered Provider in their engagement with local residents on the proposed development?
- Have you informed Elected Members of the proposed development and kept them updated on progress?
- Have you advertised the new available homes on Kent Homechoice?
- Do you have agreed easy-to-understand, set local connection criteria?
- Have you engaged the Parish Council to help confirm applicants' local connections?

#### **5. Planning officers**

- Does your authority have a rural exceptions site policy?
- Does your authority have a specific s.106 agreement for affordable rural local needs housing?
- Have you had input into the development of your Parishes' community-led plan?
- Have you given short, general advice on potential sites that have been identified for affordable rural local needs housing?
- Have you ascertained whether the site/scheme is referenced in your Local Investment Plan?
- Are your planning requirements for the development and their associated costs proportionate to the size of the proposed scheme?



- Are your design requirements for the development realistic in terms of cost to the developer and appropriateness to their surroundings?
- Have you engaged positively in pre-application discussions with your housing colleagues, the relevant Registered Provider and highway officers?

## 6. Highway officers

- Are your highways and /or access requirements for the development and their associated costs proportionate to the size of the proposed development?
- Have you engaged positively with the developing Registered Provider and relevant housing and planning officers in the pre-application stage to ensure the final application is fit for purpose?



English Rural Housing Association



Ashford Borough Council



**EXAMPLE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY**

Dear Householder

Owing to the high cost of housing in this area, the Parish Council is considering whether there might be a need for additional affordable housing in XXXX parish so that residents who cannot afford to buy or rent locally will not be forced to move away. Affordable housing means homes that can be rented or part bought (shared ownership) from a Registered Provider. The reason for providing new affordable housing is to help local people of all ages who would like to stay or return to their parish and contribute to the village services that still exist.

We are sending out this Housing Needs Survey to assess the demand and gauge the level of support a small scheme might have in our community. We are doing so with the approval of XXXX Council, whose housing officers have approved this questionnaire. Tessa O’Sullivan, the Rural Housing Enabler from Action with Communities in Rural Kent is assisting us to carry out this survey. **The survey will be analysed by the Rural Housing Enabler, with all information given being kept confidential.** She will then give a summary report to the Parish Council.

Depending on the outcome of this survey, we may try to find a suitable site within the parish of XXXX

The most likely type of site would be what is known as a ‘Rural Exception Site’, within or on the edge of the village whereby:

- All homes on the site are owned by a Registered Provider (no homes can be sold privately)
- Houses are either rented or part-sold (shared ownership) to tenants
- Only households with a genuine local connection are eligible to be tenants
- There is no Right-to-Buy on these homes so they will always remain affordable for local people.

Once a site is found a village consultation event will be held so that residents of the parish can view and discuss the proposals and put their views forward.

This is a very important issue so please take time to fill in this survey. Even if no one in your household has a housing need, we want to know your views.

**Please return this form using the FREEPOST envelope provided by XXXX**

If any further information or additional questionnaires are required please contact the Parish Clerk on XXXX or the Rural Housing Enabler on XXXX

Yours sincerely  
XXXX, Chairman of the Parish Council



## HOUSING NEEDS IN THE PARISH OF .....

Please complete this survey on behalf of your household.

### SECTION 1

**Q1. What type of housing do you live in?**  Council property  Private rented  Tied tenancy  
 Housing Association rented  Housing Association shared ownership  Owner occupier (with or without mortgage)  
 Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_  Living with relatives

**Q2. Please enter the following information -**  
Number of bedrooms in your home  Number of people that currently live in the property

**Q3. How long have you lived in the parish?**  
 Less than 1 year  1-5 years  6-10 years  11-15 years  16-25 years  26+ years

**Q4. Have any members of your family/household left the parish in the last 5 years?**  Yes  No

**Q5. If you answered yes to Q4, please state what relationship they have to you.**  
 Child  Parent  Other relative  Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q6. Please indicate the reason why they left**  
 Lack of affordable housing  To attend university/college  Employment  
 Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Q7. Would they return if more affordable accommodation could be provided?**  
 Yes  No

**Q8. Would you support a small development of affordable housing if there was a proven need for people with a genuine local connection to the parish?**  
 Yes  No

**Q9. Please use this space if you wish to explain your answer to Question 8.**

**Q.10 Do you or a member of your household need separate or alternative accommodation either now or in the next 3 years?**  
 No  Yes, now  Yes, next 3 years

**IF YOU HAVE ANSWERED YES PLEASE CONTINUE WITH SECTION 2.**



## SECTION 2

## HOUSING NEEDS

If you or anyone else living in your house is in need of alternative housing, please continue with the questionnaire. Please complete one form per household in housing need. If you need another form please contact the Rural Housing Enabler on 01303 813790

Q11. Are you completing this form for yourself or someone else?

- Self       Someone else

Q12. If you are completing this for someone else please state their relationship to you and where they currently live eg. with parents, private renting etc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please continue to complete this form by answering the questions in respect of the person/household in need of alternative accommodation.

Q13. If you live outside the parish do you wish to return?

- Yes       No

Q14. If you live in the parish do you wish to stay in the parish?

- Yes       No

Q15. What is your connection with the parish? Please tick all that apply

- I currently live in the parish and have done so continuously for the last 5 years
- I have previously lived in the parish and have immediate\* family who currently live there and have done so continuously for the last 10 years
- I have lived in the parish for a total of 7 out of the last 10 years
- I am in full time or part time\* employment in the parish
- I need to move to the parish to take up full time or part time\* employment
- I need to move to the parish to give or receive support to or from an immediate family member

\*Immediate = mother, father, children or brother/sister

\*Part time = a minimum of 10 hours per week

Q16. What type of household will you be in alternative accommodation?

- Single person       Couple       Family       Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q17. How many people in each age group need alternative accommodation?

MALE

0-9     10-15     16-19     20-24     25-44     45-59     60-74     75+

FEMALE

0-9     10-15     16-19     20-24     25-44     45-59     60-74     75+



**Q18. Why are you seeking a new home (please tick all that apply)**

- |  |   |  |                                     |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Present home in need of major repair  | <input type="checkbox"/> To be nearer family    | <input type="checkbox"/> To be nearer work               | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Present home too expensive            | <input type="checkbox"/> Need smaller home      | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce/separation              | <input type="checkbox"/> New job    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Current home affecting health         | <input type="checkbox"/> Private tenancy ending | <input type="checkbox"/> First independent home          | <input type="checkbox"/> Lodging    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Setting up home with partner          | <input type="checkbox"/> Need larger home       | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty maintaining home     |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sheltered accom due to age/infirmity  | <input type="checkbox"/> Disability/disabled    | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot afford existing mortgage |                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> To move to a better/safer environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Access problems        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                     |                                     |

**Q19. What is your current housing situation?**

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Owner occupier with/without mortgage | <input type="checkbox"/> Living with relatives | <input type="checkbox"/> Renting from Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared ownership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renting from Housing Association     | <input type="checkbox"/> Tied tenancy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Renting privately    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____      |

**Q20. Please tell us in your own words why you need to move and what prevents you from doing so.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Q21. What type of housing do you need? Please tick any that apply.**

- |   |   |                                   |  |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flat   | <input type="checkbox"/> House  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bungalow | <input type="checkbox"/> Sheltered housing (suitable for older persons with limited support via a warden or lifeline system) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation suitable for older persons without support | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Care housing (suitable for elderly people with range of support options) |                                   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify _____                               |   |                                   |  |

**Q22. Which tenure would best suit your housing need?**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renting - Housing Association/Council | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared ownership - Housing Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Private renting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify _____            |   |  |

**Q23. How many bedrooms will you need?**

- |                            |                            |                            |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5+ |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|

**Q24. Please indicate the total gross annual income (before tax) of the household in housing need (joint if a couple). Do not include housing benefit or council tax benefit.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under £10,000     | <input type="checkbox"/> £30,000 - £35,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £10,000 - £15,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £35,000 - £40,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £15,000 - £20,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £40,000 - £50,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £20,000 - £25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> £50,000 - £60,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> £25,000 - £30,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> More than £60,000 |



Q25. How much money could you raise towards the purchase of a property; taking into account any access you have to capital (e.g. equity in your home or savings) as well as the amount you could borrow on a mortgage?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q26. How much money would you be able to raise as a deposit towards buying your own home?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Q27. Do you have any particular or specialised housing requirements e.g. to assist with a disability or special need? (Please provide details).

Q28. Which method of transport is usually used by members of your household to travel to their place of work/study? Please tick all that apply

- Own car       Car share       Train       Bus       Bike       Walk  
 Mainly work from home       Other please specify \_\_\_\_\_

Q29. How many vehicles are usually available for use by the household?

