



AGENDA

CABINET

Monday, 9th January, 2012, at 10.00 am Ask for: **Karen Mannering /
Geoff Mills**

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Telephone: **(01622) 694367/
Hall, Maidstone** **694289**

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

Webcasting Notice

Please note: this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

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UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Introduction/Webcasting
2. Declaration of Interests by Member in Items on the Agenda for this meeting
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2011 (Pages 1 - 14)
4. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Exception Report (Pages 15 - 26)
5. Provisional Grant Settlement 2012/13 (Pages 27 - 32)
6. Customer Service and ICT Strategies (Pages 33 - 72)
7. Children's Services Improvement Plan - Minutes of 20 September 2011 (Pages 73 - 76)
8. Recommendations from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee - 13 December 2011 and Recommendation following the Specialist Children's Services POSC - 17 November 2011 (Pages 77 - 82)
9. Other items which the Chairman decides are relevant or urgent

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
Thursday, 29 December 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

CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 5 December 2011.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr A J King, MBE, Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr K G Lynes, Mr J D Simmonds, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr M J Whiting and Mrs J Whittle

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr M Austerberry (Corporate Director, Environment and Enterprise), Mr D Cockburn (Corporate Director of Business and Support), Ms A Honey (Corporate Director, Customer and Communities), Mr A Ireland (Corporate Director, Families and Social Care), Ms M Peachey (Kent Director Of Public Health), Mr G Wild (Director of Governance and Law), Mr A Wood (Corporate Director of Finance and Procurement) Mrs L O'Reily (representing the Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills) and Mr G Mills (Democratic Services)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

Before the commencement of business Mr Carter welcomed to the meeting Mr Andrew Ireland, the Council's newly appointed Corporate Director for Families and Social Care. Mr Carter also welcomed Mr Matt Burrows the Council's newly appointed Director of Communications and Engagement

75. Minutes of the Meeting held on 17 October 2011
(Item 3)

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2011 be agreed, and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

76. Revenue & Capital Budgets, Key Activity and Risk Monitoring 2011-12
(Item 4— Report by Mr J Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance & Business Support; Mr A Wood, Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement; and Corporate Directors)

(1) Mr Simmonds outlined the key elements of this report and highlighted the main pressures. He said that the County Council had so far received back some £11.8m from Icelandic Banks and following the successful court case he was hopeful that most if not all of the Council's money would now be recovered, possibly with some interest. Mr Simmonds also reported on adjustments made to the Capital Budget since the last meeting. Mr Carter placed on record his thanks and that of the Cabinet for the part officers had played in delivering a balanced budget which may yet show a slight under spend.

(2) Following further discussion Cabinet Resolved to:

- (a) note the latest monitoring position on the revenue and capital budgets
- (b) note that residual pressures which were currently forecast within the Specialist Children Services and Communities, Customer Services and Improvement portfolios and the management action which was forecast to be delivered within the Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform portfolio
- (c) note the final split of Early Years' budgets between "standards and quality assurance in early years settings" (Education, Learning and Skills portfolio) and "provision of early years and childcare" (Specialist Children Services portfolio)
- (d) agree the £1.2m transfer of a one-off under spend on Early Years & Childcare Quality & Outcomes Team within the ELS portfolio to the earmarked reserve to support next year's budget and that the use of this reserve would be built into the draft 2012-15 Medium Term Financial Plan.
- (e) agree that the £16.226m NHS Support for Social Care funding, details of which were included in item 9 of the 19 September 2011 Cabinet agenda, be transferred to a new specific earmarked reserve and drawn down as expenditure incurred in line with detailed plans to be jointly agreed with health.
- (f) agree that £0.950m costs for the development of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project be met from a temporary drawdown from the IT Asset Maintenance reserve in the current year, with the repayment of this funding back to the IT Asset Maintenance Reserve in 2012-13, which would be drafted into the 2012-15 MTFP.
- (g) agree the transfer of £1.599m Minimum Revenue Provision saving, resulting from the re-phasing of the capital programme in 2010-11, to reserves to fund the potential future impact.
- (h) note and agree the changes to the capital programme.
- (i) agree that re-phasing on the capital programme be moved from 2011-12 capital cash limits to future years.
- (j) agree the £4.118m transfer of funding from Building Schools for the Future Unit Cost to cover the shortfall of grant against the Academy Projects.
- (k) agree the £1.4m prudential borrowing for the Enterprise Resource Programme.
- (l) note the latest financial health indicators and prudential indicators.

- (m) note the directorate staffing levels as at the end of September 2011.

77. Autumn Budget Statement

(Item 5– Report by Mr P Carter, Leader of the Council; Mr J Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance & Business Support; Katherine Kerswell, Managing Director; and Mr A Wood, Corporate Director for Finance & Procurement) (Mr D Shipton was present for this item)

(1) Mr Simmonds highlighted the critical issues the Council faced and said the impact of a predicted net loss in funding of £11m coupled with an estimated £93m of additional spending demands meant KCC would have to make savings in 2012/13 totalling some £104m in order to balance the budget. This represented a substantial challenge and a savings target of a similar magnitude to the £95m the County Council faced in 2011/12. Mr Simmonds also said the Council would be setting itself an ambitious Capital Programme and as part of that it would be looking at ways to stimulate the Kent economy and employment.

(2) Cabinet resolved to note:

(a) The National Context:

- (i) Lower economic growth than previous forecasts and slower recovery from the recession
- (ii) Inflation higher than the government's target
- (iii) Rising unemployment
- (iv) Public expenditure reductions
- (v) Eurozone debt crisis

(b) The National Resources Position:

- (i) the difference in resource allocation between London/Metropolitan and shire areas
- (ii) Potential changes to the funding for local authorities and schools
- (iii) Potential increases in employee's pension contributions
- (iv) Funding from health authorities to support social care
- (v) Council Tax freeze and local referendum on excessive increases in future
- (vi) the disparity in grant allocations to south east authorities since 2006/07 compared to the rest of England and impact on Council tax

(c) Kent – Local Resource Allocation

- (i) Take-up of proposed freeze on Council Tax for a second successive year
- (ii) Launch draft budget and medium term financial plan before Christmas
- (iii) County Council to agree budget on 9 February
- (iv) Further enhancements to transparency of budget
- (v) Financial outlook based on reduced resources and increased spending demands necessitating significant year on year savings
- (vi) Proposed financial strategy and establishment of a Budget Programme Board
- (vii) Financial risks

(viii) Levels of general reserves

78. Vision for Kent 2012-2022

(Item 6– Report by Mr A King, Deputy Leader)(Mr G Brown was present for this item)

(1) The Vision for Kent is Kent's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and it is a statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare and from time to time modify the Strategy their area. The Vision for Kent also forms part of KCC's Policy Framework and details the steps that will be taken to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Kent and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

(2) Mr King said the Vision for Kent 2012-2022 was written around the three countywide ambitions to grow the Kent economy, to tackle disadvantage and to put citizens in control, and if ever there was a time to focus on these three ambitions it was now. The draft Vision for Kent document would now be submitted to the County Council at its meeting on 15 December and to the Kent Forum in the new year. Mr Brown outlined the wide consultation which had been undertaken in the preparation of what he said was now a much more focused document than had previously been the case.

(3) Following discussion Cabinet resolved to:

(a) endorse the draft Vision for Kent

(b) recommend that the County Council approve the Vision for Kent at its meeting on 15 December 2011 as required in the Policy Framework; and

(c) recommend that the Vision for Kent be endorsed by the Kent Forum at its meeting in February 2012.

79. Quarterly Performance Report, Quarter 2, 2011/12

(Item 7– Report by Mr R Gough – Cabinet Member Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform and Ms K Kerswell – Managing Director) (Mr R Fitzgerald was present for this item)

(1) Mr Gough said the Quarterly Performance Report contained more information than in the past and now included such matters as staff data and comparisons with peer authorities. And with the move to a new committee system it was anticipated the report would in future also contain more real time information, such as Directorate dashboards, being made available to the relevant Cabinet committee.

(2) During the course of discussion Mr Sweetland highlighted the reduction of some 48% in the number of highway related complaints made over the past 12 months and Cabinet placed on record its thanks to staff in the Highways Unit on this service improvement. Ms Honey said the level of calls to the Contact Centre had reached an unprecedented level and additional resources had been allocated to meet this rise in demand. A review looking at the whole spectrum of improving customer experience was being undertaken as part of the Customer Services

Strategy. Mrs Whittle also reported on the continuing improvement in the recruitment of social workers and the improvement in the balance between the number of experienced social workers to those newly qualified. Mr Carter said he welcomed the report and the improvements which had been made in terms of both its content and presentation. He did however ask for future reports to include more qualitative information and feedback on customer experience.

(3) Cabinet resolved to note the report.

80. Kent's Multi-Agency Looked After Children Strategy

(Item 8 - Report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)(Ms L Totman, Head of Corporate Parenting, Mr P Brightwell, Performance and Quality Assurance Manager and Mr A Duncan were present for this item)

(1) Kent County Council's improvement notice includes a requirement to put in place a detailed Looked After Children Strategy that sets out how the authority and its partner agencies would promote better outcomes for its looked after children and care leavers.

(2) Mrs Whittle said the Council had and was continuing to work closely with partner agencies to develop better strategies and to improve the outcomes for Looked after Children. The aims of the strategy included reducing the number of children in care, developing better placement strategies, including trying to place children with Foster Parents in the same area as they live, and improving levels of education attainment.

(3) Ms Totman and Mr Brightwell said the strategy had been influenced by feedback and contributions from all key agencies and services - schools and further education colleges, health services, Connexions, Catch 22, Young Lives Foundation and had been endorsed by the Kent's Corporate Parenting Group, Kent's Safeguarding Children's Board and The Corporate Parenting Panel. The strategy also included contributions by children and young people through Kent's Children in Care Council. These are outlined in the strategy. Mr Carter said that he wished to see the report sent to all members of the County Council.

(4) Following further discussion Cabinet resolved to endorse the document 'Kent's Multi-Agency Looked After Children Strategy.'

81. Annual Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements in Children's Services

(Item 9- Report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)

(1) Mrs Whittle said that the outcome from this inspection showed the Council was maintaining significant progress and had in place a robust assurance and performance management regime. The report did highlight some areas where further development was needed and these issues would be rigorously addressed. Overall the Council was now providing a significantly better service than 12 months ago and Mrs Whittle placed on record her thanks to all members of staff for their hard work and commitment in achieving this improvement. A further unannounced inspection

was expected during the spring of 2012. He also spoke of the work that would be needed to implement a new IT system that would be introduced in the autumn of 2012. Having now had the opportunity to meet with KCC staff working in the field of children's social care he also spoke of their commitment and focus. Mr Ireland said the excellent progress being was part of a journey of continuous improvement and it was his view that the Council would be the subject of a full Inspection before the next unannounced inspection took place.

(2) During the course of discussion Mr Carter spoke of the need to undertake bench marking and cross-auditing with other authorities in the south-east. This was agreed.

(3) Cabinet resolved to place on record it's thanks to the staff working in this field and noted the findings of the Ofsted Inspection and the ongoing work and actions being taken by the Council.

82. Blue Badge Reform

(Item 10– Report by Mr G Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)

See record of decision on page 9.

83. Children's Services Management Structure (To follow)

(Item 11)

The Chairman said because a number of restructurings were taking place across the council and following the usual consultation processes, a key decision on this matter would now be taken by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services in the new year. Therefore this report would not now be discussed at this meeting.

84. Children's Services Improvement Plan - Quarterly Update

(Item 12– Report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)

(1) In introducing this report Mrs Whittle said much work was being undertaken to reduce the number of child protection cases where that was safe to do so. This included working closely with other agencies such as the justice system and judiciary. The County Council continued to make significant progress in meeting the requirements of the Children's services Plan as had been evidenced by the recent unannounced Ofsted Inspection as had been reported elsewhere on the Cabinet agenda for this meeting.

(2) Cabinet resolved to note the very significant progress that had been made since the last quarterly report and noted the content of the letter from the Independent Chair of the of the Improvement Board.

85. Select Committee: Dementia - A New Stage in Life

(Item 13 - Mrs T Dean was present for this item as Chairman of the Select Committee together with Mr J Kirby and Mr L Christie)

(1) Mrs Dean placed on record the thanks of the Select Committee to Mrs S Frampton for the assistance she had given to the Committee during the course of its work. Mrs Dean highlighted a number of key areas to the report, including the need for early diagnosis, better training for staff from both the public and private sector who provide treatment and care for dementia patients. There also needed to be improved access to professional help, including legal and financial advice when seeking for example power of attorney. There was a need for sufferers and their carers to be more involved in the planning of their treatment and for there to be more awareness to the fact that increasingly dementia was being diagnosed more in younger people. Mrs Dean also spoke of 'memory cafes' and the value that they can have in helping sufferers of dementia.

(2) Mr Kirby also spoke of the need for there to be better and earlier diagnosis and about the important part memory cafes can play in the treatment and support given to dementia sufferers. Mr Kirby said steps needed to be taken to address the stigma which can be attached to dementia and spoke of the importance of all agencies, including the police receiving adequate training. He also spoke of the importance of dementia being treated on a multi-agency basis and the importance therefore of those bodies developing strong links and joint strategies. Mr Christie echoed the views of Mrs Dean and Mr Kirby. He also spoke of the need for dementia patients to have continuity of treatment and the believed the role and importance of memory cafes was such there ought to be one in each district.

(3) During the course of discussion Mr Gibbens said he thanked the Select Committee for its wide ranging and comprehensive report which would be debated more fully at the County Council meeting on 15 December. In the meantime he said he welcomed the proposal to establish a cross party group of members to work through the detail of the recommendations. He said it was important to move beyond dementia being seen only as solely a mental health issue and the care and treatment of sufferers needed to have the involvement of a range of partners in both the public and voluntary sectors. Other views were that more work needed to be done with GPs in order to improve the chances of early diagnosis, the number of cases of dementia was rising and therefore there needed to be more thought and planning as to what future resources would be needed to meet that rise. The Gateways across the county could be used to provide better information for both patients and carers and could possibly be a location for a memory café.

(4) Following this discussion Cabinet placed on record its thanks to the Select Committee for its report which would be debated at the County Council meeting on 15 December 2012.

86. The Procurement of Accommodation Service for Looked After Children and Care Leavers

(Item 14)– Report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)

See record of decision on page 11.

87. The Duke of York's Royal Military School

(Item 15 - Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning & Skills; Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform; Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning & Skills; and Mr D Cockburn, Corporate Director of Business, Strategy & Support)

See record of decision on page 13.

88. Decision Record Sheets

Kent County Council	
Decision taken Cabinet 5 December 2011	DECISION NO. 11/01769
Unrestricted	
Blue Badge Reform <i>(Item 10 – Report by Mr G Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)(Ms J Grant, Senior Policy Officer was present for this item)</i>	
<p>(1) This report provided an update on the implementation of the revised Blue Badge Service and advised on the work currently in progress to identify efficiencies which may be achieved by improvements to the new service. The report set out the costs associated with the service and the potential financial impacts when the Department for Transport removes funding in 2013/14.</p>	
<p>(2) The Blue Badge Scheme has been in place since the early 1970s and is based on the requirements of Section 21 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970.</p> <p>A review in 2007 highlighted several areas where improvements needed to be made to the administration of the scheme, the eligibility criteria and to prevent abuse. After further consultation, the Government published a reform strategy in October 2008 that included a number of commitments to ensure that the Blue Badge Scheme remained relevant.</p>	
<p>(3) The county council has been in contact with a number of neighbouring authorities, all of whom are planning to increase the charge for Blue Badges to £10 although the implementation date varies between January and March 2012. Consultation methodology amongst neighbouring authorities also varied, some were consulting widely on the changes, some only with people who phone for renewal of Blue Badge and others are not consulting.</p>	
<p>(4) The current £2 charge is for the administration of the present Blue Badge service including production of the badge, this charge is levied for all applicants whether they</p>	

are successful or not. An increase to a £10 fee could only be levied if the applicant was successful and £4.60 of this would then be paid to the contractor for the production of the badge.

The remaining part of the fee would cover the assessment and administration costs and any shortfall for these services will fall onto Kent County Council.

(5) The change in the legislation enables local authorities to raise the charge for Blue Badges from £2 to £10 from 1 January 2012. This increase in charge would come at the same time as the first phase of increases in charges to those disabled people who contribute to the cost of their non-residential care services. The Blue Badge service is not subject to means testing and it does not fall within the meaning of community care services.

(6) Cabinet considered the 3 options set out in the report and agreed the Council should proceed on the basis of levying a charge of £10 from 1 January 2011. The £10 fee is for a badge that would be valid for a period of 3 years.