- 0       1       2       more than 2

Q30. Are you registered on the council's housing register?       Yes       No

To be considered for affordable housing you must also register on ----- Council's Housing Register. If you would like to register contact the Housing Services Team on -----

If you are interested in Local Needs Housing and it is found there is sufficient demand, further survey work may be needed to establish the exact extent of the need.

If it is necessary to update this survey in the future and you are willing to be contacted again, please provide your name, address, telephone number and email address in the space below. All information will be treated as confidential.

\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM IN THE FREEPOST ENVELOPE PROVIDED**



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This Protocol follows a direct recommendation within the Kent Forum Housing Strategy, which built on research into rural housing carried out by Kerry Higgins from DTZ.

It was developed by a Task and Finish Group set-up by Kent Housing Group. The Group was chaired by Tracey Kerly from Ashford Borough Council and consisted of:

Phillip Bell, Diocese of Canterbury Property Services  
Tim Broomhead, Countryside Landowners Association  
Ian Hardman, Ward Homes  
Keith Harrison, Action for Communities in Rural Kent  
Liz Harrison, Kent County Council  
Dawn Healy, Hyde Housing Association  
Brian Horton, Kent County Council  
Chris Knowles, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council  
Simon macLachlan, Kent Rural Board  
Adrian Maunders, English Rural Housing Association  
Sophie Palmer, Homes and Communities Agency  
Anita Pearce, Homes and Communities Agency  
Jill Pells, Kent Housing Group  
Jo Purvis, Kent County Council  
Jennifer Shaw, Ashford Borough Council  
Bob White, Kent Highways

The drafting of the Protocol was carried out by Jo Purvis from Kent County Council.

# Local Needs Housing

Tracey Kerly

Head of Customers, Homes and Property



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE





ASHFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Cheeselands, Biddenden

Completed 1993

20 rented homes - 14 x 2 bed and 6 x 3 bed houses

Southern Housing Group

10 fixed equity share homes - 8 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed houses

Rural Housing Trust





ASHFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Hardens View, Warehorne

Completed in two phases 1992 and 1995

4 equity share homes - 4 x 2 bed houses

Rural Housing Trust

4 rented homes - 4 x 2 bed bungalows

English Rural Housing Association





ASHFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Celak Close, Aldington

Completed 2004

12 rented homes - 2 x 2 bed  
bungalows, 4 x 2 bed and 6 x 3  
bed houses



4 shared ownership homes - 2 x 2  
bed and 2 x 3 bed houses

English Rural Housing Association



ASHFORD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Dadson Court, Smarden

Completed 2009

10 rented homes - 4 x 1 bed flats,  
4 x 2 bed and 2 x 3 bed houses

2 shared ownership homes - 1 x 2  
bed and 1 x 3 bed house

English Rural Housing Association



# Shrimpton Close, Chilham



Completed 2010

11 rented homes

1 x 2 bed bungalow, 2 x 1 bed flats,  
5 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed houses

Affinity Sutton

# Sunley Gardens, Godmersham



Completed 2011

5 rented homes – 1 x 2 bed bungalow, 1 x 2 bed and 3 x 3 bed houses

3 shared ownership homes – 2 x 2 bed and 1 x 3 bed houses

English Rural Housing Association

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**By:** Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Regeneration  
David Cockburn, Executive Director for Strategy, Economic  
Development and ICT

**To:** Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview  
and Scrutiny Committee, 23rd September 2011

**Subject:** Feedback Report from REDPOSC Rural visits

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** The report provides an overview of the recent rural visits by REDPOSC and outlines the key issues identified.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, REDPOSC identified that rural would be a priority focus for the forthcoming year. Two visits were arranged for the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 2<sup>nd</sup> September to provide an insight into a range of rural issues.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the recent visits, set out the key issues raised and identify areas for possible future consideration.

## 2. Visits to Projects/Sites

- 2..1 Members were taken on a tour by Action with Communities in Rural Kent (the Kent Rural Community Council) to a range of projects that they had helped facilitate. Action with Communities in Rural Kent is a community development organisation providing information guidance, training, networking opportunities and other support to community groups, small businesses, social enterprises, parish and town councils and other organisations to help rural communities identify and address their needs.
- 2.2 The day was themed around examples of the 'rural big society' as rural communities have a long history of developing their own solutions and social enterprises to meet locally-identified needs.
- 2.3 **Elham Post Office Outreach**  
An example of a post office outreach concept – where post office services are available in a community without a permanent Post Office on certain days of the week. The Elham example operates from the Kings Arms Public House and provides an invaluable service for older members of the community and a range of local businesses.
- 2.4 The Kent Action for Rural Retailers (KARR) programme is sponsored by Kent County Council (following the loss of Defra funding in 2007) and works to prevent the unplanned closure of village shops and post offices. To date,

Action with Communities in Rural Kent has been able to successfully reduce the number of unplanned post office closures through the KARR initiative by finding alternative locations, identifying new shopkeepers/subpostmasters, supporting the development of community run shops/post offices and facilitating the development of outreach services.

2.5 To date the initiative has supported more than 150 retail businesses to continue to serve the communities in which they are located.

2.6 **Key findings**

It was concluded that the scheme is clearly generating hidden savings for health and social care providers through enabling vulnerable and older members of the community to continue to live independently – especially delaying entry to full-time care. Further research would be of value to highlight and quantify these indirect benefits generated by KCC's £16K annual investment in the scheme.

2.7 It was also raised that the co-location of shop and postal services in facilities such as the local pub created mutual benefits for these businesses.

2.8 **Community Owned Shop – Barham**

This community shop was set up with support from the Kent Rural Access to Services Programme (RASP) (a SEEDA funded initiative) and KARR and is managed by local volunteers. Following the loss of their local post office, the local community were supported in setting up the Nailbourne Community Store Association to provide local access to groceries and postal services. The community raised most of the funds, aided by KCC member grants and a small RASP grant.

2.9 A further 4 community village shops have been established across Kent in areas (along social enterprise models) where running a commercial operation is no longer economically viable. Although the Rural Access to Services Programme has now finished, a basic support service has been maintained through the KARR initiative.

2.10 **Key findings**

The importance of allowing the community to develop the skills and take real ownership of community projects was discussed. It was highlighted that the Kent community shop scheme was inspired by best practice in Oxfordshire and the lessons learnt within that scheme had indicated that where community shops are 'gifted' to the community rather than developed 'hands-on' by the community they are likely to fail.

2.11 The community shop has created a real focal point for the community – especially for older residents and is now completely self-sustaining.

2.12 **Goodnestone: Local Housing Scheme**

Facilitating the development of affordable rural housing to meet local business and community needs is a key objective of the Kent Forum's Housing Strategy. The Kent Housing Group and Kent Rural Board have

developed a new cross-County Protocol to help deliver affordable local needs housing in rural parts of Kent and Medway.

2.13 The Protocol aims to encourage a consistent, pragmatic approach to affordable rural local needs housing development across the County. It provides advice and guidance on issues such as identifying local need, acquiring suitable land and engaging and working with local communities to overcome any barriers to new housing on exception sites.

2.14 The Goodnestone scheme, which is currently under construction is a development of 8 units on an exception site previously owned by Dover District Council. The development of the scheme was brokered by ACRK's Rural Housing Enabler Service, which included undertaking a local needs survey and working with Goodnestone Parish Council, the local community and English Rural Housing Association.

2.15 **Key findings**

The scheme being developed has been designed to be in keeping with local styles and the quality is in keeping with market-led housing provision.

2.16 The importance of good engagement with the community throughout the process was stressed – as local opposition can often present a key barrier to the development of such schemes. It was highlighted that no planning objections, even from neighbouring properties, were received for the Goodnestone Development. Both the Kent Forum Housing Strategy and the Rural Housing Protocol have stressed the importance of the ACRK's Rural Housing Enabler Service in bringing rural schemes forward.

2.17 **Wealden Wheels Community Transport Scheme**

Wealden Wheels is a community-owned transport scheme, serving 6 parishes and provides transportation for people that public transport does not reach. Support has come from a variety of sources – including Kent County Council, a former EU regeneration fund that KCC administered (Mid Kent LEADER +) and ACRK.

2.18 The scheme is run by volunteers and raises income from parish precepts, grants and local fund raising efforts. They currently have 24 volunteer drivers, although recruiting drivers remains an ongoing challenge. Due to current legislation, they operate as a car club with 140 members rather than running scheduled services.

2.19 **Key Findings**

It was raised that further consideration should be given as to whether such schemes could be developed in other parts of the County. A number of other initiatives were discussed, including the Sheppey Wheels scheme (which Wealden Wheels helped mentor) and the work of the Thanet Community Transport Association.

2.20 **Funding Buddies Project and Hawkinge Allotment**

The Funding Buddies project was set up by ACRK in 2006 to mentor

communities in developing their own community-run projects – especially where local groups were new to fundraising and lacked the necessary confidence or know-how to apply for funding and manage community projects.

- 2.21 The programme is currently funded by the Big Lottery and has been identified as a national exemplar for community capacity building. Although it was originally set up as a rural programme, the scheme now operates across Kent's rural and urban areas. Other areas including Cumbria, Gloucestershire and Essex are looking to replicate the scheme.
- 2.22 The scheme has 28 specialist volunteer funding advisers (mentors) who have different areas of expertise – i.e. sports, arts, heritage, social health. A mentor is assigned to each group to help them identify the need and shape the project, identify suitable funding streams and advise on the bid writing process. They also provide advice on setting up social enterprises and other types of fund raising avenues e.g. how to approach local businesses etc.
- 2.23 The Hawkinge Allotment project represented just one of the 510 projects supported by Funding Buddies, where the community had been successfully supported in applying for £40,000 of Lottery funding to set up allotments for local residents. The community had had no previous grant funding experience and lacked the confidence to approach funders and submit grant applications.
- 2.24 **Key Findings**  
The Funding Buddies project has raised over £18 for every £1 invested for community projects in Kent. There is a need to consider how Kent could build on this project further – especially in developing Big Society style projects.
- 2.25 KCC member grants are particularly helpful in helping to provide match due to the flexibility of what they can fund.

Finding the right community champion is key to bringing forward successful projects – but they also require a level of expert support to help them plan and implement their projects and, ideally, to be networked with those who have already taken forward successful similar schemes.

- 2.26 **The importance of Kent's food sector – 2<sup>nd</sup> September**

**Rumwood Green Farm**

Members were taken to Rumwood Green Farm, Langley. Rumwood Green Farm specialises in soft fruit and apple production. The business also packs fruit for local growers and distributors.

- 2.27 Considerable investment has been made in the site in recent years, especially in the packhouse, which is considered essential for supplying and meeting the standards set by UK supermarkets.

- 2.28 Members were taken around the packhouse, fruit storage facilities and to see strawberries being grown in table-top cultivation systems under polytunnels.
- 2.29 **Key Findings**  
Issues raised included the importance of polytunnels for commercial soft fruit production, the current dependency of the sector of migrant labour (especially through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme), the reluctance of local people to consider employment within the sector (despite there being many skilled and high value jobs) and the wider economic impact of the sector.
- 2.30 Areas for further work identified included the need for better local data to demonstrate the linkage and multiplier effects of Kent's horticulture and agriculture sectors and the importance of better careers advice to attract young people into the sector.
- 2.31 **East Malling Research**  
East Malling Research specialises in horticultural and agricultural research. The centre used to be government-owned but has now been externalised from Defra and operates on a commercial footing.
- 2.32 East Malling has developed an international reputation for its plant breeding work, with almost 90% of global apple production using the East Malling 'rootstock 9@ developed at the centre. Due to the development timescales for developing new apple varieties, a renewed focus is being placed on soft fruit development i.e. strawberries. Currently over 100 scientists are employed on East Malling's plant breeding research programme.
- 2.33 Pest and disease research is another critical area of research for East Malling. EU pesticide regulations have reduced the number of traditional pesticides and fungicides available to growers, whilst climate change has increased the risk of new pests and diseases affecting crops. East Malling is working to develop new biological controls to address some of these challenges.
- 2.34 East Malling has also undertaken successful trials into reducing water consumption for growing strawberries and potatoes. Researchers have shown it is possible to produce one tonne of Grade 1 potatoes using just 23 tonnes of water – significantly less than the current 42-60 tonnes industry average for the same yield. They are now working with Kent strawberry growers to apply the findings of the strawberry research into commercial production systems.
- 2.35 Members were taken to see apple storage research work and the concept pear orchard sponsored by Sainsburys. Through growing pears on a range of cordon systems, the latter has demonstrated a significant increase in both crop yield and quality.

2.36 **Key findings**

Concerns over food security has re-emphasised the importance of horticultural and agricultural research to increase the productive capacity and resilience of the sector to new pests and diseases.

- 2.37 The withdrawal of core Defra funding and privatisation of the UK's agricultural and horticultural research institutes has led to the closure of many dedicated facilities across the UK. The expansion and development of R&D capacity at East Malling will be key to ensuring that the UK's national capability on this important agenda is maintained.

**3. Conclusion**

- 3.1 The above visits provided a helpful insight into some of the key issues facing Kent's rural communities and the land-based sector. There are opportunities to build upon this programme at future meetings by examining some of these areas in greater depth and the workstreams being undertaken to address key concerns i.e. the Kent Rural PLC initiative and the Kent Rural Housing Protocol implementation.
- 3.2 In addition, there is also an opportunity to undertake additional visits, for example to Hadlow College and to a community broadband initiative.
- 3.3 At the culmination of the visits, officers will bring together all conclusions for this Committee to consider

**4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to note the report and discuss the key issues and findings arising from the rural visits.

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**Background Documents:**

The Kent Rural Housing Protocol

**BY:** Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  
David Cockburn, Corporate Director of Business Strategy & Support

**TO:** Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011

**SUBJECT:** Financial Monitoring 2011/12

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:**

Members of the POSC are asked to note the first quarter's budget monitoring report for 2011/12 to be reported to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011.

**FOR INFORMATION**

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**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This is a regular report to this Committee on the forecast outturn for Regeneration and Enterprise as reported within Business Strategy & Support Directorate budget.

**2. Forecast Outturn**

- 2.1 A detailed quarterly budget monitoring report is presented to Cabinet, usually in September, December and March, and a draft final outturn report in June. These reports outline the full financial position for each portfolio and are reported to POSCs after they have been considered by Cabinet. In the intervening months an exception report is made to Cabinet outlining any significant variations from the quarterly report. The first quarter's monitoring report for 2011/12 was presented to Cabinet on 19<sup>th</sup> September and an extract from the annexes for the Business Strategy & Support Directorate relating to the Regeneration and Enterprise portfolio is attached to this report.
- 2.2 This is the first in-year budget monitoring report we have been able to bring to the POSC based on the first full quarter's spending (April to June) report to Cabinet. The previous exception report for May was not reported to Cabinet until 18<sup>th</sup> July which was after the July round of POSC meetings.
- 2.3 The approved A-Z of budgets have now been realigned for the first quarter's budget monitoring, to reflect the new portfolio responsibilities and new directorate structures and give a new starting point for the year.

## 2.4 **Revenue**

2.4.1 We are currently forecasting a break-even position on the revenue budget. To remind Members the revenue budget for 2011/12 includes £60k of staff efficiencies savings, £137k savings on previous early retirement costs and payments to the pension fund, £355k of revenue costs on staff reductions and £477k savings on projects, and £148k to be funded from reserves.

## 2.5 **Capital**

2.5.1 The first quarter's report forecasts a total variance of +£0.481m increased expenditure. However, revenue funding has been re-assigned to meet the additional costs.

The major variance relates to +£0.349m for the Margate Eastern Seafront, relating to Landscaping, fees and costs not factored in to the original submission.

## 3 **Recommendations**

3.1 Members of the POSC are asked to note the projected outturn for Regeneration and Enterprise for 2011/12 based on the first quarter's monitoring report to Cabinet.

### Background Documents:

- 1) Cabinet 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 – Revenue and Capital budgets, Key Activity and Risk Monitoring

### Officer Contact:

Dave Shipton  
Finance Strategy Manager  
Ext. 4597

## BUSINESS STRATEGY & SUPPORT DIRECTORATE SUMMARY JULY 2011-12 FULL MONITORING REPORT

### 1. FINANCE

#### 1.1 REVENUE

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

- Allocation of grants and previously unallocated budgets where further information regarding allocations and spending plans has become available since the budget setting process.
- Cash limits for the A-Z service analysis have been adjusted since the budget was set to reflect the transfers required to reflect the new directorate and portfolio structures, the addition of £1.095m of roll forward from 2010-11 as approved by Cabinet on 20 June 2011, and a number of other technical adjustments to budget.
- The inclusion of new 100% grants (ie grants which fully fund the additional costs) awarded since the budget was set. These are detailed in Appendix 1 of the executive summary.

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

Budget Book Heading	Cash Limit			Variance			Comment
	G	I	N	G	I	N	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
<b>Regeneration &amp; Enterprise portfolio</b>							
Directorate Management & Support	447		447	0	0	0	
Development Staff & Projects	3,968	-275	3,693	0	0	0	
<b>Total R&amp;E portfolio</b>	<b>4,415</b>	<b>-275</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Assumed Management Action:</b>							
<b>- R&amp;E portfolio</b>						<b>0</b>	
<b>Forecast after Mgmt Action</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

### 1.2 CAPITAL

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

The capital cash limits have been adjusted since last reported to Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2011, as detailed in section 4.1.