(7) Resolved that

(a) the changes to the Blue Badge service as described in the Cabinet report be noted

(b) the charge for the provision of Blue Badge be increased from £2 to £10 with effect from 1 January 2012; and

(c) approval be given to the Communication Plan

Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken:

None

Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information

As set above and in the Cabinet report

Background Documents: none

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

DECISION TAKEN BY Cabinet 5 December 2011	DECISION NO. 11/01684
<i>This is an unrestricted Record of Decision of a matter which contained some information which was declared exempt under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972</i>	
The Procurement of Accommodation Services for Looked after Children and Care Leavers <i>(Item 14 – Report by Mrs J Whittle, Cabinet Member for Specialist Children’s Services; and Mr A Ireland, Corporate Director, Families and Social Care)</i>	
<p>(1) The majority of the 496 UASC Care leavers 18+ (total as at 7.10.11) are accommodated independently in the community. Accommodation is arranged by Housing Officers within KCC Services for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (SUASC), working with a number of Housing Providers approved following a tendering process in May 2006. In addition to achieving the required savings, a thorough review of the statement of requirements on service providers and terms & conditions of the housing contract was necessary and overdue. The objective of undertaking a competitive procurement process was to identify a small number of service providers who could deliver a high quality, efficient service at an agreed volume and within the agreed price limitations.</p> <p>(2) The Accommodation Services to be commissioned through this procurement process are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) The provision of units of accommodation in the required locations.(b) Transportation and Move-in Services for all service users accommodated.(c) Accommodation Maintenance Services (planned, emergency and reactive). <p>(3) In line with Spending the Council’s Money, a fair and transparent non EU competitive procurement process was carried out. Organisations were invited to tender under two categories, block contract or a multiple supplier framework agreement. Following a detailed analysis of the tenders the exempt part of this report proposed a list of 5 companies who with the exception of one were already providing accommodation services for Looked after Children and Care Leavers.</p> <p>(4) Cabinet Resolved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) to approve block contracts and inclusion on the provision Framework to following organisations<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Ready Homes - Block contract and Framework	

- (ii) Social and Community Care – Block Contract and Framework
- (iii) Accommodation Plus – Framework
- (iv) H Ibrahim – Framework
- (v) West Kent YMCA

(b) subject to him being satisfied as to the detailed terms and conditions, the Corporate Director for Families and Social Care, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children’s Services be delegated authority to enter into on behalf of the County Council all necessary contracts in order to deliver these services.

Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken

None

Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information

The reasons for this decision are set out above and also in the Cabinet Report.

Background Documents:

None

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

DECISION TAKEN BY

Cabinet 5 December 2011

DECISION NO.

10/01481

This is an unrestricted Record of Decision of a matter which contained some information which was declared exempt under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972

The Duke of York's Royal Military School

(Item 15 – Report by Mr M Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning

& Skills ; Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform; Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning & Skills; and Mr D Cockburn, Corporate Director of Business, Strategy & Support) (Mrs R Spore the Director of Property and Infrastructure was present for this item)

(1) The Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover, transferred to Academy status on 1st September 2010. Before this it was an independent school which was run and funded by the MOD. The sponsor of the Academy is the Secretary of State for Defence. The School is co-educational and the sponsor's overall vision is for a high quality, exclusively full-boarding Academy which will have military ethos, character and traditions and would be primarily focussed on providing continuity of education for the children of those serving in the Armed Forces. KCC is not a sponsor of the Academy and does not place students at the school, so KCC is only acting as a procuring agent for Partnerships for Schools (PfS).

(2) The BSF and Academies team, with Gleeds as technical advisors and Cube as Architects, have been working with the Academy to develop initial options for redeveloping the site. Initial options have been costed to demonstrate which would be affordable, and new build rate used to cost the options is based on a rate advised by the DFE. The rate for refurbishment is based on the conditions survey. It is unlikely that this rate would be able to achieve the same standard as was achieved under the Building Schools for the Future programme.

(3) The first stage of the procurement is to invite all of the 11 panel members of the PfS Contractors Framework (Southern Region) to take part in the local competition by submission of a response to the PITT. This is then evaluated and 2 panel members are shortlisted from this response to proceed to the next stage. The 2 panel members will then have 8 weeks to engage in 6 – 8 design workshops with the Academy to develop a scheme for their bid

submission. These bids will be evaluated by the KCC BSF and Academies team, with our technical advisors and the Academy, to shortlist the bidder that will become the Selected Panel Member. There will be an opportunity for a Member to be involved in the evaluation process should they choose to do so.

(4) There could be some risks to the County Council acting in the role of procurement agent but these will be mitigated against by entering into a and indemnity with the MOD.

(5) Cabinet Resolved;

(a) to authorise the submission of the Feasibility study for The Duke of York's Royal Military School to PfS and DFE.

(b) authorise the commencement of the procurement from the PfS Contractors Framework to select a Contractor to deliver the Academy works and then to progress through the next stage of the process to develop detailed designs, progress the planning application and finalise contracts, and

(c) to note that the BSF, PFI and Academies Board will be updated on progress and final approval to enter into contracts will be sought from Cabinet.

Any Interest Declared when the Decision was Taken

None

Reason(s) for decision, including alternatives considered and any additional information

The reasons for this decision are set out above and also in the Cabinet Report.

Background Documents:

None

To: CABINET – 9 January 2012

By: John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance & Business Support
Andy Wood, Corporate Director of Finance & Procurement

REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING EXCEPTION REPORT 2011-12

1. Introduction

1.1 The second full monitoring report for 2011-12 was presented to Cabinet on 5 December. This exception report, based on the monitoring returns for November, highlights the main movements since that report.

2. REVENUE

2.1 There are a number of significant pressures that will need to be managed during the year if we are to have a balanced revenue position by year end. The current underlying net revenue position by portfolio, before and after the implementation of assumed management action, compared with the net position reported last month, is shown in **table 1** below.

Table 1: Net Revenue Position before and after Proposed Management Action

Portfolio	Gross Position £m	Proposed Management Action £m	Net Position after mgmt action £m		Movement £m
			This month	Last month	
Education, Learning & Skills	-0.776	-	-0.776	-1.216	+0.440
Specialist Children's Services	+13.117	-	+13.117	+12.626	+0.491
Adult Social Care & Public Health	-2.537	-	-2.537	-2.581	+0.044
Environment, Highways & Waste	-3.299	-	-3.299	-3.548	+0.249
Customer & Communities	-0.081	-	-0.081	+0.126	-0.207
Regeneration & Enterprise	-	-	-	-	-
Finance & Business Support	-6.544	-	-6.544	-5.134	-1.410
Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform	-0.848	-	-0.848	-0.926	+0.078
Democracy & Partnerships	-0.064	-	-0.064	-0.087	+0.023
Total (excl Schools)	-1.032	-	-1.032	-0.740	-0.292
<i>Schools (ELS portfolio)</i>	<i>+4.248</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>+4.248</i>	<i>+4.248</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Schools (SCS portfolio)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
Schools (TOTAL)	+4.248	-	+4.248	+4.248	-
TOTAL	+3.216	-	+3.216	+3.508	-0.292

2.2 **Table 2** shows the forecast underlying gross position **before** the implementation of proposed management action, compared with the gross position reported last month.

Table 2: Gross Revenue Position before Management Action

Portfolio	Variance		Movement £m
	This Month £m	Last Month £m	
Education, Learning & Skills	-0.776	-1.216	+0.440
Specialist Children's Services	+13.117	+12.626	+0.491
Adult Social Care & Public Health	-2.537	-2.581	+0.044
Environment, Highways & Waste	-3.299	-3.548	+0.249
Customer & Communities	-0.081	+0.126	-0.207
Regeneration & Enterprise	-	-	-
Finance & Business Support	-6.544	-5.134	-1.410
Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform	-0.848	-0.208	-0.640
Democracy & Partnerships	-0.064	-0.087	+0.023

Portfolio	Variance		Movement £m
	This Month £m	Last Month £m	
Total (excl Schools)	-1.032	-0.022	-1.010
<i>Schools (ELS portfolio)</i>	+4.248	+4.248	-
<i>Schools (SCS portfolio)</i>	-	-	-
Schools (TOTAL)	+4.248	+4.248	-
TOTAL	+3.216	+4.226	-1.010

2.3 The gross underlying revenue underspend (excluding schools) is currently £1.032m as shown in table 1 above, which is a movement of -£0.292m from the net position after management action reported last month.

2.4 In the context of a savings requirement of £95m, increasing demands for services and the need to deliver the Children's Services Improvement Plan, an overall forecast underspending position is a considerable achievement. However there is a risk that this position could deteriorate, especially with the continually increasing demand for Children's Specialist Services. The position will be very closely monitored throughout the remainder of the financial year and every effort will be made to avoid any overspend at year end.

2.5 Table 2 shows that there has been a reduction of £1.010m in the overall gross position before management action since the last report. The main movements, by portfolio, are detailed below:

2.6 Education, Learning & Skills (ELS) portfolio:

The underspend on this portfolio has reduced by £0.440m to £0.776m this month which is due to:

2.6.1 +£0.340m SEN Home to School Transport - a reduction in the underspend from £0.439m to £0.099m. This is due to an increase in pupil numbers as, since October a further 65 SEN pupils require travel. There is a possibility of further savings due to the public sector strike resulting in school/class closures, but this could be minimal and will be hard to estimate until the November invoices have been processed.

If the numbers of pupils travelling continues at this higher level, the full year effect could be a pressure of between £0.6m - £0.7m. We are working with the Transport Integration Unit to establish the full impact of this.

2.6.2 +£0.100m Strategic Management & Directorate Support – an increase in the pressure from £0.402m to £0.502m as a result of an increase in the legal costs due to the number of schools converting to academies.

2.6.3 In addition, within the 14 – 19 year olds budget:

- there is a -£0.333m gross and a +£0.333m income variance relating to Skills Force. Historically, there was an agreement that schools pay KCC and KCC then passed the money on to Skills Force (an external organisation), but this policy has now ceased and schools pay Skills Force directly.
- Thanet Skills Studio is reporting a -£0.205m gross and +£0.205m income variance due to transferring with a school to academy status in year.
- Similarly, Dover Skills Studio is reporting a net variance of +£0.065m (-£0.069m gross and +£0.134m income) due to transferring with a school to academy status in year, but this will be offset by an underspend on the expanding vocational training project.

2.7 Specialist Children's Services (SCS) portfolio:

The pressure on this portfolio has increased by £0.491m this month to £13.117m. The movements above £0.1m are:

2.7.1 +£0.206m Fostering – an increase in the pressure from £6.556m to £6.762m due to:

- +£0.3m Legal Costs, based on the latest information from Legal following a reconciliation of the first 6 months' caseloads.
- -£0.094m on other fostering budgets, including a -£0.044m reduction against in-house non related fostering in respect of transport and specialist services and a -£0.050m reduction against independent sector fostering as a result of a reduction in weeks of support.

- 2.7.2 +£0.141m Assessment of Vulnerable Children – an increase in the pressure from £2.518m to £2.659m, mainly due to increased costs of agency social workers. Managers are now forecasting that current agency staff will remain for the full year, whereas previous forecasts assumed end dates within the last quarter of the financial year.
- 2.7.3 +£0.188m Strategic Management & Directorate Support – an increase in the forecast from a £0.1m underspend to a £0.088m pressure, which is due to several small increases all below £0.1m across a number of budgets.

2.8 Adult Social Care & Public Health portfolio:

The forecast underspend on this portfolio has marginally reduced by £0.044m this month from £2.581m to £2.537m. Although only a small movement overall, there are some larger compensating movements within this. The movements over £0.1m this month are:

- 2.8.1 -£0.106m Strategic Management & Directorate Support – a reduction in the pressure from £0.151m to £0.045m, the majority of this is due to savings within the efficiency team, which is currently operating with a smaller structure than was budgeted for, together with smaller movements on safeguarding adults and strategic commissioning.
- 2.8.2 -£0.309m Learning Disability Direct Payments – an increase in the underspend from £0.224m to £0.533m mainly against the gross budget, as a result of a lower take up from that assumed in the budget.
- 2.8.3 +£0.318m Older People Direct Payments – a reduction in the underspend from £0.548m to £0.230m as a result of both an increase of 28 clients in the month, coupled with the expected continued growth to year end.
- 2.8.4 -£0.186m Physical Disability Direct Payments – a reduction in the pressure from £0.359m to £0.173m mainly against the gross budget, as a result of a lower take up than previously assumed.
- 2.8.5 -£0.166m Learning Disability Domiciliary Care – an increase in the underspend from £1.099m to £1.265m largely reflecting the restatement of the forecast based on the trend of payments to external providers.
- 2.8.6 +£0.158m Older People Nursing Care – a reduction in the underspend from £0.242m to £0.084m due to a decrease in the forecast income expected as a result of restating the forecast to reflect the latest 3 month trend of client billing runs continuing for the remainder of the financial year.
- 2.8.7 -£0.176m Physical Disability Residential Care – a reduction in the pressure from £1.334m to £1.158m. This is mainly against the gross budget (-£0.151m) due to a net decrease of 5 clients, together with a slight over recovery of income against the Preserved Rights service.
- 2.8.8 +£0.508m Learning Disability Supported Accommodation – a reduction in the underspend from £0.599m to £0.091m. This is mainly due to:
- +£0.320m as a result of a specific bad debt provision, reflecting the directorate's prudence with regards to three S256 clients where three other local authorities are currently refusing to settle raised invoices;
 - +£0.214m pressure as a result of net changes to 9 clients;
 - -£0.080m reduction in the block beds contract.
- 2.8.9 -£0.172m Assessment of Vulnerable Adults & Older People – an increase in the underspend from £0.865m to £1.037m. The main client groups contributing to this overall movement are Mental Health -£0.108m and Learning Disability -£0.061m. The Mental Health movement is primarily in relation to the deletion of the director and associated posts and formation of the MH Professional Assurance Team – Social Care. The Learning Disability movement is as a result of staff leaving and vacancy management.

2.9 Environment, Highways & Waste portfolio:

The forecast underspend for this portfolio has reduced by £0.249m this month to £3.299m. This movement is due to:

- 2.9.1 -£0.100m following a review of activities in the Partnership and Behaviour Change element of the Waste Management budget.

- 2.9.2 +£0.349m shortfall in the forecast Commercial Services contribution. This is due to:
- +£0.150m due to the inability to absorb unbudgeted Total Contribution Pay (TCP) costs.
 - +£0.199m following a reduction in lease car numbers as a result of the decision by County Council in February to remove the essential user status which, as a consequence, means that staff are no longer eligible to renew their lease cars. This was factored into the net savings reported to Council. It is proposed that this shortfall is offset by a virement from the underspending reported within the Finance and Business Support (F&BS) portfolio in the current year. **Cabinet is asked to approve this virement of £0.199m from the F&BS portfolio.**
- 2.9.3 The current forecast position for the portfolio is predicated on waste tonnage reflecting levels experienced over the last two and a half years. If there was an unexpected spike in the level of waste entering the system, this would reduce the level of underspend currently reported. In addition, the main risk in the Highway's forecast is the severity of the winter. Whilst robust plans have been put in place to deliver winter services, a very severe winter could adversely affect the final outturn.

2.10 Customer & Communities portfolio:

The forecast position for this portfolio has improved by £0.207m this month to a small underspend of £0.081m. This is mainly due to:

- 2.10.1 -£0.147m Contact Centre & Consumer Direct – a reduction in the pressure from £0.181m to £0.034m. A virement from the F&BS portfolio of £0.307m was approved by Cabinet in September to offset the pressure arising from increased call volumes. This was predicated on the need to recruit 18 fte's in order to respond to falling performance indicators, with the desired impact of achieving an average answer rate of 80% of calls within 20 seconds (80/20) for high priority services, with this indicator reducing to 70/30 and 60/40 where appropriate. However, the service is currently achieving the required performance indicators but has to date only recruited 12 fte's, so has prudently not recruited to the full 18 posts, delivering £0.096m of the forecast movement. The service initially experienced difficulties in recruiting, due to a low response rate to the advertisement, so the remainder of the -£0.147m movement relates to savings derived from a phased introduction of staff. The performance indicators will be monitored to ensure the current performance is maintained or enhanced, so some of the £0.147m may be called upon in the future, but the current forecast assumes that this will not be necessary.
- 2.10.2 A number of minor variances across various budgets within the directorate accounts for the remaining £0.060m movement.
- 2.10.3 In future monitoring reports, there may be further underspends reported, with the library service currently experiencing an increased number of staff resignations as the roll-out of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology progresses and the remaining libraries are upgraded. Whereas in the past any resignations have had to be back-filled whilst the roll out of the technology progresses, the equipment has now been implemented in 24 of the expected 34 libraries and is ahead of schedule, so back-filling is no longer required. The quantum of this is being assessed and will be reported in the next monitoring report. In addition, the directorate continues its policy of extended vacancy management targets and curtailing non critical expenditure, where it is not to the detriment of service delivery.

2.11 Finance & Business Support portfolio:

The forecast underspend for this portfolio has increased by £1.410m this month to £6.544m. This is due to:

- -£1.5m Early Intervention Grant smoothing money – following the Government reduction in this grant in the 2011-12 budget, we held a one-off contingency to smooth the effects of this reduction in the short term. However, we have been successful in achieving the efficiencies required earlier than anticipated enabling £1.5m of this smoothing money to be released. The draft 2012-13 budget proposals, released on 20 December, assume that £1m of this is transferred to reserves to support next year's budget.
- a £0.090m increase as a result of the need to bring in agency staff to cover vacancies that we could no longer carry within the Finance & Procurement Unit.

If the virement referred to in section 2.9.2 above is approved, then the underspend for this portfolio will reduce by £0.199m.

2.12 Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform portfolio:

The forecast underspend for this portfolio has increased by £0.640m this month to £0.848m. This is largely due to the delivery of previously reported management action.

2.13 Democracy & Partnerships portfolio:

The forecast underspend for this portfolio has reduced by -£0.023m this month to -£0.064m due to a small movement in the forecast for the Democratic and Member Services unit.