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

	Prev Yrs Exp £000s	2011-12 £000s	2012-13 £000s	2013-14 £000s	Future Yrs £000s	TOTAL £000s
<b>Regeneration &amp; Economic Development Portfolio</b>						
Budget	20,965	14,179	8,549	2,500	2,500	48,693
Adjustments:						
- Re-phasing at Outturn	-78	78				0
- Outturn Changes	157					157
						0
Revised Budget	21,044	14,257	8,549	2,500	2,500	48,850
Variance		481	0	0	0	481
<b>split:</b>						
- real variance		+481	0	0	0	+481
- re-phasing		0	0	0	0	0
<b>Directorate Total</b>						
Revised Budget	21,044	14,257	8,549	2,500	2,500	48,850
Variance	0	481	0	0	0	481
<b>Real Variance</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+481</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>+481</b>
<b>Re-phasing</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### 1.2.3 Main Reasons for Variance

Table 4 below, details all forecast capital variances over £250k in 2011-12 and identifies these between projects which are:

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

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

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

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

portfolio	Project	real/ phasing	Project Status			
			Rolling Programme	Approval to Spend	Approval to Plan	Preliminary Stage
			£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
<b>Overspends/Projects ahead of schedule</b>						
Regen	Margate Eastern Seafront	real		349		
			<b>+0</b>	<b>+349</b>	<b>+0</b>	<b>+0</b>
<b>Underspends/Projects behind schedule</b>						
			<b>0</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>-0</b>
			<b>0</b>	<b>+349</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

1.2.4 **Projects re-phasing by over £1m:**

None

1.2.5 **Projects with real variances, including resourcing implications:**

There is a real variance of +£0.481m in 2011-12.

**Margate Eastern Seafront: +£0.349m** (in 2011-12): The pressure is due to the following: consolidation of project costs and funding between directorates which amounts to £0.193m and additional costs due to changes to the original scheme including the costs of sub-base not factored in the original submission amounting to £0.156m. Revenue funding allocated to this project has been re-assigned to meet the unplanned costs.

**Rendezvous Site- Margate: +£0.085m** (in 2011-12): This pressure relates to public realm works for Turner Harbour View. The funding is allocated in revenue, but actual work carried out falls within capital definition.

**Dover Sea Change: +£0.023m** (in 2011-12): The Ringway contract for works was over budget by £0.011m, which is 0.6% of the £1.74m contract there has been additional remedial work carried out in respect of railings. Revenue funding allocated to this project has been re-directed to meet the additional costs.

**Swale Parklands: +£0.024m** (in 2011-12): The increase cost is due additional features to the scheme to be funded from additional grant from Sustran.

Taking these into account, there is an underlying nil variance.

1.2.6 **General Overview of capital programme:**

(a) Risks

N/A

(b) Details of action being taken to alleviate risks

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**By:** Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise  
David Cockburn, Corporate Director of Business & Solutions,  
Business Strategy and Support

**To:** Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview and  
Scrutiny Committee 23 September 2011

**Subject:** Update on Strategic Projects

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** This report provides Members with an update on the progress of key regeneration projects.

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** This report provides Members with an update on progress of major regeneration projects being delivered by Regeneration and Economy.
- 1.2** The tables that follow present progress against projects in Ashford, Kent Thameside, Dover, Thanet, Swale and for specific countywide initiatives such as Kent and Medway Infrastructure Model, Integrated Infrastructure Finance Model, Developers Guide, Broadband, Sector Conversations, Kent Forum Housing Strategy and No Use Empty.

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
<b>Ashford Growth Area</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Mike Bodkin - Contact 01622 221960</b>		
Ashford Growth Area	Delivery of the Ashford Programme to support sustainable growth.	Total Programme value £53.5m public sector funding (of which £22m GAF 3 and £5.5m KCC funding).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J9 &amp; footbridge subject to some delays but final completion scheduled for October.</li> <li>• Drovers Roundabout now substantially completed.</li> <li>• Victoria Way subject to further delays due to utilities but final completion scheduled for end of October.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of major highway schemes.</li> <li>• Final meeting of Ashford's Future Partnership Board on 29 September, then Locality Board will assume oversight of growth programme.</li> <li>• Ashford BC is commencing LDF core strategy review to confirm extent and pace of growth of the town. KCC will continue to contribute to this and ongoing partnership activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Kent Thameside</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Mike Bodkin - Contact 01622 221960</b>		
Homes and Roads	To deliver 11 major transport schemes to support growth of 20,000 homes and 50,000 jobs.	Total cost - £200m (at 2009). (Price base varies for funding commitments) Regional Transport Programme (DfT) £46m (at 2008) HCA £23m (at 2008) DfT £26m (at 2007) Eastern Quarry £40m (at 2007) Developer Contributions £63m (at 2009).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Progress Report produced including a proposed Forward Delivery Programme for the period 2011/12 to 2016/17.</li> <li>• Planning applications submitted for major development sites in Dartford at Lowfield Street and GSK East &amp; Millpond. Problem locations identified as a result of these schemes and negotiations on-going regarding mitigation measures and contributions.</li> <li>• Consultants engaged to take forward design for Rathmore Road Link, Gravesend.</li> <li>• Inspector's report on Dartford Core Strategy EIP published on 1<sup>st</sup> August endorsing Homes &amp; Roads programme approach.</li> <li>• Methodology agreed for Eastern Quarry transport assessment and surveys carried out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership Agreement between KCC/DBC/GBC to secure further developer contributions.</li> <li>• Governance structure to be drafted and discussed with partners (to incorporate proposed Memorandum of Understanding).</li> <li>• On-going discussions with CLG/DfT regarding further public sector funding commitment.</li> <li>• Alternative funding options (e.g. New Homes Bonus, Tax Increment Financing, and Kent &amp; Medway Investment Fund) to be investigated.</li> <li>• Schemes identified in Forward Delivery Programme to be progressed.</li> <li>• Work underway to identify a package of mitigation measures to support development in Dartford Town Centre in addition to current planning application submitted.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
Ebbsfleet Valley (including Eastern Quarry)	To deliver 11,000 homes and new community adjacent to Ebbsfleet station.	An estimated £100m worth of infrastructure secured by KCC and DBC to support the development of Eastern Quarry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ebbsfleet Development – Recent agreement for the first Primary School trigger to move from 200 to 350 units.</li> <li>• Still no formal agreement by Land Securities to the proposed reconfiguration of the remaining S.106 terms for community infrastructure.</li> <li>• Land Securities are actively seeking residential development partners for Eastern Quarry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue negotiations with Land Securities re: their contribution to homes and road programme (as above).</li> <li>• Continue discussions regarding potential financing models for Ebbsfleet Valley including TIF pilot.</li> </ul>
<b>Dover</b>		<b>Lead Officer: David Hughes - Contact 01622 221942</b>		
Whitfield	Development of Whitfield of up to 5,700 new homes and associated community infrastructure.	Significant private sector investment in build out of site and the provision of infrastructure. KCC Officer time in R&E/KHS regarding masterplanning and infrastructure provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phase 1a granted planning permission (June 2011).</li> <li>• Phase 1 granted planning permission (July 2011).</li> <li>• Planning granted subject to a significant number of issues being resolved –affordable housing, transportation and community infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist DDC with developing their approach to CIL.</li> <li>• Negotiate with developers on S106 requirements as required by planning consents to ensure delivery of sites.</li> <li>• Negotiate with Highways Agency to resolve Article 14 direction preventing planning going ahead.</li> <li>• Negotiate with developers to secure transportation requirement mitigating impact of developments.</li> </ul>
<b>Folkestone</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Theresa Trussell – Contact 01622 221362</b>		
HLF (Townscape Heritage Initiative) bid for £1.6m to enhance public realm and landmark buildings in Folkestone Old	Extending the creative and cultural offer of the Old Town to attract more tourists and visitors to Folkestone.	Total project cost £1.6m. KCC match funding £400k from Reg Fund (subject to approval). HLF grant of £1.2m Additional funding (in kind and capital) will be sought from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HLF application process fully underway for submission in November 2011. Project team comprising of KCC, Shepway District Council and Creative Foundation now formed and operational. Other partners to be included as project progresses.</li> <li>• Consultation underway and letters of support being received.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit HLF bid in November 2011.</li> <li>• Complete survey work, consultation and design for highways element of the scheme.</li> <li>• Carry out consultation and finalise the scheme details.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
Town		Creative Foundation and Shepway District Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background work to bring forward the highways element of the project underway.</li> <li>Regen Fund bid of £500K submitted - £100k agreed by Regen Fund sub Group for improvements to Tontine Street and Tram Road. £400K to be decided later on the outcome of the HLF Bid.</li> </ul>	
<b>Swale</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Mike Bodkin – Contact 01622 221960</b>		
Queenborough/Rushenden Regeneration	Overall scheme to deliver 2000 new homes and related community/road infrastructure over 10 years.	Estimated cost of £26.4m of community infrastructure to be secured from S.106 CLG funding of £390k; KCC £15k to carry out environmental works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Works to prepare land for 1<sup>st</sup> phase of housing (starts+ expected 2013) in hand.</li> <li>Rushenden link road progressing.</li> <li>Completion of most of environmental/community works at Q/R- one project on site this summer.</li> <li>Preparation of agreed Action Plan to take forward new skills/community centre to replace existing Rushenden Gateway, located in a temporary building scheduled to be demolished.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up KCC/SBC team to re-examine S106 and secure necessary contributions to infrastructure in Q/R from Sept 2011.</li> <li>Rushenden link road scheduled for completion November 2011.</li> <li>Completion of final KCC supported env/community schemes winter 2011.</li> <li>Taking forward of Action Plan for new skills/community centre at Rushenden.</li> </ul>
Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Milton Creek Crossing. To join Eurolink and Kemsley Industrial Areas, relieving Town Centre.</li> <li>Bapchild Link. Completion of relief road from existing route to A2 at Bapchild. route.</li> </ul>	<p>Total cost £30.6m HCA £8m S106 £2.6 DfT £20m</p> <p>Total cost estimated between £15m to £45m, dependant on final route option selected,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work proceeding well – to target and below budget.</li> <li>Following decision with Swale JTB, no further work on Bapchild to be pursued, pending development of a scheme to include a Southern Relief Road, to join the M2.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road due to be completed by December 2011.</li> <li>Initial work on Southern Relief Road and access to Kent Science Park to be submitted to Swale BC for possible inclusion in LDF Core Strategy by September 2011.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road /M2 Junction 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M2/Junction 5 Completion of Transportation Strategy for Sittingbourne, including solution to congestion / safety problems at M2 Junction 5.</li> </ul>	Total Cost estimated between £120m to £150m. (Preliminary costs only at this stage).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work pursued as identified by Swale JTB Members above.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See note above.</li> </ul>
Sittingbourne Town Centre	Remodelling / regeneration of Town Centre Retail Core and local road network.	Costs being borne by developers (Tesco / Spenhill).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint meeting held between Swale BC and KCC July 2011 to agree way forward to achieve uplift in Sittingbourne town centre and potential sharing of land assets.</li> <li>Planning Applications for Morrisons and Tesco / Spenhill being assessed</li> <li>Swale BC negotiating development agreement with Spirit of Sittingbourne for redevelopment of SBC owned sites in town centre.</li> <li>Joint approach agreed on transport modelling to enable comprehensive assessment of proposals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow up to see how KCC assets can be used in potential land development model.</li> <li>Discussions with SBC over possible involvement of KCC owned sites and / or services in conjunction with Spirit of Sittingbourne partnership.</li> <li>Heads of Terms of development agreement (DA) to be signed by SBC by end of Sept, full DA by end Dec.</li> <li>Transport Mitigation strategy to be agreed and reported to Swale BC.</li> </ul>
<b>Thanet</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Theresa Bruton - Contact 01622 221947</b>		
East Kent Opportunities LLP	Limited liability partnership created by KCC and Thanet DC to develop land holdings at Manston Business Park and Euro Kent adjacent to Westwood Cross. EuroKent spine Road opened November 2008.	KCC purchased Manston Park landholdings in June 2006 £5.35m. Now sits alongside TDC equivalent landholding at EuroKent in the LLP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation from consultation feedback on Eurokent planning application proposal.</li> <li>Ongoing stakeholder engagement being concluded prior to planning application.</li> <li>All sales continued to be pursued at Manston with available market leads.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eurokent planning submission in Sept/Oct to be informed by consultation.</li> <li>Planning underway for second Employ Thanet Jobs Fair in autumn.</li> <li>All sales opportunities to be pursued at Manston in difficult market conditions.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
<b>Margate</b>				
Rendezvous site development	A quality mixed-use development at the eastern end of the Rendezvous site that is sympathetic to the Turner gallery and provides strong and effective linkages to the Old Town and the Winter Gardens. R&E are working with Thanet District Council (TDC), to transform the Grade 2 listed, Winter Gardens into a successful, modern operation.	Total cost will be determined by the eventual direction of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landscaping works in front of the new Turner Contemporary completed except for slipway.</li> <li>Measures to limit parking and direct TC visitors to parking in the town being implemented.</li> <li>Planning brief from TDC for site still awaited.</li> <li>Member level meeting (KCC and TDC) held July 2011 to review options and agree way forward for Winter Gardens. Likely future aim is for joint public/private initiative to refurbish and improve offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objective for joint KCC/private sector scheme to develop eastern end of the site for hotel/apartments remains – keeping watching brief on market (nb previous private sector partners pulled out in 2010 due to lack of demand in the market) to gauge impact of TC in the longer term.</li> <li>Taking forward planning brief for Rendezvous site with partners and users of the site (eg RNLI and Margate Yacht club).</li> <li>Winter Gardens to be maintained as now by TDC (the owners) as live music venue - re-evaluation of market opportunities early 2012.</li> </ul>
Development on the Dreamland site	To deliver the Dreamland Entertainment Complex & Heritage Amusement Park on a 10 acre site around the listed cinema and scenic railway.	£12.4m (Phase 1) including: SeaChange £4m HLF £3m TDC £0.75m Developer £4m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TDC has taken steps to CPO (compulsorily purchase) whole Dreamland site.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress is dependant on the CPO – this will take some time as site value needs to be agreed via formal process</li> </ul>
<b>No Use Empty</b>				
No Use Empty	Initiative launched in 2005 as part of its PSA 2 commitments to examine better ways of delivering services and		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tunbridge Wells joined the Loan Scheme (July).</li> <li>NUE confirmed as 1 of 4 partnerships shortlisted for a Regeneration &amp; Renewal Award (July).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gravesham BC expected to join Loan Scheme (Oct).</li> <li>Discussion with Maidstone BC on joining Loan Scheme.</li> <li>Continue to process loan applications.</li> <li>Outcome of HCA expression of interest</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
	working more effectively with district councils by returning long term empty properties back into use.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presented NUE Model to Maldon and Community Housing Wales (inc. Welsh Assembly (July).</li> <li>• £4.8m loans awarded since start of Initiative, pulling in £10.4m leverage to date (Aug 2011).</li> <li>• £831k of loans repaid (Aug 2011).</li> <li>• Further applications for loans with a value of £1m currently being considered / processed.</li> <li>• 1,729 units returned to date since start of the Initiative.</li> <li>• 52 units achieved by Qtr 1 2011-12 versus an annual target of 200.</li> <li>• HCA have acknowledged bid for funds of £1.5m to pilot NUE Affordable Homes Project but have delayed announcing successful bids until September.</li> </ul>	<p>(due Sept).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further Development of the NUE Affordable Homes Project (subject to successful bids).</li> <li>• Follow up work on recovery of loans in relation to revised payment plans (further 50k due by Sept).</li> <li>• NUE to pilot a “drop in surgery” at West Kent Landlord Forum to offer advice, guidance and potential loan assistance.</li> </ul>
<b>Kent Forum Housing Strategy</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Brian Horton - Contact 01622 221947</b>		
Kent Forum Housing Strategy	To develop and implement an integrated Housing Strategy for Kent and Medway.	£255k (rev) funding from the KCC Regeneration Fund. £200K (capital)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A detailed Implementation Plan has been prepared with Kent Housing Group and Kent Planning Officers Group. This Plan has been endorsed by Joint Kent Chiefs and the Kent Forum.</li> <li>• The final implementation plan has a number of work streams that are at an advanced stage of development including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Rural Housing Protocol – this has been launched by the Bishop of Dover. The Protocol has been jointly sponsored by Kent Housing Group and the Kent Rural Board.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Kent Forum will receive an update on progress and a proposal for refresh of the Housing Strategy in September.</li> </ul> <p>Work is progressing on the delivery of the recommendations detailed in the Implementation Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The development of Housing and Planning Futures, a new methodology to help District and Boroughs to determine their future dwelling numbers and recommend a Kent single managed growth ambition.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
			<p><b>2.</b> Older Peoples Housing Needs and Aspiration Report has been completed and recommendations are being progressed by a multi agency task and finish group.</p> <p><b>3.</b> Houses as homes – Improved accommodation to reduce levels of re-offending – this report was presented to the Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board (IOMSB) and they have agreed to use the report to inform the housing theme in the IOMSB work plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scoping work carried out between KCC and a major constructor into institutional investment on publicly-owned land to fund the delivery of new private sector housing.</li> <li>• Initial discussions have been held with Sector Treasury Services and Local Authorities around the development of a Kent-wide Local Authority Mortgage Scheme to help First Time Buyers access the mortgage market.</li> <li>• The completion of the Rural Housing Protocol, which was launched by the Bishop of Dover on 6<sup>th</sup> June and is currently being taken through District and Borough Executives.</li> <li>• The completion of detailed research on older people's housing provision, recommendations from which will be taken forward by a KHG Task and Finish Group.</li> <li>• The completion of research into the role of housing in the re-settlement of ex-prisoners, which has been used by the Integrated Offender Management Strategy Board as the basis for the housing strand of their reducing re-offending pathway.</li> </ul>
<b>Sector Conversations</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Megan McKibbin – Contact 01622 221914</b>		
Sector Conversations	Expanded network of business contacts with key business sectors – target no of new business	Total project cost £12K – 1.5K per event.  Partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 consultations have been completed Food Production, Horticulture and Agriculture, Construction &amp; Development and Low Carbon Energy Production. The detailed</li> </ul>	<p>The forthcoming programme of consultations is as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19 Sept, Health &amp; Social Care – hosted at East Malling Research Centre.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
	<p>contacts 800 Identify key actions that will stimulate business growth</p> <p>Task &amp; Finish activities to address issues that will make a tangible difference to business growth</p>	<p>contributions in kind – include subsidised venues, business champions time and speakers free of charge</p>	<p>event reports have been produced and shared with delegates on website. <a href="http://www.keb.org.uk">www.keb.org.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some 400 businesses participated in the events and some 800 have been contacted to date.</li> <li>• Follow-up to date includes: - the development of Skills Task &amp; Finish Groups focussed on Communications, Agriculture and Low Carbon Industries have been taking place during August and early September.</li> <li>• Kent Rural Plc – a concept initially raised at the Agricultural sector consultation was formally launched at the County Show on 15 July.</li> <li>• Participants from that sector consultation have been recruited to work in partnership to progress the discreet elements of the Kent Rural Plc initiative, Food Sector Action Plan.</li> <li>• Water Management Group – planned event in the autumn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• w/c 24 Oct, Creative &amp; Digital – hosted at Maidstone Studios – and delivered in partnership with Media Tree.</li> <li>• High Growth and Technology Businesses – late Nov – date tbc.</li> <li>• Manufacturing and Engineering – early 2012.</li> </ul> <p>The Kent Innovation and Growth team funded via the KCC Regen Fund from Sept 2011 will be running a series of masterclass events to address some of the barriers businesses face i.e. access to venture capital, sector buying networks, access to public sector procurement etc.</p>
<b>Kent and Medway Infrastructure Model</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Adele Harrison – Contact 01622 694835</b>		
Kent and Medway Investment Fund	Revolving Fund to provide investment for regeneration	Phase 2: Development £650k – contributions from Medway & Districts subject to further discussion. KCC contribution up to £500k, subject to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feasibility report presented to Kent Joint Chief Execs (21/6/11). Many districts indicating an interest.</li> <li>• Ongoing individual meetings with each authority to explain model in detail.</li> <li>• All districts have been invited to contribute towards the next stage of developing KMIF at a cost of £25k</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset review to assess potential value to create the Fund</li> <li>• Subject to support from Districts, consultancy support will be procured for phase 2 development.</li> <li>• Development stage is anticipated to be 9-12 months through to Fund set up.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
		Regen Fund bid.	<p>each.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £50k commitment secured from Medway and also £25k each from 3 districts.</li> <li>• All others subject to the outcome of a review of their assets to determine value, whether appropriate to KMIF and whether capable of raising sufficient capital to seed the fund.</li> </ul>	
<b>Pfizer/East Kent Recovery Package</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Barbara Cooper – Contact 01622 221856</b>		
Pfizer/East Kent Recovery Package	<p>Following the announcement that Pfizer will exit the Sandwich site by the end of 2012, this project focuses on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Establishing new options for the future of the Sandwich site;</li> <li>b) Supporting staff, contractors and suppliers affected by closure; and</li> <li>c) Developing the broader economic strategy for East Kent.</li> </ol>	Sandwich Task Force, East Kent Leaders and CE's, Business and HE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task Force established in February and continuing to meet.</li> <li>• Sandwich site now being marketed as Discovery Park by CBRE, with support from Locate in Kent.</li> <li>• Full economic impact assessment completed.</li> <li>• Enterprise Zone designation secured for Sandwich site. This gives a business rate discount worth up to £275k over five years for new occupiers on the site from April 2012.</li> <li>• Funding to provide 1 in 200 year flood defence for Sandwich site and town secured.</li> <li>• Application submitted to Regional Growth Fund to support access to finance for business and key infrastructure across East Kent.</li> <li>• Additional EU funding secured through Skills Funding Agency to support training and skills development for unemployed people across East Kent.</li> <li>• Joint skills and employment activity continuing, with programme of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision on Government support for Regional Growth Fund expected in October.</li> <li>• Site marketing continuing, and to incorporate marketing of incentives associated with Enterprise Zone.</li> <li>• Preparation to take place for successful implementation of Enterprise Zone, including development of Zone governance arrangements.</li> <li>• Longer term framework for economic development in East Kent to be taken forward in conjunction with East Kent districts.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
			support offered for Pfizer staff seeking to establish own businesses and spin-outs.	
<b>Rural Superfast Broadband Project</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Elizabeth Harrison – Contact 01622 694835</b>		
Unlocking Kent's Potential: Rural Superfast Broadband Project	To pilot innovative solutions to providing high speed access in areas of market failure for next generation broadband access.	£1.6m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meetings held with the 5 communities for round 1 with successful discussions.</li> <li>• Evaluated tenders for procurement framework.</li> <li>• Discussions ongoing with BDUK to secure government funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalisation of procurement framework.</li> <li>• Commencement of mini-competitions to procure individual pilot solutions.</li> <li>• Wave 2 pilot parameters to be finalised with steering group.</li> </ul>
<b>Integrated Infrastructure Finance Model &amp; Developers Guide</b>		<b>Lead Officer: Nigel Smith – Contact 01622 221867</b>		
Integrated Infrastructure and Finance Model	Model to support What Price Growth work and developed jointly with Finance and external consultants	£125k revenue funding from the KCC Regeneration Fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• URS Scott Wilson (consultants) developed model.</li> <li>• Approach validated by SNR Denton.</li> <li>• Outputs signed off by KASS Senior Management Team, ELS Area Education Officers and C&amp;C Heads of Service.</li> <li>• Finance inputting corporate information.</li> <li>• Information being used to inform Local Development Frameworks (LDF's), Infrastructure Delivery Plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance to complete corporate section of model.</li> <li>• Use model as the single source of information for ELS, FSC and C&amp;C in connection with Planning Applications, Local Development Frameworks (LDF's), Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP's), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and KCC Developers Guide.</li> </ul>
Developers Guide	A revision of the current Guide to reflect new innovative service delivery methods for ELS, C&C and FSC and KCC's	£25k for public consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Guide prepared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal partnership consultation.</li> <li>• Modify and obtain Cabinet approval ready for public consultation.</li> <li>• Consideration of appropriate amendments and adoption by KCC.</li> </ul>