3. CAPITAL

3.1 There have been a number of cash limit adjustments this month as detailed in **table 3** below:

Table 3: Capital Cash Limit Adjustments

	£000s 2011-12	£000s 2012-13
1 Cash Limits as reported to Cabinet on 5th December	336,806	273,751
2 Re-phasing agreed at Cabinet on 5th December		
Education, Learning & Skills (ELS)	-30,826	-9,378
Adults Social Care & Public Health (ASC&PH)	-5,333	640
Environment, Highways & Waste (EHW)	-366	216
Customer & Communities (C&C)	-255	255
Regeneration & Enterprise	-8,670	3,670
Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform (BSPHR)	-660	660
3 Academies - changes to project costs and level of grant funding - ELS portfolio	-2,570	-41
4 Academy Unit Cost - increase in project costs - ELS portfolio	238	
5 BSF Unit Costs - reduction in costs - ELS portfolio	-3,721	-940
6 New Grant Funding - Transforming Shortbreaks - SCS	2,283	
7 Sittingbourne Northern Relief - reduction in project cost - EHW portfolio	-114	
8 Ashford Ring Road - reduction in external funding - EHW portfolio	-184	-20
9 Drovers Roundabout/M20 Junction 9 - additional grant funding - EHW portfolio	1,697	

	£000s 2011-12	£000s 2012-13
10 Victoria Way - additional grant funding - EHW portfolio	1,000	
11 Integrated Transport Scheme - new grant - EHW portfolio	100	
12 A2 Slip Road - transfer of commuted sum to revenue - EHW portfolio	-116	
13 Smartlink Ashford - removal of funding - EHW portfolio		-20,000
14 Ashford Station Forecourt - reduction in project cost - EHW portfolio	-125	
15 PROW Structural Maintenance - additional funding - C&C portfolio	194	
16 Euro Kent Road - reduction in General Capital Receipts - Regen portfolio	-212	
	289,166	248,813

3.2 The current forecast capital position by portfolio, compared with the position reported last month is shown in **table 4** below.

Table 4: Capital Position

	Real and Re-phasing Variance This month	Real Variance Last month	Movement This month
Portfolio	£m	£m	£m
Education, Learning & Skills	-2.182	0.514	-2.696
Specialist Children's Services	-0.005	0.211	-0.216
Adult Social Care & Public Health	-0.334	-0.015	-0.319
Environment, Highways and Waste	5.030	4.800	0.230
Customer & Communities	-0.098	-0.018	-0.080
Regeneration & Enterprise	-0.736	0.264	-1.000
Business Strategy, Performance & Public Health	1.927	1.335	0.592
Total (excl Schools)	3.602	7.091	-3.489
Schools	0	0	0
Total	3.602	7.091	-3.489

Since last month's report, the forecast outturn has reduced by £3.5m has detailed below:

3.3 Education, Learning & Skills portfolio:

The forecast has moved by -£2.696m. Projects subject to re-phasing and overall variances affecting 2011-12 are:

- Basic Needs - Goat Lees Primary School (-£0.495m re-phasing and -£0.759m real variance): Re-phasing has become necessary as this project cannot progress until a land ownership dispute is resolved. The under spend is to fund the increased costs at Repton Park Primary School, see below.
- Unit Review (-£0.960m, re-phasing): the movement is due to the following:
 - **Sittingbourne Community College** (-£0.190m): spend has been on hold whilst legality of spend issues were resolved following the School's intention to transfer to Academy status on 1 January 2012. £0.770m has re-phased where the start of building was delayed whilst checks were made to ensure best value for projects at **Cage Green Primary School, Joy Lane Primary School and**

West Malling Primary School. All three projects expect to commence towards the end of December.

- **Special Schools Review Phase 2** (-£0.340m, re-phasing): feasibility works for this programme have been undertaken in house rather than by external consultants which has resulted in a reduction in the cost of development fees in 2011-12, this be re-phased added to the budget available for build cost which will not occur until 2012-13.
- **Repton Park Primary School** (+£0.334m, real variance): the overall project has increased from £4.8m to £6.1m due to the decision to increase the building from a 1FE to a 2FE following the difficulties in progressing the Goat Lees Primary School project. The increased costs are to be met from a transfer of funding from Goat Lees Primary School and additional developer contributions.
- **Specialist Schools – Ursuline College** (-£0.242m, re-phasing): a revised planning application for pedestrian access to the new sports facility has been submitted following an objection by the Highways Agency, the majority of the remaining project expenditure has been re-phased into 2012-13.
- **Modernisation Programme 2011-12** (-£0.200m, re-phasing): the main reason for the movement is due to the following:
 - Halfway House Primary School** (-£0.298m): the project is on hold while value engineering is undertaken, when completed this will result in the project being re-submitted to Cabinet for approval. Expenditure has been re-phased based on a mid February start date rather than the previously anticipated early January start.
 - Modular Classroom Programme** (+£0.232m): the previous forecast was based on estimated costs, the actual tenders indicate an increase in costs of £0.232m. This increase will be found from within the overall Modernisation programme by using the underspend against Children's Centre Maintenance (see below) and bringing forward funding from 2012-13.
 - Children's Centre Maintenance** (-£0.100m): the previous forecast reflected proposed virement of £0.250m to Business Strategy & Support. A review of spend has indicated the proposed transfer is reduced to £0.150m.
- **Vocational Programme** (-£0.147m, re-phasing): the reduction in cost and subsequent reduction in revenue support for the programme relates to the project at Senacre Skills Centre, where the school made the decisions to cut back elements of the proposed due to increasing costs.
- **Primary Improvement Programme** (+£0.135m, re-phasing): the main reason for the movement is due to the project at Richmond Primary School which has progressed faster than expected and will complete before Easter 2012.

Overall this leaves a residual balance of -£0.022m on a number of minor projects.

3.4 Specialist Children's Service portfolio:

The forecast has moved by -£0.216m. The main reason for this variance is due to:

- **Service Redesign** (-£0.216m, re-phasing): following feasibility studies only preliminary works will take place in this financial year with the major works commencing after March 2012

3.5 Adult Social Care & Public Health portfolio:

The forecast has moved by -£0.319m. The main reason for this variance is due to:

- **Transforming Social Care** (-£0.272m, re-phasing): the Swift Enhancement project is re-phasing due to a delay in the acquisition of several enhancements whilst requirements are reviewed.

Overall this leaves a residual balance of -£0.047m on a number of minor projects.

3.6 Environment, Highways & Waste portfolio:

The forecast has moved by +£0.230m. Projects subject to re-phasing and overall variances affecting 2011-12 are:

- **Energy and Water Efficiency Fund** (+£0.147m re-phasing and +£0.050m real variance): across the MTFP period additional expenditure of £0.275m is being forecast for school LED and other

projects, this is met from additional Salix funding, recycled KCC match funding and bringing forward 2012-13 funding.

- Major Scheme Preliminary Design (-£0.120m, real variance): there has been limited preliminary design work carried out in this financial year, which has indicated an underspend. It is proposed that the under spend is used to fund repairs required to Westwood Road and Victoria Road in Broadstairs following the unexpected collapse of the road surface.
- Highways Major Maintenance (+£0.120m, real variance): please see explanation above.
- Ashford Ring Road (+£0.100m, real variance): developer contributions funding this scheme were understated in the previous forecast.

Overall this leaves a residual balance of -£0.067m on a number of minor projects.

3.7 Customer & Communities portfolio:

The forecast has moved by -£0.080m. Projects subject to re-phasing and overall variances affecting 2011-12 are:

- The Beaney Centre (-£0.255m re-phasing and +£0.329m real variance): delays and potential increased costs that have been alluded to in previous reports have now been quantified and agreement reached with the contractor for a fixed contract sum of £8.7m. The total shortfall in funding is £0.769m, with KCC being required to contribute £0.329m and Canterbury City Council responsible for the remainder. The overspend will be funded from developer contributions and external income. There is re-phasing of £0.255m for the fit out costs as result of the revised hand over date. The anticipated opening of the building is scheduled for Autumn 2012.
- Tunbridge Wells Library (-£0.108m, re-phasing): the cost of this project is now based on the pre-tender estimates that reflect additional works of £0.126m necessary legislative requirements regarding access and fire safety, this has delayed start on the project until February 2012. The increased costs are to be funded by £0.118m from the DDA programme within Modernisation of Assets and £0.008m contribution from Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

Overall this leaves a residual balance of -£0.046m on a number of minor projects.

3.8 Regeneration and Enterprise portfolio:

The forecast has moved by -£1.000m. The main reason for this variance is due to:

- Margate Housing (-£1.000m, re-phasing): the planning application for the re-development of Hotel Lesley has been submitted to Thanet District Council. Notification of the outcome of the application are expected the end of March/early April. No spend is expected to be incurred until 2012-13.

3.9 Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform portfolio:

The forecast has moved by +£0.592m. Projects subject to re-phasing and overall variances affecting 2011-12 are:

- Integrated Children's System (+£0.652m, real variance): this project totalling £1.326m has been included in the 2012-13 budget as part of the MTFP process but has not had official sign off yet and spend is required in this year. **Members are asked to approve the inclusion of the project and the prudential borrowing to fund this project.**

Overall there is a residual balance of -£0.060m on minor projects.

3.10 Capital Project Re-phasing

Normally, cash limits are changed for projects that have re-phased by greater than £0.100m to reduce the reporting requirements during the year. Any subsequent re-phasing greater than £0.100m is reported and the full extent of the re-phasing will be shown. The tables below summarise the proposed re-phasing this month.

Table 5 – re-phasing of projects >£0.100m

Portfolio	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Future Years	Total
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Education, Learning & Skills					
Amended total cash limits	115,348	143,221	107,354	97,601	463,524
Re-phasing	-1,867	627	1,240	0	0
Revised cash limits	113,481	143,848	108,594	97,601	463,524
Specialist Children's Services					
Amended total cash limits	14,942	5	0	0	14,947
Re-phasing	-216	216	0	0	0
Revised cash limits	14,726	221	0	0	14,947
Adult Social Care & Public Health					
Amended total cash limits	6,853	9,911	7,392	3,561	27,717
Re-phasing	-272	272	0	0	0
Revised cash limits	6,581	10,183	7,392	3,561	27,717
Enterprise & Environment					
Amended total cash limits	96,490	54,993	51,893	257,168	460,544
Re-phasing	-3	-2	38	-33	0
Revised cash limits	96,487	54,991	51,931	257,135	460,544
Customer & Communities					
Amended total cash limits	18,203	5,732	5,256	4,929	34,120
Re-phasing	-533	533	0	0	0
Revised cash limits	17,670	6,265	5,256	4,929	34,120
Regen & Enterprise					
Amended total cash limits	5,592	12,219	7,500	2,500	27,811
Re-phasing	0	0	0	0	0
Revised cash limits	5,592	12,219	7,500	2,500	27,811
Business Strategy & support					
Amended total cash limits	7,018	8,252	6,140	2,923	24,333
Re-phasing	-1,000	1,000	0	0	0
Revised cash limits	6,018	9,252	6,140	2,923	24,333
TOTAL RE-PHASING >£100k	-3,891	2,646	1,278	-33	0
Other re-phased Projects below £100k	-393	+407	-14	0	0
TOTAL RE-PHASING	-4,284	+3,053	+1,264	-33	0

Table 6 details individual projects which have further re-phased since being reported to Cabinet on 5th December.

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Future Years	Total
	£k	£k	£k	£k	
ELS					
Goat Lees Primary School					
Original budget	+1,756	+1,500	0	0	+3,256
Amended cash limits	-480	+480	0	0	0
additional re-phasing	-309	-929	+1,238		0
Revised project phasing	+967	+1,051	+1,238	0	+3,256
Halfway House Primary School					
Original budget	+1,833	+367	0	0	+2,200
Amended cash limits	-855	+855	0	0	0
additional re-phasing	-298	+298	0	0	0
Revised project phasing	+680	+1,520	0	0	+2,200
Unit Review					
Original budget	+3,400	0	0	0	+3,400
Amended cash limits	-1,345	+1,339	+6	0	0
additional re-phasing	-960	+958	+2	0	0
Revised project phasing	+1,095	+2,297	+8	0	+3,400
Special Schools Review - Approval to Plan					
Original budget	0	+9,965	+10,000	+10,000	+29,965
Amended cash limits	+500	-500	0	0	0
additional re-phasing	-340	+340	0	0	0
Revised project phasing	+160	+9,805	+10,000	+10,000	+29,965
C&C					
Tunbridge Wells Library					
Original budget	+113	+200	0	0	+313
Amended cash limits	+200	-200	0	0	0
additional re-phasing	-108	+108			0
Revised project phasing	+205	+108	0	0	+313
EH&W					
Energy and Water Efficiency Investment					
Original budget	+884	+129	+125	+248	+1,386
Amended cash limits	-197	+100	+94	+3	0
additional re-phasing	+81	-83	+38	-36	0
Revised project phasing	+768	+146	+257	+215	+1,386

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is asked to:

- 4.1 **Note** the forecast revenue and capital budget monitoring position for 2011-12.
- 4.2 **Agree** the virement of £0.199m from the underspending within the Finance & Business Support portfolio to the Environment, Highways & Waste portfolio (see paragraph 2.9.2).
- 4.3 **Note** the changes to the capital programme.
- 4.4 **Agree** that £3.891m of re-phasing on the capital programme is moved from 2011-12 capital cash limits to future years.
- 4.5 **Agree** the inclusion of the Integrated Children's System project in the Business Strategy, Performance & Health Reform portfolio to be funded by £1.326m prudential borrowing (£0.652m in 2011-12 and £0.674m in 2012-13).

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To: Cabinet 9th January 2012

From: Paul Carter, Leader of the Council
John Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Support
Andy Wood, Corporate Director of Finance and Procurement

Subject: Provisional Grant Settlement 2012/13

Summary: To update the Cabinet on the further information on provisional grant settlement for 2012/13 that could not be included in the draft Budget Book and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) launched 20th December. To agree arrangements for KCC's response.

Cabinet members are asked to bring their copy of the draft Budget Book and MTFP to the meeting

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The provisional finance settlement from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was announced on 8th December. The provisional settlements were largely as we had anticipated based on the indicative allocations announced on 31st January 2011 and are set out in table 3 of the draft MTFP (page 20) and covered in paragraphs 2.23 to 2.32.
- 1.2 The announcement of the schools' grant settlement was on 12th/13th December and came too late for the deadlines to finalise the draft Budget and MTFP. The main headlines are that Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will remain at the same cash per pupil as 2011/12 (which itself was the same as 2010/11) and that once again no authority can lose more than 2% in cash terms. The Minimum Funding Guarantee for individual schools limits overall reductions in grant to 1.5% per pupil (same as 2011/12). School's capital allocations were also announced.
- 1.3 There are still some specific grants which have not been announced but the Council's policy remains the same that we will adjust spending supported by specific grants in line with grant changes.
- 1.4 No indicative allocations for 2013/14 or 2014/15 have been published pending the outcome of consultation on changes to both the local government and schools funding systems. The government announced the outcome of the local government resource review on 19th December and published the draft Local Government Finance Bill on 20th December. This provides the legal framework for the Business Rates retention proposals. The Secretary of State for Education has published the responses to consultation on changes to the schools

funding arrangements but as yet we have no details when draft legislation will be published.

2. Provisional Local Government Settlement

2.1 The deadline for responses is 16th January 2012. By and large the provisional settlement is as anticipated and Government has not made any changes to the distribution methodology for Formula Grant other than it now includes the Council Tax freeze grant for 2011/12. As a consequence we have no new significant issues with the provisional allocations other than to repeat our objections with the “four-block” model and the inequitable allocations which were highlighted in the Autumn Budget Statement presented to Cabinet on 5th December.

2.3 The provisional settlement included a marginal increase in the anticipated amount for the Learning Disability & Health Reform Grant and this has been reflected in the draft budget for the Adult Social Care and Public Health portfolio. The Home Office grant which replaced the Safer Stronger Communities Fund has not yet been announced and we have no detail when this may be released. At this stage we have included the illustrative amount announced on 9th February 2011 in the draft 2012/13 Budget and 2012/15 MTFP. The provisional allocation of PFI grant has been recalled and we have no indication when revised allocations will be released.

2.4 The provisional amount for Early Intervention Grant (EIG) has increased from the previously published figure of £53.159m to £54.883m. We understand the £1.7m increase is to fund the support for an additional 260,000 most disadvantaged two year olds announced in the Chancellor’s autumn budget statement. At the time the draft Budget was being prepared we had no detail how this amount had been determined or what likely demand in Kent. Therefore, we did not include the increase in the draft budget or any additional funding Education Learning & Skills portfolio.

2.5 We intend to make a response to the consultation welcoming that the Government has not made any changes to the Formula Grant methodology and that it now incorporates the 2011/12 Council Tax Freeze grant. We propose to re-state our concerns with the “four block” model and that this will in effect be crystallised with the proposed changes from 2013/14 through the Business Rates retention proposals.

3. Adjustment to Local Authority Funding for Academy Transfers

3.1 The Government launched a separate consultation on 9th December about the calculation and recovery arrangements for the Academies Funding Transfer for 2011/12 and 2012/13. The deadline for this response is 12th January. Within the consultation the Secretary of State is “minded to” make no changes to the 2011/12 calculation

following previous consultation responses but is proposing some changes to the calculations from April 2012.

- 3.2 There are currently two adjustments to reflect academy transfers. DSG is reduced on a per pupil basis according to spending in each local authority as reported in section 251 statements. There is also a top-slice from Formula Grant to reflect local authority central functions transferring to academies (LACSEG).
- 3.3 Under the current LACSEG arrangements KCC had £4.019m removed from the 2010/11 baseline used for the 2011/12 Formula Grant. A further £3.166m was removed from the 2011/12 baseline used to determine the 2012/13 provisional Formula Grant. The LACSEG reduction was applied pro rata to all local authorities as a fixed percentage of the relative needs formula for central education functions i.e. irrespective of the number of pupils in academies in each local authority area.
- 3.4 The Secretary of State is “minded to” not make any changes to the LACSEG adjustment in the 2011/12 Formula Grant calculation. In reaching this decision the Secretary of State has taken heed of the unwelcome turmoil and instability any change to the 2011/12 calculation would cause.
- 3.5 For 2012/13 the Secretary of State is minded to agree an alternative LACSEG calculation at the end of the year based on the number of pupils in academies in each local authority area. Where this works out less than the pro rata LACSEG deductions authorities would be reimbursed the difference through an un-ringfenced grant allocation. Those authorities where the per pupil calculation is more than the pro rata calculation in the provisional grant calculation would have their contributions capped at the pro rata amount.
- 3.6 We welcome the decisions both for 2011/12 and 2012/13 as they ensure stability. Whilst we accept the logic that there should be a deduction for the transfer of central functions we remain opposed to a per pupil calculation (although accept for 2012/13 this cannot have a negative impact on local authority grants).
- 3.7 The consultation is also proposing to amend the calculation of the DSG recoupment to include a share of contingencies. Local authorities will be able to make representation that individual components of the contingency provisions should be excluded. We are opposed to this proposal as by their nature it seems inappropriate to allocate contingency funds on such a simple pro rata basis.