Project	Summary of project outcome	Cost of Project KCC/Partners £	Latest progress	Next Steps
	<p>approach delivering services in the current economic climate. The Guide will be informed by the IIFM above.</p>			

## **2. Recommendation:**

**2.1** Members are asked to note progress against each of the projects.

### **Lead Contact Officer:**

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**To:** Regeneration & Economic Development  
Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**From:** Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer and  
Communities  
Amanda Honey, Corporate Director of Customer and  
Communities

**Date:** 23 September 2011

**Subject:** Connecting with Communities – 2010/11 Annual Report  
on Consultation, Engagement and Involvement Activity.

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:**

The purpose of this report is to update Regeneration & Economic Development (R & ED) POSC Members on the activities that took place between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2011 to consult, engage and involve all those who are interested in or involved with our services.

**FOR INFORMATION AND COMMENT**

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the main aspects of consultation, engagement and involvement within KCC during the financial year 2010/2011. It also informs Members on both existing and future work and highlights the changes the Council intends to make to further embed and extend engagement processes.

1.2 Whenever KCC makes a decision about improving or changing its services, it needs to be confident the decision is properly informed by public opinion. The reduction in budget allocation for public services means that it is likely that all residents will be impacted upon in some shape or form. At this time, more so than any in the recent past, it is important that the public has the opportunity to have a say about the services they receive. Public opinion should be viewed as an important tool for Councillors - the local decision makers - in making difficult decisions about where and how to reduce or redesign services.

**2 KNOWN INFORMATION**

2.1 It is important that we target our information and use our resources in the most cost efficient way. KCC has used customer insight to ensure that we provide information in a way that suits people best.