4. Schools Funding Settlement

- 4.1 The DSG settlement announced on 13th December is as anticipated (although we had not previously had any official indicative allocations). We welcome the stability this allows although as with Formula Grant

we have some fundamental concerns about the equity of allocations which were outlined in the Autumn Budget Statement to Cabinet on 5th December. In light of the ongoing consultation about changes to school funding it seems pointless to restate these concerns at this stage.

- 4.2 The Pupil Premium was announced on 12th December and we were able to include this in the draft 2012/13 Budget and 2012/15 MTFP. The total funding has increased as previously announced but will be allocated for more pupils (any pupil who has been eligible for a free school meal in the last 6 years). This means the per pupil amounts have not increased as much as previously anticipated.
- 4.3 The allocations for 16-19 year olds from the Young People’s Learning Agency were published on 13th December. This provided additional funding for the extra places as a result of raising the participation age. This additional funding should preserve the per capita amounts. The transitional arrangements announced for 2011/12 will continue into 2012/13 to help schools and colleges manage changes in funding.
- 4.4 The schools capital allocations were also announced on 13th December. The allocations for KCC are summarised in table 1.

Table 1	Local Authority £000s	Voluntary Aided £000s	Total £000s
Basic Need	14,278		14,278
Capital Maintenance	18,052	3,757	21,809
Devolved Formula	3,286	720	4,006
Total	35,616	4,477	40,093

- 4.5 The Government has changed the methodology for determining basic need to take account of both pupil numbers and existing capacity. Transitional protection ensures that no authority receives less than 80% of that they would have received under the existing methodology. KCC receives less under the new methodology. Basic need allocations do not include the additional £600m announced in the Chancellor’s autumn budget statement. There have been no changes to the capital maintenance and devolved formula capital (other than impact of academy transfers).
- 4.6 These school funding announcements are not subject to consultation and therefore there is no proposed response.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Cabinet members are asked to note the provisional allocations and to delegate authority to Cabinet Member for Finance and Business Support to agree the Council’s response

Officer Contacts

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Dave Shipton – Acting Head of Financial Strategy Ext. 4597

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By: Michael Hill, Cabinet Member for Customer & Communities
 Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform
 Amanda Honey, Corporate Director - Customer and Communities
 David Cockburn, Corporate Director - Business Strategy and Support

To: Cabinet, 9 January 2012

Subject: Customer Service and ICT Strategies

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's formal approval of the Customer Service Strategy, and authority for the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform to formally approve the ICT Strategy, subject to the views of this meeting and of the Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Customer Service Strategy is the critical element of the Council's strategy map that will underpin the transition from organisation-centric to citizen-centric public services, crucial for delivery of the Bold Steps ambitions. The ICT strategy is presented in tandem as technology represents a fundamental component in realising the outcomes of the Customer Service Strategy.
- 1.2 The success of both strategies is reliant upon positive engagement and adoption across the 'one council'. The strategies and their delivery timetables are interdependent; one cannot be delivered without the other.
- 1.3 Investment will be required to deliver the desired outcomes. It is anticipated that in most instances the change in approach will deliver financial efficiencies as well as improved customer service. Business cases will expect to operate to an 'invest to save' profile. To support this approach:
- The work on consolidation of budgets currently being undertaken by Finance to align with structures implemented through 'Change to Keep Succeeding' needs to be in place by April 2012.
 - Business process change identified by Customer Services needs to be adhered to and the resultant efficiencies released to meet implementation costs.

2.0 Customer Service Strategy

- 2.1 The Customer Service Strategy has been shared with a number of groups who have played a vital role in its development. These include:
- Customer & Communities Directorate Management Team
 - Access & Assessment Team – 9 September 2011

- Delivery Assurance Team (DAT) – 4 October 2011
- Gateway Programme Delivery Board (members include representatives from all Kent district councils and Medway Council) – 20 October 2011
- Corporate Management Team – 8th November 2011
- Customer & Communities Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 17 November 2011

- 2.2 As well as consulting with our Kent partners, we have also shared the Customer Service Strategy with, and received positive feedback from, both Northamptonshire and Surrey County Councils and from Experian, a private sector partner. Feedback collated from these groups has informed this version of the strategy.
- 2.3 To help managers deliver the priorities outlined in the strategy, a toolkit is being designed using expertise from across the Council. This includes delivery and communications plans, Equality Impact Assessment, a cost- to-serve model and a comprehensive training programme.
- 2.4 The Head of Customer Relationship will be attending each directorate’s management team meeting to discuss the strategy.and its implementation.
- 2.5 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and this has identified the need to monitor the progress of projects, particularly those involving channel shift and service redesign, to ensure that they do not adversely impact on customers or particular groups.

3.0 ICT Strategy

- 3.1 The strategy has been shared with a number of groups who have played a vital role in its development of the Strategy. These include:
- Business Strategy & Support Directorate Management Team
 - ICT Management Team
 - Delivery Assurance Team (DAT) – 4 October 2011
 - Corporate Management Team – 8th November 2011
- 3.2 As well as consulting with our Kent partners we have also shared the executive summary of our ICT Strategy with Gartner, a private sector research and advisory company. Feedback collated has informed this version of the strategy.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

(i) Endorse the Customer Service Strategy and agree to its publication, as detailed in this report, and

(ii) Agree that the Cabinet Member for Business Strategy, Performance and Health Reform be authorised to take the final decision in respect of the ICT Strategy after taking into account the views expressed at the Cabinet meeting and the Corporate Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee which is meeting on 11 January 2011.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

One Council, One Customer Service Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to increase customer satisfaction creating an enduring positive experience of the County Council and its services. Wherever possible we want our customers to feel that we have added value to their experience of us and to have exceeded their expectations. We want our customers to have a lasting impression that Kent County Council makes a real difference to their lives, that we help them to help themselves and to help each other.

The word 'customer' signifies a different relationship with citizens; one which focuses on their individual needs and preferences. It includes anyone who lives or works in Kent, or visits us here, and it also includes people who buy goods from us; our suppliers and contractors; commissioned agencies and our strategic partners.

Creating a Lasting Customer Impression

"A customer whose illness had made him unable to speak and who had no family to help him came into the Gateway. He had had to give up work because his condition had got worse. He gave us a list of things he needed help with. Our Gateway staff were able to check his housing benefit claim and advise him that we would meet his rent in full. They also advised him his council tax claim had been assessed and he would get a refund. The customer service advisor helped him to complete a blue badge application and referred him to Adult Social Services who arranged for an assessment so they could adapt his house and arrange for help at home with meals. They arranged for a benefit advisor from DWP to visit him to see if he was entitled to higher disability benefits.

He was very emotional but happy that he had walked into the right place. He held up a note just saying 'Thank you'."

Our aim is to change the way we serve our customers. We believe it is possible to achieve high quality customer service and save money – a win-win strategy. We will achieve our purpose by designing services in a way that makes sense to our customers. This is about a different way of working aimed at increasing our customers' ability to help themselves and to help each other. It gives us a real chance to have one corporate approach to customer service creating "one feeling" or experience for our customers.

What are the big differences we want to make?

We want a '**One Council**' approach to raising customer satisfaction by:

- Using knowledge about our customers to shape future policies and priorities
- Creating one "digital council" that allows easy access to information and services
- Working closely with the private sector to develop new models of delivery
- Aspiring to create a contact centre that is world class becoming a regional contact centre with both public and private sector partners
- Raising the standard across our face-to-face network so it matches the best of the private and public sectors
- Reducing unnecessary customer contact across the whole County Council

- Increasing self-service opportunities
- Engaging **all** our staff

Achieving customer excellence
needs....everyone, every day

This will increase public recognition of and confidence in the KCC brand. Our brand is much more than just our logo. It represents everything we stand for, our core values, and the way the public view us. Customers will define our brand based on their most recent experience of us. Strong branding allows customers to associate our services with a consistent set of values which they know and trust. This helps to deliver immediate satisfaction whilst building solid long term relationships. With a strong brand, customers will see added value in new services because of what they associate with our brand.

Vision

Our vision of *customer satisfaction* is a consistently high-quality customer experience, recognised by '**one front desk**':

- **One** KCC digital environment
- **One** KCC 'phone number
- **One** KCC face-to-face network
- **One** KCC customer account and card

This will become standard practice across our organisation; there will be **one** way of doing things.

Principles

The principles behind this strategy were developed by the KCC Challenger Group in June 2011 and have been fundamental in its design; they were brought together under three headings:

We will treat all our customers:

- with dignity and respect, keeping our promises, exceeding expectations wherever possible
- in a way that empowers them to take control and make informed choices
- fairly, offering transparent and easy to understand processes
- equally, providing a consistent customer experience regardless of how they choose to contact us

We will continuously improve our services by:

- understanding who uses our services
- using customer insight, consultation and customer experience surveys
- understanding the customer journey
- providing easy access to a wide range of services
- working with partners to join up services in a way that makes sense to our customers
- providing greater efficiency by sharing accommodation with our partners

We will behave as one council by:

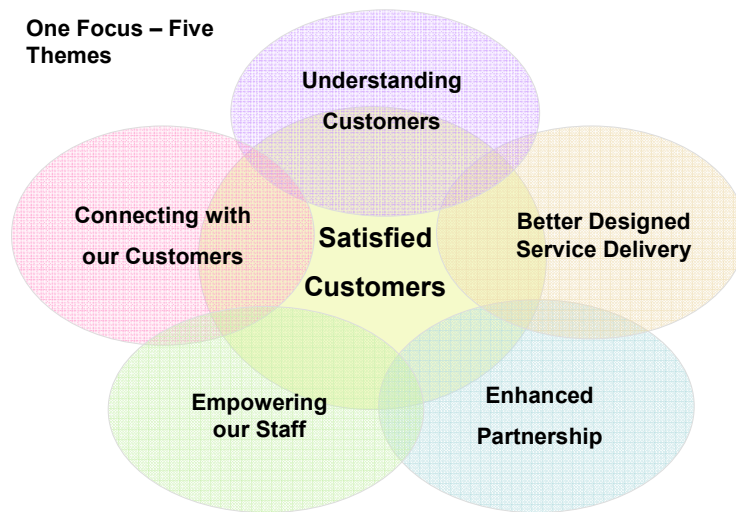
- managing information and knowledge to remove duplication
- matching customer need with the appropriate response
- delivering value to the customer
- training our staff to a consistently high standard of customer service
- resolving customer queries at the first point of contact
- promoting channel migration to the most effective channel

Whilst not all our customers are willing customers, they are entitled to expect the same degree of dignity and respect as we would expect ourselves. Our aim is to build relationships which will help us to solve problems together.

Themes

We have broken down our strategy into **five themes**;

1. Understanding our customers
2. Connecting with our customers – effectively and efficiently
3. Empowering our staff to meet customer expectations
4. Providing excellent quality and value to customers through better designed service delivery
5. Improving customer experience working with our public service partners.



Bold Steps for Kent

The Customer Service Strategy will contribute to achieving the three ambitions in **Bold Steps** for Kent:

- It will put customers in control by empowering them to help themselves and each other
- It will help tackle disadvantage by making it easier for them to talk to us and making sure that they receive the same high quality of service regardless of their circumstances or how they contact us
- It will help the Kent economy to grow; whether by putting services together in such a way as to make it easier for customers to get the skills they need to find a job; or by making better use of our buildings by sharing them with public sector partners, voluntary and community groups

The key priorities in **Bold Steps** for this Customer Service strategy are to:

- Improve access to public services and move towards a single initial assessment process
- Expand the 'Gateway' programme to cover multi-channel access to services through the internet and telephone - a single Gateway website and single Gateway telephone number, so residents can access the services they wish

- Embed the Gateway approach across the range of KCC front facing facilities so whichever door the customer walks through it is always a gateway to KCC being able to help them meet their needs

The Strategy contributes to achieving the **Leader's vision** of an enabling authority with an emphasis on:

- **Personalisation** - through introducing a customer account and creating a Kent Card
- **Incentivisation** - by helping people to help themselves through the creation of opportunities to access services online, enabling them to choose their own services and complete self assessments
- **Demand Management** – by making information more readily available on our website; by encouraging people to use more cost effective channels, and by reducing duplication.
- **Localism** – by working with people to design and potentially run their local services.

How long will it take to implement the Customer Service Strategy?

The strategy is a three year plan, based on the experience of other authorities' customer strategies, but this does not mean we will stop after three years. Excellent customer service is about keeping up with customer expectations and our customer service will evolve and change to reflect this.

By 2015 we will be recognised as delivering a 'leading edge' service. We are not starting from scratch; we have already started this journey with Contact Kent, kent.gov and face-to-face at libraries, children centres and Gateway.

Who will make this happen?

Everyone:

- Our customers, because they will have the opportunity to be involved in shaping and delivering services.
- Our Members, because they are the elected representatives of our customers and have valuable insight into customers views and needs
- Our staff, because every one of us makes a contribution to customer service.
- Our partners, because if we redesign services together we will improve the customer experience

"If you're not serving the customer, your job is to be serving someone who is."

Jan Carlzon – Former CEO of Scandinavian Airlines

What will be the overall outcomes?

Customers will;

- experience satisfaction and delight with KCC
- receive consistently good service no matter where or how they contact us
- find it easy to contact us and get answers to their enquiries
- make informed decisions and grow in self-reliance
- trust the Kent County Council brand

Staff will:

- have the skills and the knowledge to deliver excellent customer service

- be able to resolve customers enquires and be empowered to change processes for the benefit of customers
- understand the connections between services and how they affect customers
- be satisfied in their jobs and feel valued in their teams
- be proud to work for Kent County Council and act confidently as its ambassadors

KCC will:

- be recognised as a first rate authority
- save money through service delivery that is intuitive to the customer
- involve customers in the design and delivery of services
- deliver more integrated services by developing better partnerships
- be better prepared for future demands by making use of our insight into recent, current and upcoming demand for services

What will our approach be?

Our approach to increasing customer satisfaction is:

- Building a better understanding of our customers
- Creating 'one front desk' that brings together the data from all customer channels in one place to help us understand where improvements can be made
- Using that "one front desk" or customer contact centre to drive new changes for customer service
- Creating a Customer Assurance and Design (CANDO) team to help business units identify opportunities for improvement
- Giving the same consistent quality, whatever channel a customer chooses to reach us
- Making our processes as quick and easy as possible for the customer
- Making first-time resolution the norm
- Using feedback from our customers to change our processes

Our approach to reducing costs is:

- Reducing unnecessary contact
- Re-engineering and improving our processes and removing duplication
- Having one public access point for each channel
- Encouraging and driving channel shift
- Creating a single initial assessment process
- Reducing and integrating computer databases and systems

Customer Contact Centre – 'The Bridge'

In the same way that a captain controls the ship from 'The Bridge', by having an overview of everything that is going on in and around the ship, the customer contact centre will have an overview of all customer contact, enabling it to drive improvements in customer experience across KCC.

How will we fund the Customer Service Strategy?

There is an assumption sufficient resources will be made available to implement the Customer Service Strategy allowing adjustments for priorities, funding and service quality. The funding model for the Contact Centre will be remodelled. Savings achieved through channel shift and streamlining

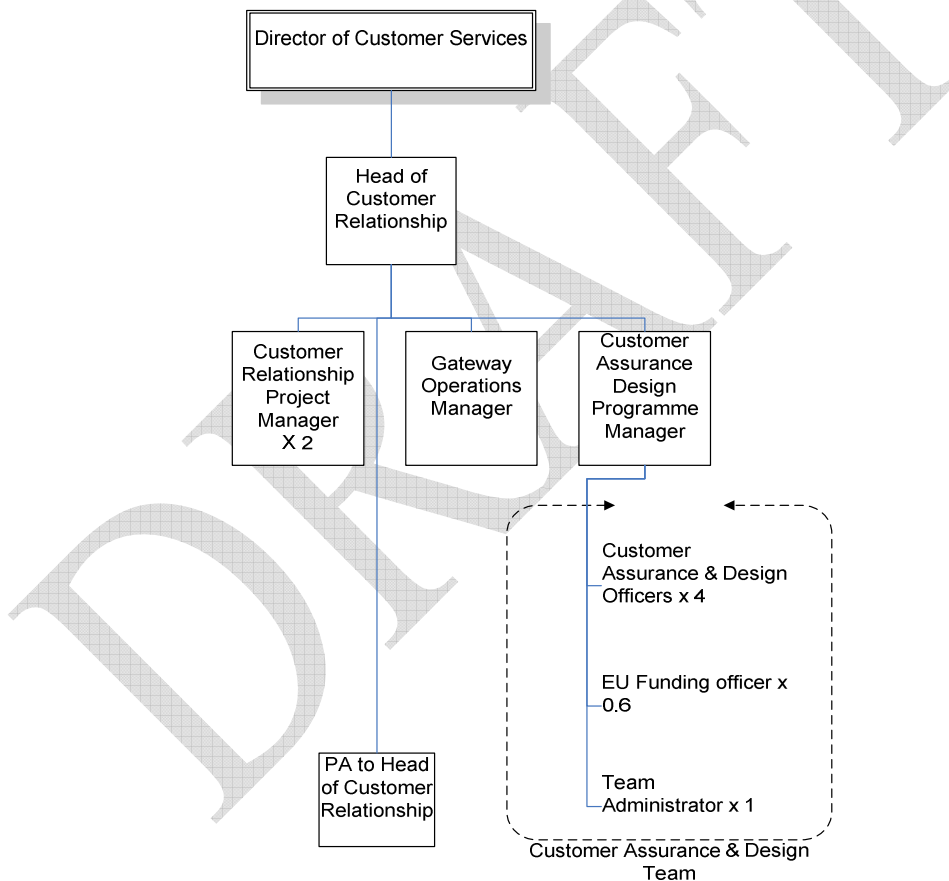
processes should go back to the team concerned to count as savings or be used to invest in service improvement.

The strategy itself will call upon existing customer resources and new resources in the short term. The Customer Assurance and Design (CAnDO) team will work with units to support them to serve their customers in more efficient ways, leading to improved customer experience and a reduction in service costs for KCC.

The CAnDO team will bring an evidence based approach to business process and service design improvement. This team will balance skills for customer delight, empathy for customer reality and designing against demand. This will bring a fresh set of skills and insights to existing business processes.

Based on successful models elsewhere, the team will be expected to cover its costs within two years by identifying and delivering significant savings.

Suggested Kent Customer Assurance and Design Team staffing structure:



Governance

The Customer Services Strategy will be owned corporately by Kent County Council, managed by the Director of Customer Services, implemented by the Customer Relationship Team together with the Directorates and driven by the Customer Access and Assessment Team.

Comments on this strategy should be sent to pascale.blackburn-clarke@kent.gov.uk & mike.ballard@kent.gov.uk

THEME ONE: UNDERSTANDING OUR CUSTOMERS

By 2015, customers have greater confidence in their relationship with KCC because they feel their needs are known and their preferences understood.

Understanding our customers better helps us to design and target services much more effectively. We can do this by using information we already have about our customers, encouraging them to give us feedback about how we are performing and by using insight tools to help us predict what they might need in the future.

We have a wealth of data and need to use it better. In the private sector customer data is the most important asset they have. We are missing the gold here. We have a treasure of information about our customers but it is not held in one place and so it is difficult to learn from. We also get regular feedback through comments and complaints, community engagement, social media blogs/posts, forums and insight from our own staff and Members which we should use to improve our services.

If we put this information together with insight tools, we will be in a stronger position to predict future demand for services and understand the way in which people want to access them.

Insight tools – These are knowledge based tools which collect information about people and the way in which they choose to live and interact. A well known example is Tesco Clubcard which allows Tesco to understand what we buy and when, so that they can tailor vouchers and advertising to the right people

Example of using Customer Insight - Ashford Library stock

Before Ashford Library opened in July 2011, customer insight was used to decide which books should be on the shelves. Insight highlighted the demand for children's books and confirmed reading trends in the area. In August 2009, the average daily footfall was 717 and 18,000 books were issued, 7,000 of which were children's books. In August 2011, the average daily footfall was 912, and 26,000 books were issued, of which 13,000 were children's books

One Resident, One Account

We propose customers will have access to their own individual customer account to let them keep track of things they have reported, requested or paid for and to find out about other services which they may interest them. This will provide us with a view of the customer which can be used to influence and shape future services. This will be done by ensuring all transactions and contacts are routed through one central system capturing key information.

“The world is moving in this direction where things are going to be designed more around people and that's going to be a really powerful direction... In a few years' time people will share more information and expect to see services, advertising and websites that were targeted at them.”

Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook

Complaints

“Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.”

Bill Gates

Customer feedback and comments, including complaints and compliments, are a really valuable opportunity to learn about what matters to customers and how to improve service design and delivery. Acting on lessons we learn from complaints is an essential part of continuous improvement.

We will introduce one contact telephone number, postal address and email address for all complaints. The information about how to complain will be held in one place and the complaints themselves handled by one KCC Complaints Team based in Customer Services.

Customer benefits

- Customers will know how to give KCC their views about their needs and preferences and suggestions about services
- Customers will feel they are understood
- Customers will receive information and advice enabling them to help themselves and each other
- Customers will be able to view their contacts with KCC
- Customers will be kept up to date with their enquiry's progress

We propose to:

- Actively and routinely consult customers and learn from their comments
- Bring our customer information together in one place
- Use insight to get a better understanding of the services people want and how they would prefer to access them
- Develop 'One Resident: One Account'

THEME TWO: CONNECTING WITH OUR CUSTOMERS – EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY

By 2015, customers contact KCC in ways and at times to suit them, receiving the same high quality, timely and reliable response whichever channel they choose.

Customer behaviour is fluid and people's expectations are high. We all want information and to be able to complete transactions faster than ever and in ways that are convenient to us at that particular moment.

Our customers expect to be able to complete their transactions easily and quickly regardless of which department or even which tier of government is responsible for delivering a service. They see us as one entity and so should we.

We will have one 'front desk' for all of our contact channels. We will ensure that our staff will have access to the information they need in order to resolve the majority of customers' enquires first time.

There will be one version of the truth across all channels; we will be 'digital by default'. Staff will use our website as their primary resource. The information people find on our website will be as reliable as speaking to a member of staff – enabling customers to trust and have confidence in all our channels.

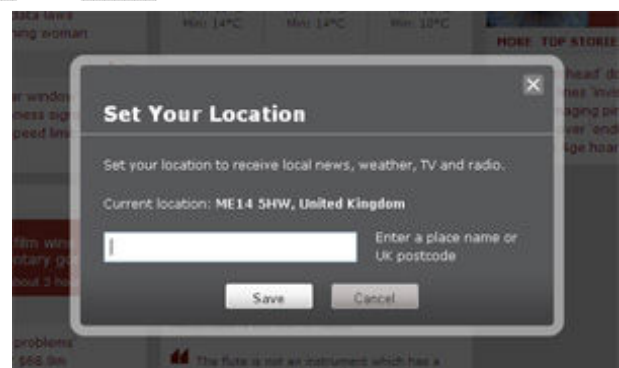
Offering customers choice about which channel they want to use is important, however we need to reduce dependence on costly transactions where there are reliable alternatives that are cheaper and easier for the customer. The drive to using more cost effective channels is known as "channel shift".

Web and mobile

Our website will be our **online Gateway**, where people can quickly and easily find and use a wide range of rich, open information and services that relate to who they are, where they live or what they want to do, in a way that is convenient for them.

We will focus on:

- Getting the basics right
 - We will make it quick and simple to get advice, tell us about a problem, request a service, book an appointment, pay for things, or track the progress of things reported or applied for
 - we will never launch a new digital service without first testing it with people who will use it
 - we will learn from people who use our website to continually improve it
- Encouraging people to use our website
 - We will make our web content and services available for re-use on other websites, such as local community websites
 - We will use social media to encourage more people to visit our website
 - Our staff will encourage people to use our website when they call or visit us



BBC Website

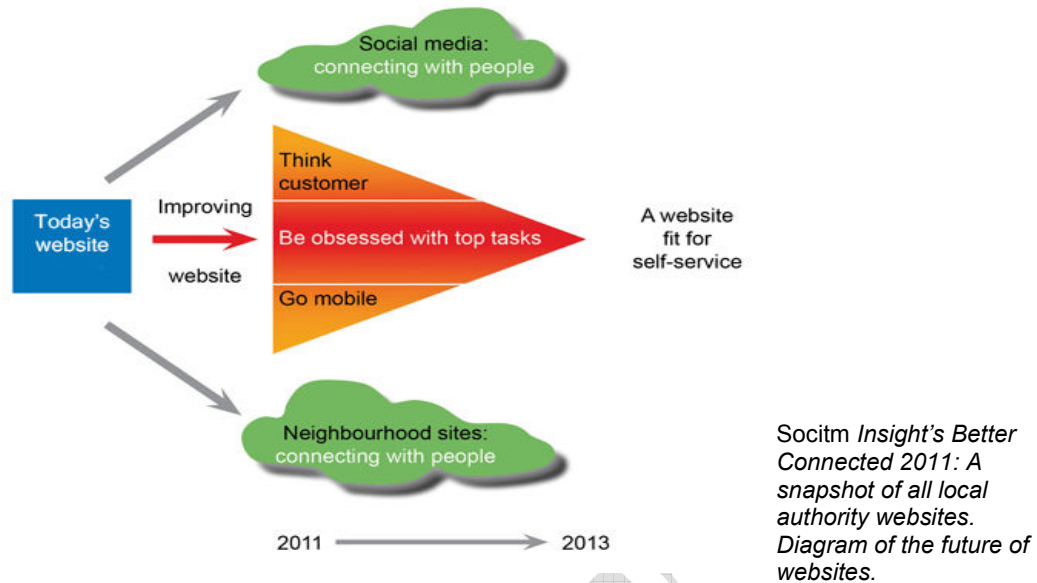
- Offering a personal experience
 - We will provide a single customer account so people can track the progress of things they have reported to us or applied for.
 - We will enable people to type in their postcode to find out what services are nearby such as schools, doctors' surgeries and information such as when rubbish is collected or planned developments.
 - We will enable people to sign up to receive timely and relevant information.
- Being usable and accessible
 - We will make sure that the website is accessible and usable on 'smart' devices such as Blackberrys, iPhones and, in future, internet TV
 - We will continue to make sure our digital services are accessible
- Providing new and compelling ways for people to interact with us
 - We will use mobile applications (apps) to make our content and services available 'on the move'
 - We will use social media to listen and talk to customers, answer their questions or direct them to the appropriate place
 - We will add value to people visiting our website by providing other useful content from other websites, such as NHS Choices

Example of Digital Technology - Explore Kent Mobile App

In May 2011, Explore Kent launched KCC's first mobile application or app as they are known. It offers a simple and new way to explore the Kent countryside and coast and it's free. You can download walking and cycling routes direct to your phone and track and share routes with friends.

So far customers say they love the app and it has received the highest rating of 5 stars. In its first month over 1,800 walks were downloaded.

Customer Comment: 'Just got back from a splendid walk around Cranbrook guided entirely by this app and I LOVE IT!!! Such a lot of effort has gone into this...'



We will use social networks and connect with people through local community websites to:

- increase the reach of our services
- inform people, particularly about information that is time critical and localised such as services available in bad weather
- understand what is important to our customers, answer their questions or signpost them to the relevant place
- encourage them to report problems and be involved in decision-making
- raise awareness about local issues

Smart Cards

We will have one KCC smart card to give residents access a range of services from libraries to concessionary travel. Customers will be able to add services onto their smart card as they become eligible for them without needing to give us the same information again.

The single smart card will replace all the separate cards currently in use. In future, we will work with private and public sector partners to create a single card for Kent to offer additional services, such as access to leisure facilities; and offer incentives such as discounts or the opportunity to try something new.

Telephone

The Contact Centre will be the hub for all telephone contact (and emails) about KCC services.

It will:

- have one public contact number for all services,
- pilot live web-chat which will enable customers to complete transactions online with help from contact centre staff,
- use technology such as text messaging to keep customers informed,

- gather information and feedback to achieve excellent customer service across all our channels,
- use the same tools as our customers to help improve and to build their confidence in those systems,
- make the most of the opportunities technology offers, for example home-shoring which could let contact centre staff work from home, making it easier to manage peaks and troughs in customer demand and improve staff retention

Face to face

There will always be a need to offer services through our face-to-face network as not all customers are able to transact with us by phone or web.

We will complete the current Gateway programme (subject to service review) and extend the Gateway approach across our face-to-face network including libraries and children centres. The Gateway approach means more than just locating services together under one roof. Partners in each Gateway understand each other's services so that they can cross refer customers to meet their needs in a more complete way.

We have a lot of buildings that customers visit, such as libraries and children's centres, which can also offer similar 'Gateway' solutions. In this way services available through our current network of Gateways will be expanded and our staff equipped with the skills, knowledge and tools needed to resolve the majority of enquiries at the first point of contact – "whichever door the customer walks through, it is always a gateway to KCC where we can help them to meet their needs." We will extend this approach by reaching out to our rural communities and 'hard to reach' groups by using our mobile outreach.

We will continue to work in partnership with other public and voluntary sector organisations, fully exploring opportunities for collaboration and joined up service delivery where this benefits customers and delivers efficiency.

Channel Shift

It costs KCC less to handle customer contact by phone than it does face-to-face, even less if customers serve themselves on the website. We also know many of our customers prefer to use the web, for banking or shopping but in most cases we do not offer them the opportunity to do this on our website.

The aim of channel shift is to encourage more users to self-serve using the web, whilst reserving face-to-face and phone channels for the most complex enquiries or for customers who cannot interact with us online. If achieved, channel shift will reduce costs, improve customer experience and ensure that customers are using the most appropriate channel for what they want to do.

Cost to serve
£7.40 face to face
£2.90 by phone
£0.32 by web
Cost to serve is calculated using Socitm 'Better Served: Customer Access, efficiency and channel shift paper February 2011'

What we know from our customer insight work is that there are key audiences who will use our website, when it meets their expectations. These expectations are currently driven by private sector experiences such as Amazon. This will mean that our services will have to be designed as online services wherever possible. We will also continue to encourage people to use the website

by running promotional campaigns for those services that have a low take-up online and high levels of phone calls. We had 756,000 unique visits to our website in October 2011. We will aim to satisfy the majority of those web visitors by enabling them to complete their transactions on the web. This will reduce unnecessary resolution by phone and face-to face visits, whilst also increasing customer satisfaction and reducing costs.

There are three types of channel shift:

- **Natural** – this is occurring as more and more people gain access to broadband and mobile internet and become accustomed to using online services.
- **Accelerated** – we can do more to encourage people to channel shift such as making sure our website address is advertised on all our literature and actively signposting customers to our web pages when they call us
- **Deliberate** – we can encourage people to use channels that are new to them by creating new online services and using marketing techniques to drive the behaviour change required for successful channel shift

Customer benefits

- Customers can contact relevant services through a channel that suits the individual customer's needs and convenience
- Improved customer satisfaction
- Customers receive the same level and content of service regardless of channel
- Each channel has a unique entry point admitting customers to all services
- Most customer enquiries are resolved on their first contact with KCC

Helping people to help themselves

We are currently helping people to build their computer literacy skills by offering training opportunities through our computer buddy scheme and dedicated UK online centres located in some of our libraries and Gateways. To build on this for the future, we are exploring opportunities with the Post Office to offer people in remote areas the chance to learn how to use the web.

We propose to:

- Provide a choice of channels offering convenient access to customers
- Provide each channel with its unique entry point that admits customers to all services
- Improve self-service functionality on our website and adopt new technologies such as new digital media (eg. smart cards, mobile apps)
- Improve channel design and content and empower staff so that customers receive the same level of service and information regardless of the channel
- Enable customers to move smoothly across channels, functions and selected partners
- Increase year on year the percentage of people opting to use the web as their preferred channel of choice
- Participate in the Government's 'Digital Britain' programme of broadband expansion
- Expand our outreach programmes to increase ease of local access in rural communities and for those considered 'hard to reach'

THEME THREE: EMPOWERING OUR STAFF TO MEET CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

By 2015, customers know they can rely on KCC staff to give them the best possible service.

Example of empowering staff – Highways Find and Fix Campaign

In 2010 & 2011, Kent Highway Services implemented a 'Find and Fix' campaign which empowered contractors working on behalf of KCC to fix any potholes they found.

Customers only needed to report one pothole in their area enabling the teams to come out and fix the others.

In 2010, 31,000 potholes were filled

Our staff have a good understanding of what our customers expect but it is mostly in their heads. We must therefore empower staff to share their knowledge in the redesigning of services, which is reflected in KCC's values - being open, inviting contribution and challenge, and accountability. We will define a set of skills for serving customers, applicable to all staff, complementing KCC's behaviours and competences.

Our customers expect us to be professional and knowledgeable and to resolve their issues and complete their transactions quickly and efficiently. Irrespective of the job we do, or where we work, excellent customer service is an essential part of what we set out to deliver. Every KCC employee has a part to play in ensuring our customers receive high quality services which are reliable, efficient and user-friendly.

The Kent Manager programme will ensure all managers are clear about what is required of them. This will improve transparency and help staff to know what to expect from their manager. The Kent Manager is designed to bring together KCC's behaviours, values and competencies. An essential feature for all managers will be to understand this Customer Service Strategy and deliver it.

"It's our job every day to make every aspect of the customer experience a little bit better."

Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon.com

For the first time, the introduction of Unified Communications across KCC will enable all staff to hold a single personal contact number and voicemail. Using common technology, each member of staff will be required to manage their availability, making it easier to remain in contact or manage phone calls when working flexibly. When staff are absent, personal voicemail will signpost customers to an agreed alternative contact. A key benefit is that customers will have their enquiries dealt with faster and more efficiently.

Ensuring staff are well motivated and equipped with the right skills and knowledge is an integral part of this strategy. It is important that our staff and Members are aware of new technology and the power it has to improve the way we deliver services. Our staff must be empowered to be creative and innovative and must be able to rely on managers to take notice of their feedback about processes that don't work well for customers.

Insight to Innovation (i-to-i)

The i-to-i tool is designed to let staff be innovative about current service provision. Staff imagine the experience of customers by putting themselves in their shoes and looking at the range of services they need. In workshops, staff are asked to:

Explore the needs of customers by mapping their various interactions, to see where we can make improvements to the service.