2.2 This area of work is driven by the information and data we hold about residents of Kent, including the feedback we get from customer comments and complaints. KCC also makes use of a number of data and information sources including 'MOSAIC' to provide insight into the background and lifestyles of residents across the whole of Kent.

2.3 Getting an insight into how customers are interacting with KCC, what they want and who they are is crucial to improving access to services. This insight can help KCC to predict what people will want and need in future. We can also find out who is or isn't interacting with the Council as well as over/under provision and over/under utilisation.

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

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

2.5 The Unit collects, collates, processes, analyses and maps data for a wide range of projects across the whole of Kent County Council and beyond. All of the latest data and publications on these topics can be found on the Research and Intelligence website [www.kent.gov.uk/research](http://www.kent.gov.uk/research)

2.6 This information is used before we go out to consult with the public. The knowledge gained through consultation is then fed back across KCC.

### **3 THE WAYS IN WHICH WE'VE INVOLVED LOCAL PEOPLE IN 2010/11**

3.1 There are a number of different opportunities for residents, service users and other interested groups to influence decision-making and service delivery across all our functions. The main objectives for these consultation and involvement activities are:

- To find out what customers think about the services they have received or want to receive
- To find out what particular groups or audiences think about a given theme
- To find out what interested or affected people think about a particular proposal, policy or plan

- To include groups of interested or affected people in a decision-making or policy-making process
- To include groups of interested or affected people in service design and delivery, in order to improve those services
- To include groups of interested or affected people in the assessment or evaluation of services
- To involve residents in the recommendations of member community grants

3.2 There are also a variety of methods and tools that are used to meet these objectives, as shown below:-

**Satisfaction Surveys:** As well as measuring satisfaction levels and monitoring them over time, surveys often include other questions which enable the services to act on the information provided to fix problems or take opportunities. The surveys are usually carried out using questionnaires (paper, email or online) or are done over the phone. They target service users and tend to be carried out by units with high levels of frontline customer contact.

**Forums, groups and panels:** The purpose of this sort of activity is to examine issues in greater depth and begin to explore solutions to problems or to identify new opportunities. They are 'qualitative' methods and the forums, groups and panels we run are generally groups which meet regularly to talk about a particular service. They typically involve around 5 to 15 people per group, and may be organised around a particular service, location or issue.

**Participative events and processes:** The main purpose of this sort of activity is to exchange views, opinions and ideas, and often making decisions together.

**Market research:** Main purpose of this sort of activity tends to be to generate actionable information about people, communities and groups who are, or who could be, using a service which we provide. We use it to identify opportunities for developing certain areas of our businesses.

**Participatory Budget events (You Decide):** The main aims have been to engage a wide section of the local community in the grant decision-making process.

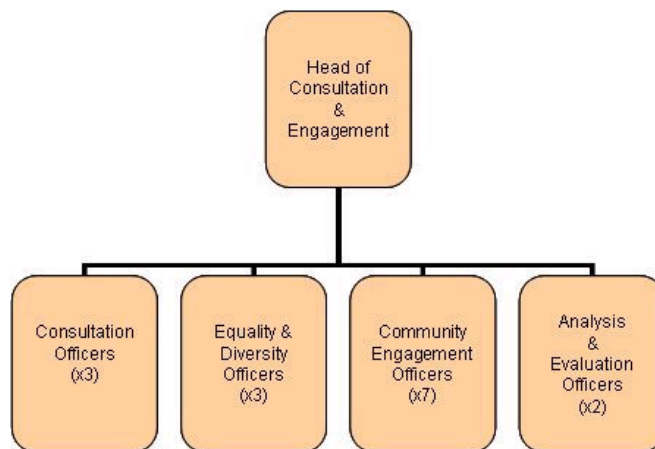
## 4 WHAT WE HAVE DONE

4.1 Detail of the consultation, engagement and involvement work carried out by Regeneration & Economic Development during 2010/2011 is presented in the Appendix to this report together with contact details of the lead officer for each project.

## 5 OUR PLANS FOR A NEW WAY OF WORKING

5.1 The current team of Community Engagement Managers transferred into the Communities directorate in April this year, and as part of KCC's need to make substantial savings over the next three years, the division in which they are part of (Communications and Engagement) has been undergoing a restructure.

5.2 As officers are appointed to new roles within the restructure, the Consultation and Engagement team will be working in a different way, and will be structured as follows:



5.3 The new team will have fifteen officers with different specialist areas all working much more seamlessly to support Consultation and Engagement.

5.4 Though good progress has been made there is still scope for further improvement and consistency in consultation and engagement practice across the Council. From September 2011 there will be a central resource to ensure:

- KCC does not target the same audience segment by age/interest/geography at the same time with two different consultations
- All questions asked are constructed in an appropriate and unambiguous method to ensure answers that are relevant to the topic and to an agreed accuracy
- A log of all consultations is kept so that there is visibility of the contact being made by KCC with its customers – and its impact.

5.5 The corporate responsibilities are for setting and supporting coherent standards, giving advice, challenging the business need and creating the opportunity for working with partners to share costs and findings.

5.6 We still need to make it even easier for local people to have their say and we also need to use their views and suggestions more effectively and - crucially - ensure we publicise what difference those views made when a final decision was taken. We will continue to explore how digital technologies could be better deployed to make engagement work, cheaper, quicker, more responsive, more relevant and more convenient for residents and businesses.

5.7 Participatory Budgeting (PB) events are a useful tool for engaging with communities where residents see that they can have an impact on the decisions to be made. The grant allocation process was a helpful starting point and PB has shown it has the potential to be a valuable tool across a wider range of discretionary service decisions.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The examples in the Appendix indicate the extent to which KCC is using information from service users and other interested groups to influence its decision making. This is in keeping with the statutory **duty to involve** (even though the Coalition Government has indicated this is due to be repealed, the same duty will remain but become non-statutory), the Equality Act 2010 and with the culture being fostered across the Authority.

6.2 Twin pressures are influencing our consultation, engagement and involvement work. Firstly there is pressure to improve the quality of the work we do, which arises from problems that other authorities have had when they have been judged to have acted incorrectly or inappropriately. This pressure concerns what we consult about, when we consult and how much detail we use to inform the consultation process and the ultimate decision making.

6.3 The second pressure arises from our budget position and the need to reduce significantly the overall amount of our resource committed to consultation, engagement and involvement.

6.4 Because some consultation work, for instance, must be done and must be done to a particular standard and timescale, the outlook for the future can be summarised as **doing less work overall but doing the work we do better and more efficiently and effectively.**

6.5 This work will continue during 2011-12 and three particular priorities will be:

- Undertaking a rigorous and mandatory assessment of all consultation, engagement and involvement proposals at a very early stage, in order to identify those projects that are not a priority and will not be pursued and also those that are a priority and don't just need to be done but need to be done in a demonstrably exemplary manner.
- Exploring how digital technologies could be better deployed to make engagement work cheaper, quicker, more responsive, more relevant and more convenient for residents and businesses.

- Using every opportunity to keep down the costs of consultation exercises; minimise duplication and to make best use of the analysis and information that is collected.

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Members of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to **NOTE** the contents of this report and **COMMENT** on the priorities identified in section 6 above.

*Director:* Jill Rawlins  
*Title:* Interim Director of Communications and Engagement

*Contact Officer:* Nick Warren  
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## APPENDIX

*Title of consultation* Cyclopark local access consultation

*Name of lead officer* Laurence Tricker

*e-mail address of lead officer* [laurence.tricker@kent.gov.uk](mailto:laurence.tricker@kent.gov.uk)

*Lead officer's telephone number* 01474 338813

### *What we wanted to find out*

Local residents' views on local access issues and options for resolving conflicts.

### *What we asked and the methodology used*

At an open meeting in June, 43 local residents (700 were invited) were asked what they thought about the various formal and informal accesses to the Cyclopark. No consensus was reached, so a letter followed to 700 residents presenting four access options and asking for residents' preferences.

### *What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

200 questionnaires were returned and the analysis showed that a majority of respondents showed support for options 1 and 2.

### *How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?*

#### *How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

The analysis of the questionnaires and other information was supplied to local Members in order to inform their decision. The results of the consultation and the Members' decision were circulated to local residents.

### *How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

Officer time was significant but not recorded. External fees estimated at £2,200 for delivery of the questionnaire and preparation of option plans.

*Title of consultation* Greening the Gateway  
*Name of lead officer* Val Hyland  
*e-mail address of lead officer* [Valerie.Hyland@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Valerie.Hyland@kent.gov.uk)

*Lead officer's telephone number* 01622 221373

*What we wanted to find out*

The views of stakeholders, groups and local Members on how to take the ambitions for Green Grid forward

*What we asked and the methodology used*

A new Community Forum ('Caring for our Towns and Countryside') has been developed for north Kent (Gravesham and Dartford). The Forum met in Dec 2010 in Dartford, and will meet quarterly.