Identify opportunities for efficiency - saving time and money and improving staff experience.

Produce a list of improvements they will action.

Share information such as ideas and questions that will be recorded, shared between teams and fed into the planning process.

“Customer service isn’t a department, it’s an attitude!”

A customer care training and development programme will be developed for our staff to help them to gain the knowledge and skills they will need to resolve customer queries first time. New employees will receive customer care training as part of their induction.

Our Members, as the elected representatives of the citizens of Kent, have an invaluable insight into the views of our customers. They are uniquely placed to understand what concerns them, to sound out opinions, and gain feedback to shape formal engagement. This also means that they have a key role acting as champions for the strategy and its principles; promoting the design of new ways of delivering services - doing things differently to provide a better customer journey that is also more cost-effective, rather than simply reducing to fit within budget limitations.

The key aspects of the Strategy that Members will champion are:

Localism – working with local partners to see how they feature in our customers’ journeys

Customer insight - understanding our customers better

One Resident – one account - allowing customers to keep track of things that they have reported, requested or paid for

Kent Card – having one card for residents to access a range of services, replacing the individual cards in existence now

Improving our website – providing the same level of service regardless of which channel people choose

Embracing new technologies - keeping up with our customers’ expectations

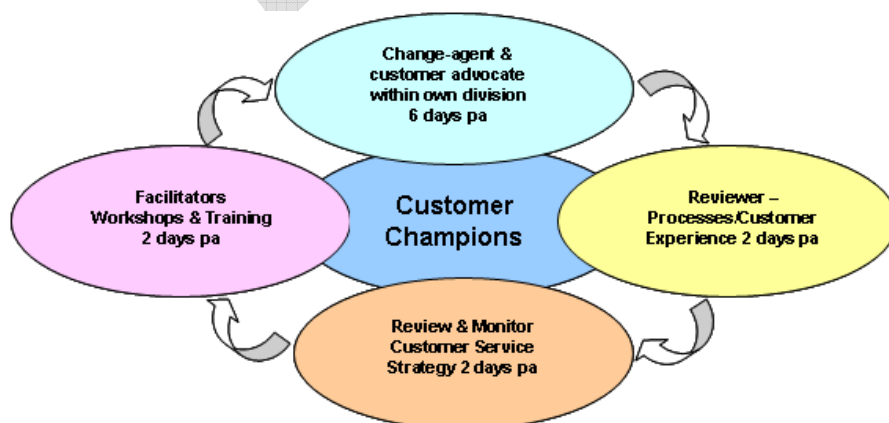
Channel Shift –increasing the number of customers opting to ‘shift’ to more convenient and cost effective channels and increasing their ability to self-serve

A single initial assessment – meaning that customers should only have to tell us things once

Re-engineering our services – improving our customers’ experience and shortening the time from their initial contact to resolution of their enquiry

Customer Excellence Standard – recognition that KCC is delivering a national standard of customer service

We will also have staff Customer Champions in each division, chosen because of their firm commitment to customer service and ability to be an advocate for this strategy. They will help to communicate this strategy across KCC.



Customer benefits

- Customers will be assisted and empowered to make informed choices and better use of services.
- Customers will feel their problems are understood by representatives of KCC (including its contractors) who seek good solutions and keep promises.
- Customers will have a positive feeling as a result of their interactions with our staff

We propose to:

- Embed the principles of this strategy in recruitment and personal development policies
- Build competence and behaviours through training and development activities
- Use customer insight techniques and staff experiences to deliver service improvement
- Introduce customer champions to drive change in their service areas
- Identify resources to lead on customer service improvement and deliver cost savings
- Create a Customer Assurance and Design Team (CAnDO) to help business units identify opportunities for improvement and cost savings
- Meet the national Customer Excellence Standard through robust performance management
- Ensure staff empower customers to self-serve, presenting the information people need to make real, informed choices
- Ensure our customer satisfaction ratings are consistently above 90% by 2015.

Customer Assurance and Design Team (CAnDO)

The CAnDO team will examine data from the contact channels to identify areas which are causing concern to the public and work alongside units to overcome potential problems by re-engineering processes to make them more cost effective and customer friendly.

CAnDO will identify and drive opportunities for partnership and collaboration to improve customer experience. The role of the team will be to make improvement part of our everyday business based on the evidence gathered from customer information and feedback.

Surrey County Council's equivalent team recognised the need for a single online booking system which will help numerous departments including the registration service. They estimate that the system will save them £1.6 million.

THEME FOUR: PROVIDING EXCELLENT QUALITY AND VALUE TO CUSTOMERS THROUGH BETTER DESIGNED SERVICE DELIVERY

By 2015, customers recognise they are served excellently – effectively, courteously, promptly, and efficiently.

Excellent processes produce high-quality outcomes and value for the customer. For example, the online process for renewing car tax is friendly, fast and reassuring for the customer. Behind the scenes there is a complex process involving a number of private and public sector organisations. By working with industry experts and trusted authenticators such as the Post Office, we could achieve similar improvements to our processes.

Excellent customer service can only be delivered by providing our staff with current, accessible and relevant data and information and using this to underpin efficient and effective business processes.

Services in KCC are sometimes designed from our needs rather than from the customer perspective. This means many of our processes are hard to understand and often do not provide a full start-to-finish solution. In order to avoid customers having to chase us for resolution, we must ensure they get what they need first time, or at least understand when and how they will get an answer.

Example - Self-service in Libraries

In 2011, Libraries introduced self-service machines for customers to check out and return books. This speeds up the process for customers whilst freeing up staff to answer more detailed enquiries.

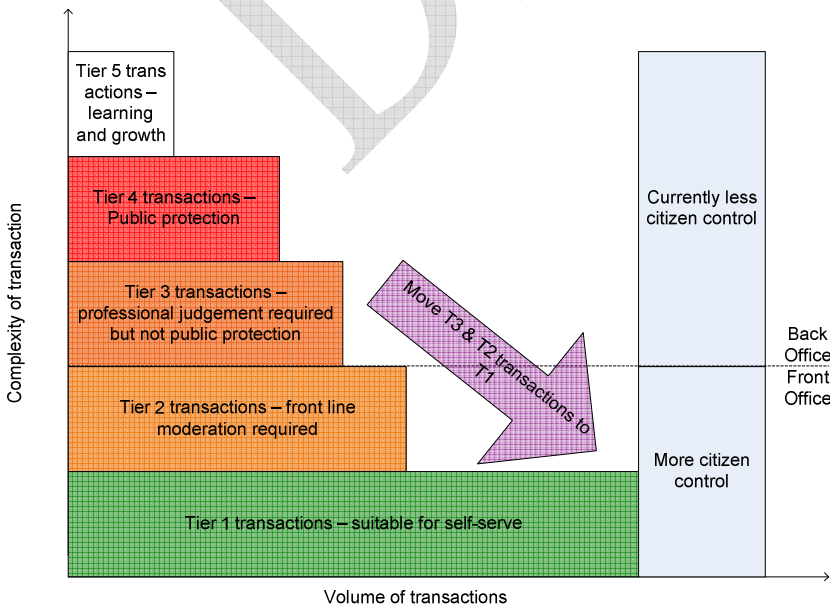
In the first week Ashford Gateway Plus opened, 89% of customers opted to use the self service machines

It is estimated this will save around £1.5 million in the first two years.

Every time one of our processes fails it costs us money. If we don't get it right first time the customer will try again and may well choose a more expensive channel.

Tiered Service Offer

We will offer our services on a tiered basis.



Tier One - business processes will be redesigned so they are easier for customers to understand, putting the customer in control and enabling self-service. These services will be delivered online or by front line customer service staff by telephone or face-to-face.

Tier Two - a second level of more complex transactions requiring a degree of specialism to complete will be delivered by our front line customer service staff by telephone or face-to-face.

Tier Three - a third level of more complex transactions requiring professional judgement to evaluate and complete, typically delivered direct to customers or in the back office

Tier Four - Kent County Council has a statutory duty of public protection, for example safeguarding children and adults. These services are not appropriate for customer self service and must be carried out by trained professionals. These processes will still be reviewed, to make sure they are clear and easy for customers to understand.

Tier Five - these are transactions reserved for complaints, investigations, reviews and service improvements.

All tiers will capture information which will improve our understanding of our customers.

Example of tiering - Children and Families Information Service (CFIS)

In April 2011, CFIS transferred to the Contact Centre. The service was reviewed and re-engineered to improve customer service and achieve savings. A two tier business model was adopted. Tier One is simple, short duration enquiries handled by multi-skilled Customer Service Advisors, while Tier Two calls require a greater degree of time or specialist intervention. The Contact Centre trained 16 existing members of staff to handle the calls. This gives the service more flexibility, and sufficient resources to cover breaks, leave and unplanned absences. Before the service moved to the Contact Centre calls were sometimes diverted to an answering machine during opening hours, if all the advisors were busy.

- In February 2010, 66% of callers chose not to leave an answer phone message and had to call back. The Contact Centre answers all calls during service opening hours and customers are able to call when it is convenient to them.
- 62% of calls can now be handled at first contact and on average emails are answered within 4 hours during working hours
- A number of other processes were changed, including using email instead of post, and reducing expensive advertising.

The potential saving for 2011/2012 is estimated at **£483,707**

Over the lifetime of this strategy we will aim to ensure the majority of processes are delivered in Tier 1 and Tier 2; where possible reducing and redesigning Tier 3 transactions. Tier 4 and 5 transactions will be dealt with in an open and honest way to promote organisational learning and growth.

Customer Records

Currently we record customer details on lots of different systems. This means we do not know what other services a customer is using. So we will bring together customer records to ensure customers only need to give us the information once.

Staff working on the front line need to access this information so they can serve customers appropriately. In addition this information must be easily available so we can learn how customers access our services. This will help us to redesign services to make them more effective for the customer and to reduce costs.

The data strategy will take into account the relevant data protection regulations and law, ensuring that our customers' records are stored securely and handled appropriately.

Example of service redesign - Adult Social Services: Bathing Assessment Clinics

A large number of referrals for bathing assessments was having a significant effect on the amount of time customers were waiting. Using Lean processes, Adult Social Services designed a more streamlined approach to delivering assessments and providing equipment. The aim was to improve response time for customers and reduce costs for the service. Part of the new process was to set up a clinic based assessment service using Gateway wherever possible.

- On average clinic assessments are 69% cheaper to run than home assessments.
- 23 % of customers now have their needs met at first contact.
- Using clinics increases productivity by an average 48%.
- Customers are actively engaged in finding solutions to their needs.
- Customers attending the clinics at Gateway also have other services opened up to them.
- Customers are overwhelmingly satisfied with the service and the 'Did Not Attend' rate at the clinic is negligible.

Customer comment: "Excellent service from start to finish."

Customer benefits

- Customers will have realistic expectations about the services KCC provides and have information relevant to their needs
- Customers will experience faster responses to their queries and better solutions to their problems than in 2011
- Customers will experience greater choice, flexibility and self-service in their dealings with KCC (and its partners)

We propose to:

- Keep pace with customers' expectations for knowledge about services and need for information
- Develop an integrated performance management system, including quality standards, that is driven by customer service
- Demonstrate value-for-money in the costs of our service processes and transactions

Kent Contact and Assessment Service (KCAS)

Faced with a high call abandon rate, KCAS was identified as a pilot site for using Lean Six Sigma methods to improve processes. Since December 2010 the service has achieved a 95% - 100% call handling rate.

- Demonstrate that enhanced customer value has been achieved when redesigning service processes
- Increase staff capacity to answer enquiries promptly first time
- Prepare and implement a data strategy to improve our understanding of customer needs, improve service processes and simplify data-handling infrastructure
- Check processes end-to-end; redesign where necessary, and ensure customers reach the solutions they seek in the most effective manner
- Implement a tiered service response
- Ensure procurement of ICT systems improves the customer experience
- Develop an integrated record for each customer.

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THEME FIVE: IMPROVING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH OUR PUBLIC SERVICE PARTNERS

By 2015, customers experience enhanced benefits from KCC working in partnership with other service providers.

Customers' enquiries and problems do not neatly fit within the boundaries of one service or one organisation. We can not always solve issues on our own and need to work with partners to achieve full resolution for our shared customers. This means we must proactively seek out opportunities to work collaboratively with our partners so that customers experience seamless, high quality public services, no matter who is delivering them. We will expect the same high standard of service from any organisation delivering services on our behalf, and this needs to be reflected in our procurement and commissioning processes.

We will work with the Locality Boards to examine how we can improve processes - services and solutions, delivered locally, shaped by local people to meet local needs. The strategy will also give us the opportunity to influence commissioning groups as they develop. If we redesign our services with our partners in a way that makes sense to our customers, we can provide a seamless customer experience which will resolve more of our customer queries than if we worked alone.

Example - Tell Us Once is a national project enabling customers to report a death or a birth to a registrar and opt to allow us to share that information with 27 public authorities. These include Passport Service, DVLA, Pensions, District Councils for Council tax and electoral roll and KCC services such as Blue Badges and Libraries. On average it reduces the number of contacts from seven per customer to one.

In 2010 all 12 District and Borough Councils in Kent joined the programme. With approximately 12,500 deaths in Kent per year that is a potential reduction in contacts from 87,500 to 12,500. One Local Authority has calculated savings of £600 per case.

The next step will be to increase the number of appointments by making them available in more Gateway and library locations.

There is enormous scope to use this system in the future to include other notifications such as change of address, and to widen the scope to other organisations such as finance, insurance and utility companies.

Gateway is an example of partner engagement delivering an integrated front-line service model. It has produced wide-ranging benefits for customers in a face-to-face setting. We will extend Gateway values to phone and digital channels.

Many external partners have collaborated, gaining advantages from Gateway expertise in serving customers more effectively face-to-face. Many KCC customer-facing services have yet to fully engage with these opportunities, missing out on improved customer experience and operational efficiency.

Example - Working with our Partners

Gateway has been designed to improve customer journeys. Knowledge about local residents has directly informed the service mix of statutory and voluntary agencies. Gateway invites all those best placed to respond to participate with joint assessment and informed sign-posting. In addition to the county and district councils, HM Revenue & Customs, Job Centre Plus and the Ministry of Defence are collaborating through Gateway alongside Health, Citizens Advice Bureau, Volunteer Bureaux, Kent Savers and many other local voluntary and charitable agencies.

Regardless of who is delivering the service, all are expected to follow the Gateway ethos of customer service delivery.

It is essential that we map the journeys of our most vulnerable children, families and adults, recognising that these take place in a highly complex, multi-disciplinary environment, which can increase the risk of delays or failures in the system and lead to the frustrations that result in complaints. Understanding the end-to-end customer journey, including the timely involvement of partners, will reduce these risks very significantly.

Partnership need not only be within the boundaries of Kent. Strategic alliances with other local authorities who are on the same customer service journey, whether that is in the South East of England or elsewhere, will further increase our customer service capacity. In the development of this strategy we have worked with Surrey and Northamptonshire County Councils and are looking to build a more formal relationship so we can learn from each others' strengths and build excellence together.

This includes:

- Sharing experience about increasing capacity in the front office and reducing back office processes to achieve savings. This will include looking at tiering services
- Sharing how to implement improvements in process design
- Sharing approaches to creating useful insight tools as well as exploring the commercial value of customer data
- Investigating how we can use Customer Record Management systems as well as other useful tools such as the customer account to improve the customer experience

Customer benefits:

- Customers will benefit from more joined up services and a seamless 'customer journey' across them, whilst receiving the same high standard of service regardless of who is providing them.

We propose to:

- Develop strategic capacity and momentum through partnership
- Make connections across partner services easy for customers.
- Share data effectively with our partners.
- Reduce 'front desk' duplication and cost by integrating fully with partner services.
- Maximise the business benefits of Unified Communications with public sector partners
- Develop the concept of a 'super' contact centre achieving economies of scale and income potential
- Develop innovative alliances with the best of the private and public sectors to grow the best reputation for customer service across the UK

- Work with public sector partners to find web and digital solutions such as a national online "report it" form and put pressure on suppliers to make sure that reports automatically go into our computer systems.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

Communication and Consultation

Delivering the Customer Service Strategy will only be successful if we build trust and credibility for it among KCC staff, our customers and our partners. Communication is critical to generate support and momentum for the strategy, and to sustain interest in, and commitment to, the changes it will drive. The way we communicate will need to:

- meet the demands of a large and diverse internal audience;
- capture the views for our external customers and partners;
- bring about change in behaviour throughout KCC, not just our "customer facing" staff;
- gain acceptance and support from all of our stakeholders in recognition of the fundamental changes this will mean.

The success of the Customer Service Strategy depends on it being communicated to ensure that staff, customers and partners know about it, feel consulted about it and support it.

Measuring Performance

We will use a balance of quantitative and qualitative measures to assess our performance against this strategy. These include cost to serve, speed of response, process time (eg. call time), transaction volumes, first point resolution, failure demand, repeat contact, avoidable contact and intelligence gathered from complaints, comments and compliments.

Customer perception surveys will use standard questions, repeated regularly so that trends can be observed. The results can be segmented, to increase the depth of insight, and supplemented by call-backs to customers after a period of time to get their perception of the whole end-to-end service. These measures will be combined with methods such as mystery shopping and benchmarking against both public and private sector organisations

Review

The pace of change in recent years proves that we need to review the strategy regularly, particularly as technology evolves and customers' expectations increase. We will carry out a formal review of the strategy after the first year.

Next Steps

The strategy will be supported by a detailed implementation plan. The phases below give an outline of what needs to be achieved to deliver the aims of this strategy successfully. Phases will overlap but will be completed within the 3 year timeframe.

Phase One

- Establish 'One Front Desk' embracing all channels creating the 'One Council, One Feel' customer experience
- Integrate the Complaints Team into Customer Services

- Obtain baseline customer satisfaction data & cost to serve
- Use information acquired from our contact channels to identify priority areas to focus on for improvement
- Create Customer Assurance and Design Team (CAnDO)
- Begin 'quick wins' projects – creating online solutions to encourage channel shift and deliver savings
- Begin service redesign
- Start to use customer insight techniques across all services and wherever services are being redesigned
- Develop Customer Service training programme for all staff
- Develop role of Customer Champions
- Develop Mobile Outreach strategy
- Develop Data Strategy and Performance Management framework for customer experience
- Increase percentage of people transacting via the web
- Monitor cost savings
- Review and confirm year two implementation plan

Phase Two

- Build a single view of customer contact data
- Trial initial single assessment process
- Further increase percentage of people transacting via the web
- Develop innovative partnership approaches with other authorities
- Introduce new online transactions
- Trial new technology to improve customer service – Mobile apps, touch screen devices, web chat.
- Accelerate service redesign
- Monitor cost savings
- Review and confirm year 3 implementation plan

Phase Three

- Introduce Citizen Account
- Introduce Smart Card/Citizen Card
- Introduce new online transactions
- Achieve Customer Excellence Standard
- Further increase percentage of people transacting via the web
- Complete Gateway programme
- Continue service redesign
- Monitor cost savings
- Review and confirm future plans

KCC ICT Strategy Overview 2011-2015

Version 1.3

November 2011

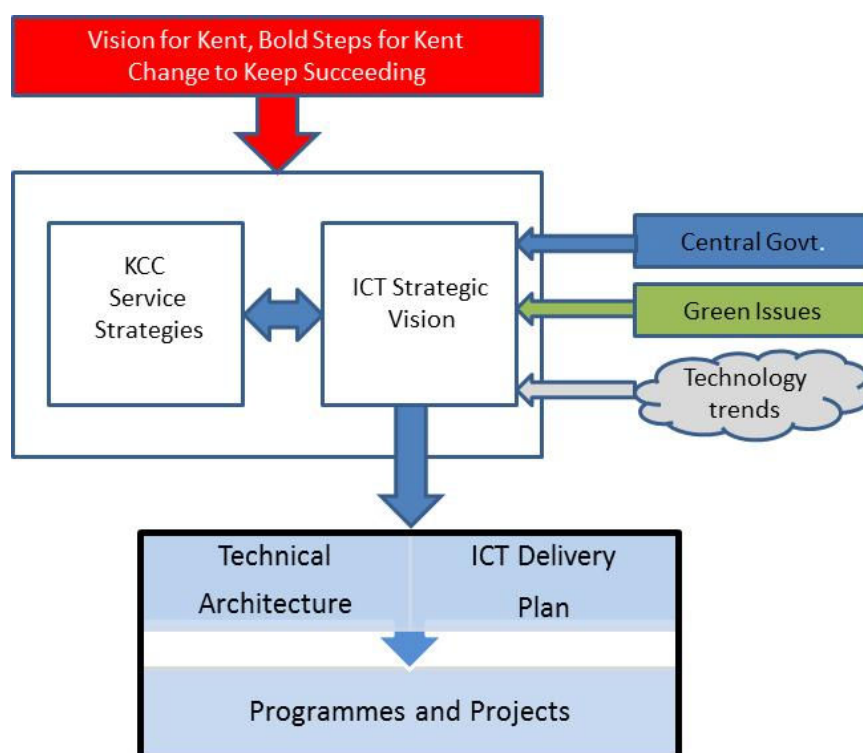
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

Executive Summary

One ICT Strategy to Support One Council

This document comprises the executive summary of an extensive ICT strategy framework which has been produced to reflect the policy objectives of the Council and other wider public sector organisations across Kent. The main sources of reference for KCC have been: The Vision for Kent; Bold Steps for Kent; Change to Keep Succeeding; KCC Service Strategies; the National ICT Strategy and 'Planting the Flag' the local public agencies response to the national strategy.

The simplified view of the framework shown below shows how the ICT strategy is positioned in relation to the published Council vision and the other influences that have a bearing in setting ICT strategy,



The objective is to anticipate the drivers for change that will demand a response from ICT critical for the delivery of the desired outcomes, the most pressing policy areas being identified as:

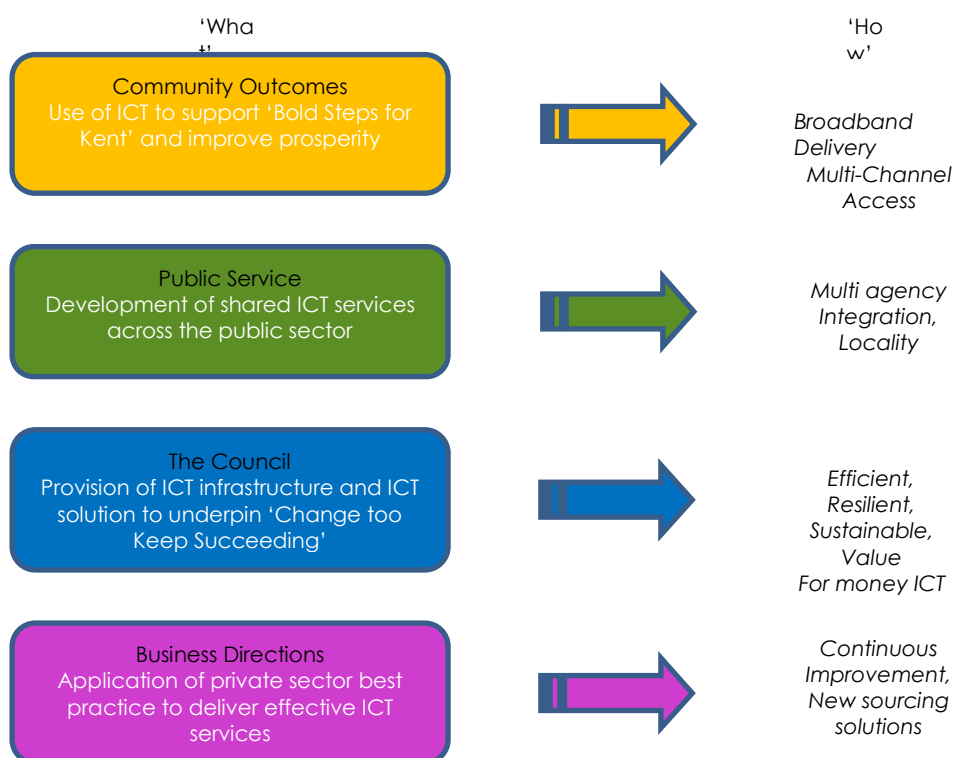
- **Open Innovation** – how communities and council taxpayers can get real leverage over public services investment in digital services.
- **Open Public Services** – mapping the move to the new enabling and commissioning culture and away from the old supply and delivery approach to public services

- **Digital by Default** – charting the relationship between the move to online channels and the implications for social inclusion.
- **Technology Developments** - defining the benefits and a hype-free route-map for government and public services in areas such as Cloud Computing, Agile, 4G communications, etc.
- **New Public Governance** - how the digitally-driven shift to cooperative and collaborative governance will impact on, public engagement, public management and public administration.
- **Public Service Redesign** – identifying the blockages to redesigning public services that impact of the above and good practice in how these can be addressed.
- **Digital Infrastructure** – Broadband agenda

These drivers for change need to be accommodated alongside the existing priorities such as the Council's approach to maximising the value of investments in information and technology in the efficient management of resources, understanding the needs and delivering the best outcomes for the communities and citizens of Kent.

Vision

The vision for ICT is to be an enabler for community outcomes and a foundation for future public services.



ICT provision is not an objective on its own and will always be used as a facilitator of a business requirement and hence all ICT investment should be judged from the perspective of its contribution to service outcomes.

The strategy is designed to support the council’s service strategies which are vehicle for delivery of the three ambitions in Bold Steps. Technology delivery can also be used as a tool to directly support community infrastructure, as well as providing a framework for more effective service outcomes.

A framework, in which overall outcomes are greater than the sum of the parts, requires a rigours application of ‘One Council’ principles and a disciplined approach to the common elements of infrastructure. The following ICT principles have been defined with this objective in mind.

Principles

Delivery is entirely dependent on good governance and will require the council to adopt a more disciplined approach to investment in technology if this is to underpin policy objectives; successful service strategies and delivery of a One Council approach.

Principle 1: Investment

Our investment decisions will be based on a robust evaluation of each business case supported by appropriate management information, and delivery aligned to policy outcomes and service strategies.

ICT investment will be affordable, deliver tangible community or service benefits and demonstrate excellent value for money.

Principle 2: Delivery & Change Approach

We will consolidate and re-use enterprise assets, remove duplication and waste to deliver an efficient, coherent and stable 'One Council' ICT service.

Principle 3: Technology Architecture

Our Technology strategy will require compliance with published technical standards that will be adopted across the enterprise and where appropriate aligned with our public sector partners.

Principle 4: Partnerships

Shared ICT services will be evaluated by their capacity to deliver tangible and demonstrable benefits through efficiency savings or through improved partnership working.

Our priority is to secure best value for the citizens of Kent. To achieve this we will actively seek opportunities to share ICT services and infrastructure with our public sector partners.

Principle 5: Business Systems

Business applications will be reviewed periodically or in advance of renewal, and where no longer viable or efficient will be decommissioned and where viable replaced with lower cost or more effective alternative in line with a single integrate systems architecture.

Principle 6: Customer Service & ICT improvement

Solutions design and organisation structure will be driven by a customer centric approach and exploit the potential of new technologies and sourcing solutions to improve customer experience and service outcomes.

Principle 7: Security

Data security, information governance and ICT security best practice will be maintained at all times.

Approach

Partnership working

- Provision of ICT services from local shared services agencies will always be a priority in service procurement
- The Council's infrastructure will be integrated with that of partner organisations supporting a multi-agency shared service culture across shared office locations.
- Council staff will work in joint teams with staff from organisations across the public, private and voluntary sector, for instance Health service partners.
- Mobile staff and multi-agency workforces will utilise common solutions to share information and processes to ensure seamless joined up working.

Information

- Information is a corporate asset and will be managed to deliver maximum value to the Council and its partners
- Information will be held and processed in accordance with best practice both internally and by partners. Information will be held securely whilst at the same time promoting sharing with other organisations
- Detailed, reliable information will provide the basis of rapid and evidence based decision making across the Council
- Council systems will be connected both to other Council systems and partner organisations via common standards, consistency applied.
- Data will be publicly available in commonly supported data formats

Value for Money

- Investment decisions for technology will be guided by clear principles to ensure that money is focused to deliver business priorities, maximised value reducing duplication and providing economies of scale
- The number of systems will be reduced , leading to decreased maintenance costs focussed at key business systems

- Systems providing duplicate business functionality will be rationalised to a set of common solutions to enable maximum value
- Technology support for flexible and mobile working will support efficiency gains through rationalised offices.

Boosting Productivity

- Staff will use common processes across business functions streamlined to remove duplication, boost efficiency and support business transformation
- Training will be mandated to ensure that investments in ICT can be fully exploited. Where system facilities exist to replace manual or outdated business practices these will be promoted to enhance productivity and increase the return on investment
- Joined up systems will accommodate common data sharing across systems reducing errors and reducing the effort to populate data into systems. Data quality will be a key issue to providing an enhanced quality of service to our citizen customers
- ICT will work to remove barriers to the widespread adoption of technology to support common business requirements

Citizen Outcomes

- A prosperous and vibrant economy provides jobs and prosperity to local citizens and is actively supported and promoted by the Council
- Access to services will be a seamless experience across all channels: web, smartphone apps, phone, personal callers (Gateways), the citizen will be able to make the choice of how to engage with us.
- Council investment whether in the community or on its own mechanisms to provide services should drive support for the local economy
- Information gathered by the Council must deliver insight into the quality of life for citizens and the state of the real economy to ensure that the Council is able to appropriate and timely services.
- Technologies and solutions that improve the customer experience should inform investment decision and priorities.

Where appropriate Council assets and services will be made available to support local businesses particularly where these facilities are not available from other sources e.g. use of KPSN to support broadband provision.

Impact

In the past ICT has been seen as a set of back office solutions to support front office delivery services. In the new world our approach will need to alter as technology becomes not only a primary point of access to, and assessment for services, but also in some cases the medium through which the services is delivered directly into the home of the citizen

Where previously solutions have been designed around public service processes and organisation, future versions will need to be accessible online 24 by 7, the approach employed in online retail environments where the users are your customers. This is a radical change for how KCC delivers ICT services.

Change is implemented through programme and project activity. Successful delivery is dependent on programme and project management skills which must be a priority area of professional development.

Delivery Plan

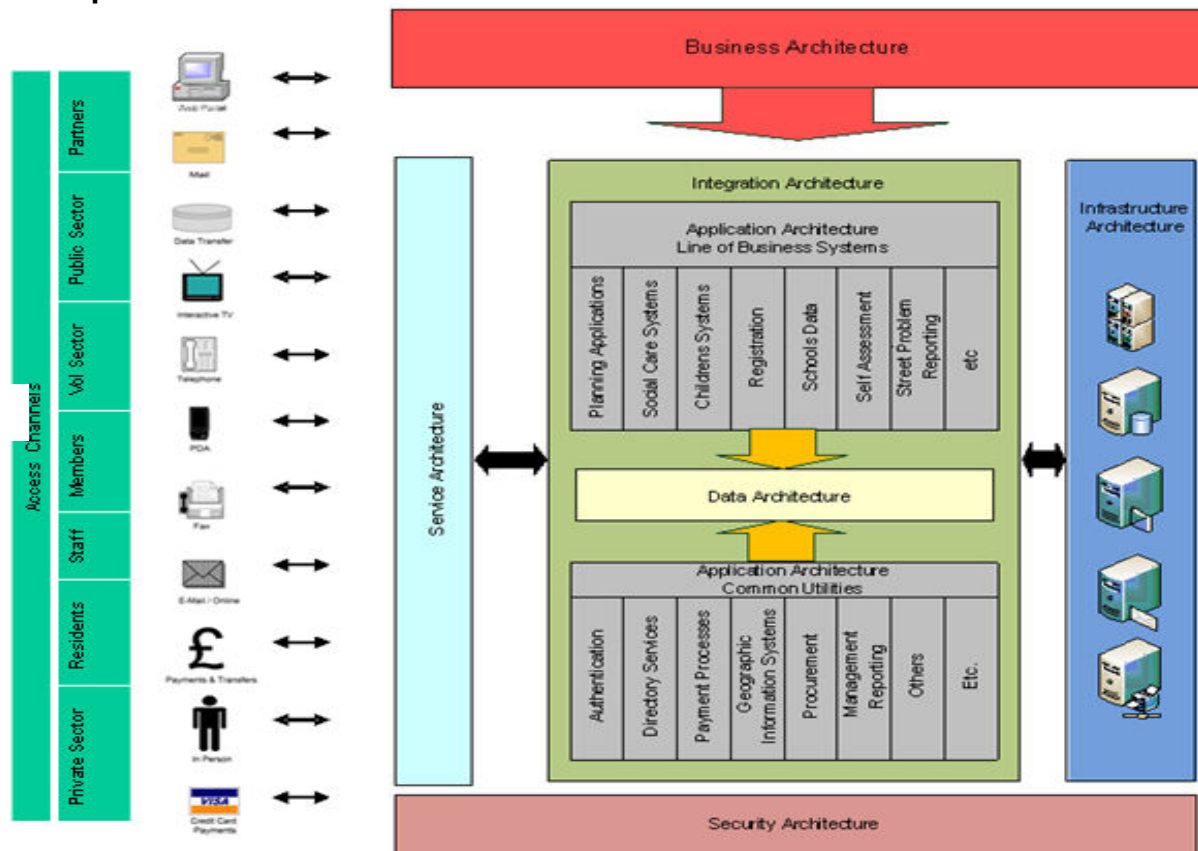
For ICT the Vision outlined above needs ultimately to be reflected in a design for an enterprise architecture that can be used as a blueprint for the development of the components that comprises the council’s technology assets.

ICT Technical Architecture Layers

The ICT Technical Architecture layers referenced below are intended to provide a coherent relationship map across the business organisation and processes, services, security, software applications, operating systems, database technologies, server technologies, desktop and mobile computing technologies, and communications and connectivity technologies.

The development of each of these layers will need to be evaluated against the objectives of the strategy and adhere to the principles outlined above. The following definitions provide a high level explanation of each of the elements.

Enterprise Architecture



Business Architecture Layer (What we need to achieve)

The top layer of the Enterprise, the Business Architecture provides the blueprint for the business vision, drivers and constraints, business capability, process and organisation. The business layer represents the council's service strategies that need to be captured as the primary inputs into the technical architecture, this will increasingly comprise enterprise strategies E.g. Customer Service Strategy, rather than the functional perspective prior to adoption of the 'One Council' approach..

Service Architecture Layer (How it will work for service users)

A layer that is common to many of the Enterprise Architecture Layers, the Service Architecture defines the blueprint for the relationships between pan public service organisation and service boundaries, the provision of service to customers and the consumption of service from suppliers. It provides the blueprint in terms of Service Management considerations. The layer is considered as an integration layer because ALL layers of the enterprise can be used to deliver service to customers or can contribute to the delivery of service to customers, what service architecture considers

Security Architecture Layer (Keeping it safe)

Another common layer of the Enterprise Architecture, the Security Architecture provides the blueprint for Information Security across all layers of the Enterprise. By including security as a layer within the Enterprise Architecture ICT are bringing security to the forefront of its ICT strategy and governance to ensure that Information Security is built into its services as a matter of course and in a calculated and coherent manner.