*What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

*How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?  
How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

*How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

This is being managed by the Greening the Gateway Kent and Medway Initiative; a partnership project hosted by Medway Council with KCC on the Steering Group, so there is no direct cost to KCC.

*Title of consultation* Discovery Park, Ashford  
*Name of lead officer* Val Hyland  
*e-mail address of lead officer* [Valerie.Hyland@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Valerie.Hyland@kent.gov.uk)

*Lead officer's telephone number* 01622 221373

*What we wanted to find out*

Development of ideas and projects for taking forward Discovery Park, Ashford

*What we asked and the methodology used*

There was a stakeholder workshop (included local residents and other interested parties) on 22nd July, hosted by Ashford Borough Council.

*What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

A copy of the report of the workshop held on 22 July is available at [http://www.ashford.gov.uk/pdf/101019\\_CHILMINGTON\\_GREEN\\_REPORT\\_lo\\_wres.pdf](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/pdf/101019_CHILMINGTON_GREEN_REPORT_lo_wres.pdf)

*How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?*

*How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

The project is currently on hold pending decisions on taking the development forward.

*How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

*Title of consultation* Kent Design Guide: 'Safer Places,  
Building out risk – Building in safety'

*Name of lead officer* Katherine Putnam, Kent Design  
Manager, Business Strategy & Support

*e-mail address of lead officer* [katherine.putnam@kent.gov.uk](mailto:katherine.putnam@kent.gov.uk)

Lead officer's telephone number 01622 696958

*What we wanted to find out*

This informal consultation sought the views of key stakeholders on content, accuracy, general usefulness and any areas not covered in the first draft document which provides technical guidance to the Kent Design Guide, and provide more specific detail and guidance on how to address the reduction of risk from fire in Kent's future built environment. Safer Places will act as a reference point for developers, planning consultants, architects and local authority officers responsible for all forms of development, at the early stages of the planning process. It will also serve more widely as a useful information source on this subject.

*What we asked and the methodology used*

Key stakeholders were asked seven specific questions and given the opportunity to add any further comments in a consultation that ran for eight weeks from 28 February 2011 to 25 April 2011

*What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

A copy of the ten detailed sets of comments and how they were addressed is available on request.

*How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?*

*How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

The consultation period for this document has only very recently ended. Therefore changes to the document/response comments have not yet been formed. We are due to amend the document and reply to the comments on 13 May 2011.

*How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

Officers' time only

Title of consultation Kent Design Guide: 'Kent Farmstead Guidance' and 'Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance': consultation draft

Name of lead officer Katherine Putnam, Kent Design Manager, Business Strategy & Support

e-mail address of lead officer [katherine.putnam@kent.gov.uk](mailto:katherine.putnam@kent.gov.uk)

Lead officer's telephone number 01622 696958

*What we wanted to find out*

This informal consultation is seeking the views of key stakeholders on the 2 draft guidance documents. produced by English Heritage – the Kent Farmstead Guidance and the Kent Downs AONB Farmstead Guidance to help develop and determine sound and sensitive development proposals for historic farmsteads in Kent and the Kent Downs AONB.

*What we asked and the methodology used*

Key stakeholders (Local Planning Authorities, Planners, Conservation Officers, consultants, agents and landowners) were asked their opinions on content, accuracy, general usefulness and any areas not covered in the two guidance documents, including their answers to 5 key questions in a consultation period that ran for eight weeks from the 29 March 2011 to 24 May 2011.

*What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

A copy of the four detailed sets of comments and how they were addressed is available on request.

*How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?*

*How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

The consultation period for this document has only recently ended and changes to the document/response comments have not yet been formulated.

*How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

Officers' time plus £5,000 to date.

*Title of consultation*                      Asset Management Review & Kent Design  
Guide Review Consultation on a standard palette of materials for use in public  
realm schemes

Name of lead officer                      Bob White, Development Planning  
Manager, Enterprise & Environment

*e-mail address of lead officer*        Bob.White@kent.gov.uk

*Lead officer's telephone number* 07715455956

*What we wanted to find out*

Austerity measures require “more for less”. Maintenance costs need to be reduced without degrading the overall quality of the public realm, recognising the value of the “Total Place” approach. The opinions of key stakeholders were sought on the proposal that a standard range of materials (the so called palette) be used in new construction intended to be adopted for maintenance at public expense on completion.

*What we asked and the methodology used*

Developers, scheme promoters and maintenance engineers need to know which materials they can use to create good quality paths, streets, roads and public places without incurring additional costs to support maintenance. The consultation document set out the standard palette of materials for use in Kent (but not Medway), recognising that there are local materials that may be used in context, and allowing for the enlarging of the palette when other suitable an eight weeks consultation with local authority and development company representatives in Kent between January and March 2011

*What we found out (copy of a report, or summary)*

A copy of the responses to the 9 consultation questions and Kent Highways Services' comments on those responses is available on request.

*How we used this information? How did it inform the decisions we made?*

*How we reported this back to those who took part and to the public?*

The closing date was not rigorously applied. Subsequent communication with the Chair of the Kent Developers' Group indicates that the Group may wish to offer a view. Ten different consultees responded, and a consultation report is currently being finalised. This will lead to some changes to the main document. The matter will be reported to POSC at a suitable time in the near future.

*How much did it cost in addition to KCC staff time? (include cost of any publications, software or third parties commissioned to undertake any survey/analysis work)*

By: Head of Democratic Services

To: Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview  
and Scrutiny Committee  
23 September 2011

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report updates Members on the progress of the Select Committee on the Student Journey

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**Select Committee – “The Student Journey”.**

1. (1) The Select Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr Kit Smith, has nearly completed its evidence gathering sessions, which included interviewing key stakeholders from business, education and obtaining evidence from young people. It will continue gathering evidence until October 2011.

(2) The Committee met on 1 September 2011 to signpost areas for possible recommendations, the outcome of this is set out the APPENIDX to this report.

(3) It is intended that the Select Committee will submit its final report to Cabinet in April 2012 and to County Council in May 2012.

**Suggestion for a Select Committee topic reviews**

2. If Members have any suggestions of topics they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future topic review work programme, they should contact the Democratic Services Officer for this POSC.

**Recommendations**

3. Members are to note the draft areas for recommendations proposed by the Select Committee on the Student Journey, and advise the Democratic Services Officer of any topics they would like to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the future Select Committee Topic Review Work Programme.

Background Information: *Nil*

Christine Singh  
Tel No: 01622 694334  
e-mail: [christine.singh@kent.gov.uk](mailto:christine.singh@kent.gov.uk)

## Select Committee – The Student Journey

### *Update*

The Select Committee has started its evidence gathering sessions and has interviewed key stakeholders including KCC officers, representatives of local businesses, academics, and representatives of careers education and apprenticeships services. It will continue gathering evidence until October 2011 by visiting businesses, schools and colleges, and by interviewing young people.

Potential areas for recommendation that have emerged so far include the following.

- Promote at strategic, county-wide level, the adoption of mechanisms that genuinely strengthen the link between local educators and businesses, and that enhance the employability of young people in Kent (for example, develop links between Vocational Skills Centres and local businesses, develop the role of Planning Forums, etc.).
- The way careers education and information, advice and guidance are taught in schools in Kent should be more consistent. It is suggested to promote and produce an “employability passport” for each student, which includes a checklist of activities and objectives every student must achieve in order to reach adequate employability standards. Also, in order to ensure good quality and consistent advice and guidance, KCC should develop with partner organisations a county-wide kitemark scheme.
- Evidence indicates that young people lack the “soft skills” (for example, punctuality, professionalism and motivation) that employers seek in potential employees. Also, careers education in schools is often taught too late. Finally, the business community - as well as the Wolf Report - points out that young people’s literacy and numeracy standards when completing compulsory education are generally inadequate.
- The great majority of businesses in Kent are small or medium-sized. Several of these businesses may find it challenging to invest time and resources in order to offer apprenticeship and work experience programmes. Kent County Council should develop further its important strategic role by increasing its support, advice and guidance to employers offering apprenticeships and work experience programmes. Red tape and bureaucracy should be cut to promote the setting up of apprenticeships by employers and their take up by young people.
- About 5% of young people aged 16-18 in Kent are not in education, employment or training. As powerful collaboration structures between learning and skills providers already exist, KCC could encourage them to agree voluntary targets to reduce the number of young people who could potentially become NEETs when leaving school or college. A pilot scheme could initially be run for this purpose.
- Normally young people in Kent go through their education with a view to having three optional endings: continue their education, employment or unemployment. The option of being more entrepreneurial and of becoming self-employed should be promoted, and more information should be offered to young people about the support and guidance available to them.

It is intended that the Select Committee will submit its final report to the Cabinet in April 2012 and to County Council in May 2012.

## **Select Committee - The Student Journey**

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