Application Architecture Layer (Technical view of systems)

Sitting beneath the Business Architecture layer but above the Data Architecture layer is the Application Architecture. The Applications Architecture provides the blueprint for the software applications utilised by the organisation. The scope of these software applications includes all software, including office applications, business applications, communications and messaging applications as well as specific software applications required to deliver particular services. It describes the functionality provided by the software applications estate and contains the catalogue of the complete set of software applications leveraged across the business together with the functionality that they provide. The Application Architecture will provide the roadmap for how software applications will evolve to improve customer experience, reduce costs, improve quality and deliver service outcomes.

Data Architecture Layer (How data becomes information)

ICT have deliberately introduced the Data Architecture layer into the Enterprise Architecture to enable the council to manage information as a corporate asset by providing an enterprise-wide approach to information management. The Data Architecture layer will provide a corporate data model which will describe information from an enterprise wide perspective and will contain reference models of how the data entities described in this model are managed across the application architecture. The Data Architecture layer will also provide an enterprise-wide blueprint for Master Data Management and Business Intelligence.

Integration Architecture Layer (How it all fits together)

Traditionally disparate applications have been integrated in an ad-hoc manner using a variety of technologies. This can result in an ever increasing complex network of point-to-point integrations resulting in the daisy-chaining of information across multiple applications (rather than sourcing data from a master repository), data inconsistencies, latency, high cost of ownership, unnecessary complexity, inflexibility and fragility in the Application Architecture and Business Architecture.

To raise the focus on the problems of point-to-point integration and to begin to establish an enterprise-wide approach leveraging real-time transactional integration technologies. This Layer will provide an integration blueprint that will underpin goals of the Business Architecture, Application Architecture, Data Architecture, Service Architecture and Security Architecture.

Infrastructure Architecture Layer (The hardware)

The Infrastructure Architecture provides the blueprint for the underlying physical ICT Technology that is used to process and store applications and information. It provides the blueprint for server technology, storage technology, communications and connectivity technology, as well as user devices such as laptop and desktop computers and mobile devices.

Programmes and Projects

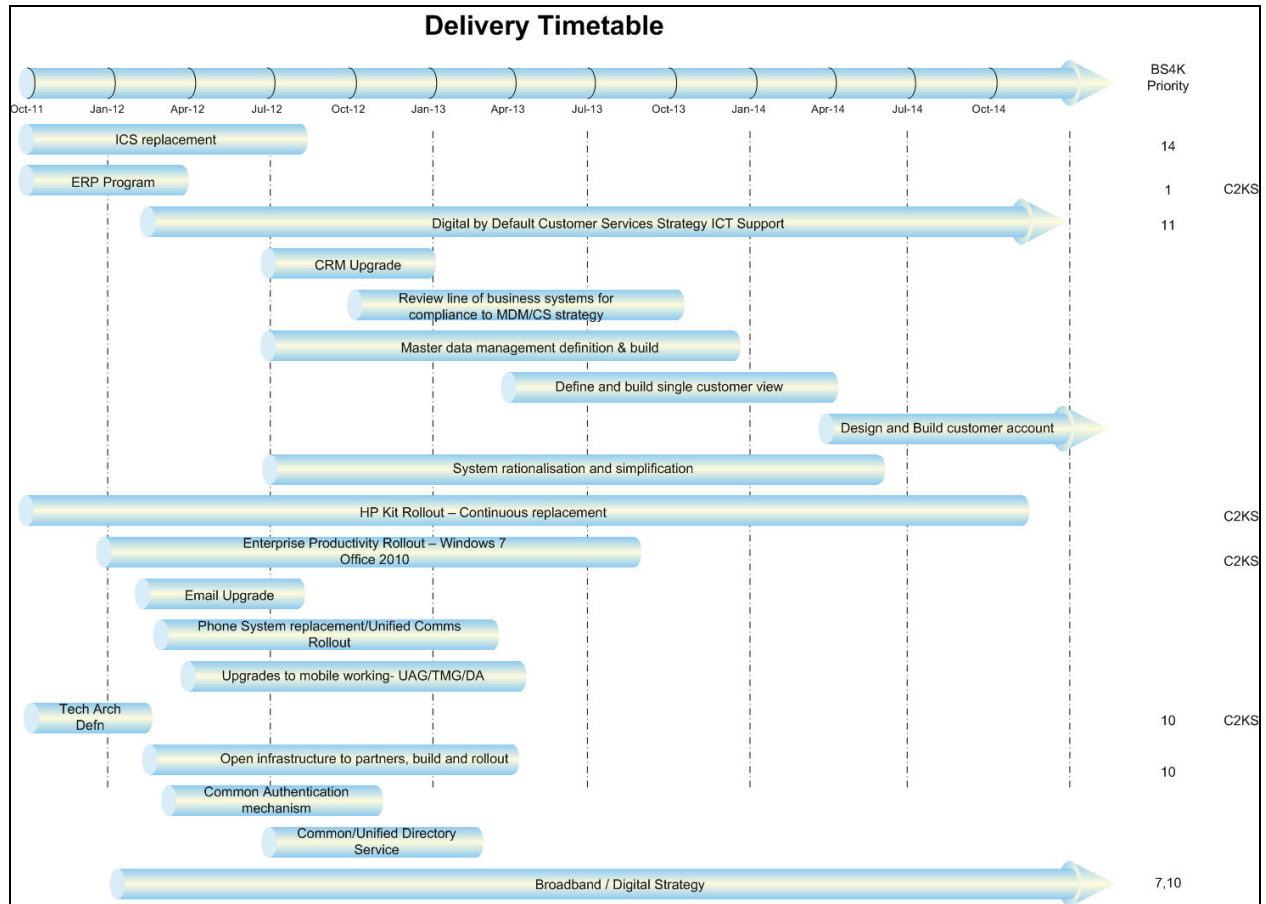
Delivery will be through the application of the principles outlined in this strategy to the change projects initiated in support of Bold Steps. This will provide a framework for continuous improvement, ensuring that each investment decision consolidates and strengthens the 'One Council' approach.

This is illustrated in existing ICT priorities:

- CSS Improvement Programme and replacement of the integrated Children's System
- Enterprise Resource Planning programme – Reengineered Finance and Business Processes supported by a new Oracle implementation
- ICT capital programme to upgrade core infrastructure
- Enterprise Productivity Tools – Upgrade of desktop hardware and software with standard application of Microsoft software
- Digital by Default – Technology Programme to support Customer Services Strategy.

Timescale

The programme of change is aligned to the objectives outlined within Bold Steps and the timescales for the associated service strategies.



This high level plan links key programmes over the next 3 years with their associated Bold Steps priorities. Whilst many projects will deliver specific business objectives others will deliver capabilities to improve business efficiency. The goals of rationalising and simplifying the ICT environment will be achieved through a combination of activities including an enhanced approach to implementing line of business systems.

Minutes of the Children's Service Improvement Panel
Meeting Held: 20 September 2011 14:00 Medway

Present:

Mrs Whittle (Chair)
Mrs Allen
Mr Christie
Mr Cubitt
Miss Hohler
Mr Lake
Mr Smith
Mr Vye
Mrs Waters

Officers:

Malcolm Newsam
Jean Imray
Donna Shkalla
Jennifer Maiden-Brooks
Fiona Maycock (Clerk)
Beverley Clarke
Lorraine Goodsell
Andrew Coombe

Apologies:

Mr Ferrin
Mrs Dean (Mr Vye substituted)
Mr Wells

1. Previous Minutes

1.1 The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the last meeting.

2. Progress Report

2.1 Malcolm Newsam indicated that focus is now shifting towards improved throughput, increased managerial grip and other services available to children and families.

2.2 Confirmation was given that the adoption report will be presented at the County Council meeting on 20th October 2011. (since delayed and will now be debated at Corporate Parenting Panel on 5 December).

2.3 Malcolm Newsam confirmed that Members can be proud of the current numbers of children being fostered within Kent, however the number of children being fostered is linked to the number of Looked After Children (LAC). The Phase 2 Improvement Plan focuses on reducing the number of LAC and increasing the number of KCC foster carers, thus enabling virtually all Kent LAC to be cared for by in-house foster carers.

2.4 Mrs Whittle stated the purpose of Martin Narey's review is to increase the rate of adoptions, reducing delays for children waiting to be adopted and prospective adopters to be approved where they are needed.

2.5 Mr Lake asked who decides when a child should be adopted. Jean Imray stated that ultimately the decision resides with the court; there are variances in the time it takes, and some children are harder to place than

others. In some instances it can take up to 5 years for a child to be adopted. KCC needs to ensure managerial grip retains accountability and that approaches are consistent.

2.6 Mrs Whittle reported about her recent visit to Lincolnshire's Children Services with Malcolm Newsam; they were an inadequate authority in 2006 and have since been rated outstanding by Ofsted in 2010. This is a four year journey which can and should be accomplished by Kent.

3. DIAT Inspections Presentation

3.1 Beverley Clarke gave a presentation on her Inspections of each of the District Duty and Initial Assessment Teams.

3.2 One of the positive things to have come from the mock inspections was that all cases have now been allocated and staff have a stronger focus on the throughput of cases.

3.3 Beverley Clarke reported the common factors of poor outcomes as being weak management, poor supervisory grip, ineffective administration and slow throughput.

3.4 There was some concern that in certain districts assessment timescales were beginning to slip; it is imperative that focus is retained on completion of assessments in timescale.

3.5 Beverley Clarke and Malcolm Newsam assured Members that work had been commissioned urgently to rectify the conditions at the Shepway office; an additional visit has been arranged to check on the progress of this work. This indicates strongly that performance is no longer due to resource and accommodation issues.

3.6 Beverley Clarke emphasised the idea that embedding good quality social work practice does not happen overnight; intensive additional support has been given to those districts that required it and follow-up mock inspections will be carried out at a later date.

4. Audit of CDT Referrals Report

4.1 Lorraine Goodsell outlined the findings of the audit on referrals into the Central Duty Team (CDT), highlighting that the Police had the highest overall referral figures and Health had the lowest. Performance will be picked up in the Quality and Effectiveness subgroup of the KSCB.

4.2 Lorraine Goodsell confirmed that the referrals are not only related to cases held by CAMHS but also by the work of the preventative services. The

staff within the CDT are working with preventative services managers to step down as many cases as is appropriate.

4.3 Health colleagues have now started to ensure that LAC have priority in being seen, especially within CAMHS, to ensure a solid and comprehensive service.

Joint KCC/Health CAF Report

4.4 More work is needed to fully embed the CAF process into the Health Service, although Lorraine Goodsell stated that this difficulty is not unique to Kent. 33 CAFs have been completed between April and August compared to 28 completed over the same period in 2010 – 2011.

4.5 This should be an area for reducing the number of referrals coming into children's services; more focus on the action plan will ensure the process is embedded within the health service.

5. Data Reports

5.1 The number of CAFs coming into the service is increasing; the majority are from schools.

5.2 Referrals are continuing to reduce; this report is the first month the effect of the CDT can be seen on referrals and initial assessments. The progress of core assessments can be better seen in the weekly report.

5.3 Progress towards reaching the adoption target will be brought to a future meeting of this panel.

6. Improvement Plan Highlight and Exception Reports

6.1 No questions were raised.

7. Any Other Business

7.1 Nothing to discuss.

Dates of future meetings

Agenda Setting*	Time	Meeting	Time	Venue
12 April	4 pm	26 April 2011	12.30	Waterton Lee
3 May	11 am	17 May	4 pm	Swale 3
7 June	4 pm	22 June	9 am	Medway
6 July	3.30 pm	13 July	3 pm	Swale 3
27 July	10 am	25 August	11 am	Swale 3
31 August	2 pm	20 September	2 pm	Medway
12 October	10.30am	24 October	2.30 pm	Cabinet Room
15 November	11am	1 December	3pm	Cabinet Room
4 January 2012	3pm	17 January 2012	2pm	Cabinet Room
14 February	10am	29 February	2.30pm	Cabinet Room
21 March	10am	11 April	3pm	Cabinet Room

By: Alex King – Deputy Leader
Peter Sass - Head of Democratic Services

To: Cabinet – 9 January 2012

Subject: Recommendations from Cabinet Scrutiny Committee – 13 December 2011
Recommendation following the Specialist Children’s Services POSC – 17 November 2011

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the decisions from the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, items which the Committee has raised previously for follow up and any specific recommendations from the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Cabinet Scrutiny Committee

1. (1) Attached as Appendix 1 is a schedule that contains the decisions from the most recent meeting of the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on 13 December 2011, together with the response of the relevant Cabinet Member. The schedule also describes any outstanding requests for information from the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee which have not to date been discharged by the Committee.

Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees

2. (1) At its meeting on 15 July 2010, the Scrutiny Board agreed that any specific recommendations to Cabinet arising from Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees (POSCs) should also be fed back to the Cabinet. All the POSCs make a valuable contribution in their specific areas through detailed debate and discussion of policies and services.

(2) Following the Specialist Children’s Services (SCS) POSC on 17 November 2011 the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Spokesman would like to make the following recommendation:

"As the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Spokesman of SCS POSC, we would seek to ensure that adequate funding is made available to cover the investment in Children's preventative services, which will continue the improvements being made and deliver savings in the future"

Recommendation:

3. That the Cabinet agree responses to these decisions, which will be reported back to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and agree a response to the recommendation in 2(2) which will be reported back to the Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Contact: Peter Sass
peter.sass@kent.gov.uk
01622 694002

Background Information: *Nil*

Kent's Multi-Agency Looked After Children Strategy (13 December 2011)

Cabinet portfolio: Mrs J Whittle

Synopsis: The report presented the draft Looked After Children Strategy.

Reason for call-in: Members wished to examine the deliverability of the Looked After Children Strategy, in particular:

- (a) The reduction of numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) and how will this be achieved
- (b) Placements of LAC by KCC outside of Kent and the circumstances surrounding these placements
- (c) The movement towards Permanently Looked After Children (PLAC)
- (d) In relation to the Reduction in Volumes referred to in the Children's Services Improvement Plan - Quarterly Update, the fact that there has been no reduction in LAC (despite a reduction in all other indicators)
- (e) How the £19.8million to be spent on Children's Social Services in 2012/13 (as referred to in the Autumn Budget Statement) will be allocated

Recommendations and responses:

- 1. Thank Mrs Whittle, Mr Ireland and Mr Brightwell for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions. Members considered that there had been an excellent debate and were reassured by the discussion had with the witnesses**
- 2. A bullet point should be added to page 10 of the strategy regarding the importance of listening to the Looked After Children and how, as Corporate Parents, Members can facilitate this.**

Agreed by Cabinet Member; Paul Brightwell to action.

- 3. The addition of a bullet point on page 11 of the strategy mentioning alcohol or confirmation that alcohol is included within the 'substance misuse' reference on that page.**

Agreed by Cabinet Member; Paul Brightwell to action.

- 4. Look at examining the link with Kent Drugs and Alcohol Action Team possibly as part of the prevention strategy.**

Agreed by Cabinet Member; Paul Brightwell to action.

- 5. Further details to be provided about the bullet points on page 11 of the strategy:**

- **'The average number of placements that our looked after children**

- experience during their time in care' and
- 'The average length of time that a child/young person is looked after before achieving permanence or leaving care'

Paul Brightwell to provide information to Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and Corporate Parenting Panel why the range of figures is so high and what can be done to tackle these figures.

- 6. The inclusion of targets regarding number of placements per child within the strategy and clarification of those targets.**

Paul Brightwell to explore

- 7. Clarity should be provided for carers in relation to permanently looked after children and special guardianship possibly via workshops.**

Paul Brightwell to action

- 8. Explore distance learning for looked after children, possibly via the virtual school or other means.**

Tony Doran to explore and report back to Corporate Parenting Panel

- 9. Clarification should be sought regarding the admissions criteria for schools and the situation regarding prioritisation of looked after children within that criteria.**

Paul Brightwell to discuss with Tony Doran and report back to Cabinet Scrutiny.

- 10. Independent Reviewing Officers should consider challenging their counterparts in placing authorities regarding the appropriateness of placing looked after children in Kent.**

Paul Brightwell to action

- 11. Identify other local authorities who have similar problems regarding looked after children being placed within their boundary and working with them to find a solution.**

Cabinet Member to action although problems more acute in Kent than anywhere else

- 12. Write to London Boroughs to encourage them to work with each other to use vacant places in their boroughs to place looked after children.**

Cabinet Member to action

- 13. Write to the Children's Minister, Tim Loughton to encourage him to enforce local authorities who place children more than 20 miles from their home (the 20mile limit) – include statistics separating the number of**

asylum seeking children in Kent and the number of looked after children placed by other local authorities in Kent.

Letter already written and reply received Note: The letter to and response from Tim Loughton MP is available from the Research Officer to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee on request.

Paul Brightwell to send over the statistics required which have been compiled by the Management Information Unit

14. Provide Members with details of the successor bodies to the Kent Improvement Board and Children's Services Improvement Panel to ensure Members continue to be part of the chain receiving information.

At the present time both the Board and the Panel will continue to exist until Kent's Children's Social Services receives an adequate judgement from Ofsted. However the CM would like to provide an assurance that the successor body or bodies will ensure that Members remain at the helm in driving through improvement and scrutiny of Children's Social Services through access to reliable and high quality performance management data.

Cabinet Member's Response:

I thought it was a very constructive meeting and reflective of a sea change in Member involvement and engagement in Children's Social Services over the past year. I hope my comments as per the above are helpful and I will ensure the information requested is shortly distributed to Committee Members.

Date of Response: 18 December 2011

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