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To: Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 24 March 2010

Subject: Kent Environment Strategy

Summary:

This report summarises the key points made during the recent consultation on the draft Kent Environment Strategy and sets out the next steps in finalising the document.

1. The Consultation process

- 1.1 This Committee at its meeting on the 30 July 2009 considered the plans for updating the existing Kent Environment Strategy, a Kent Partnership sponsored document. At the 13 October 2009 meeting of the Kent Partnership the draft version of a new Environment Strategy for Kent was debated and it was agreed that the document should go out to wider consultation. The draft strategy was distributed to all KCC Members.
- 1.2 Since the 27th October 2009 the draft Strategy has been widely circulated and available for comment via the web. In addition, a number of consultation meetings have been held including all Local Strategic Partnerships in the County. Some 56 formal responses have been received primarily from key partners and stakeholders. Annex 1 gives an overview of the consultation process.
- 1.3 The consultation process has shown that there is significant interest and enthusiasm for a Kent Environment Strategy. The substantive feedback received has been a general consensus in support of the new tone and focus of the document but with some concerns.
- 1.4 The main points made during the consultation process are, in summary, the need to:
 - Making more upfront the links between the underpinning evidence base and the content of the strategy
 - Clear measurable targets and clearly identifiable links between objectives and the actions taken forward in the final document.
 - Clarity over the interlinkages between the Environment Strategy and other key documents such as the Kent's Regeneration Framework and Local Development Frameworks
 - More detail on flooding and resilience, transport issues, housing growth and heritage

1.5 The content of all the formal responses has been documented in a consultation matrix which can be made available to REDPOSC Members individually if they wish to see it.

2 Responding to the Consultation Responses

2.1 Most of the points raised during consultation can be sensibly incorporated in to the document through the redrafting process.

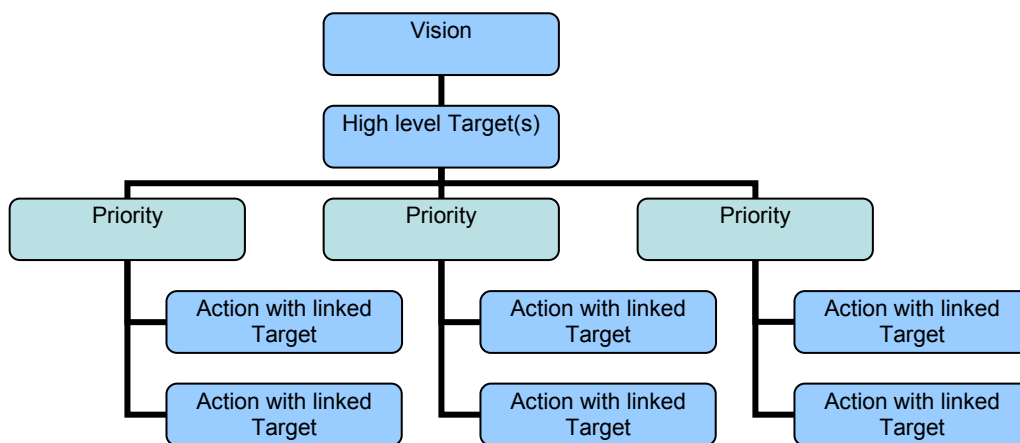
2.2 Therefore the intention is to retain the three key themes identified in the draft as the basis for the final document.

2.3 These are:

- Prosperity within environmental limits
- Rising to the climate change challenge
- Value from our natural and living environments

2.4 For each theme there will be a revised set of objectives from which will flow a limited number of key actions to be taken.

2.5 The structure of the document will also be changed from the draft version to bring far greater clarity and logic to the link between vision, priorities and actions, (see below).



2.6 There still some challenges to meet before the final draft is completed. These include:

- finalising the commitments by key stakeholders to the actions identified
- robustly presenting the evidence base underpinning the strategy and the actions
- ensuring consistency with and across the suite of relevant strategies being progressed
- overtly recognising that there are a range of projects and activities happening in Kent in support of environmental

objectives that are no less important just because they are not included in the strategy

- 2.7 Some consultation responses requested that transport and housing issues are more overtly incorporated in the Environment Strategy. This has been considered. However a better way of achieving the desired outcome is the parallel and linked development of the Integrated Transport Strategy together with the District Local Development Frameworks, the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy and regional spatial framework. Therefore REDPOSC is advised to endorse this approach as a better and more coherent way for taking these issues forward.

3 Next steps

- 3.1 The strategy is currently being redrafted, retaining the 3 main themes but addressing the concerns as outlined in this paper. This will include restructuring the final document along the following grounds
- 3.2 The intention is to bring a final version for approval to the Kent Partnership on their 8 June 2010 meeting subject to resolving the points made above.

4 Recommendations - REDPOSC are asked to:

- 4.1 Support the overall approach and agree next steps.

Contact: Carolyn McKenzie EHW 1916.

ANNEX 1 - Kent Environment Strategy – Key Stakeholder Consultation 2009 – 10

Organisation	April 09	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec/Jan	Feb/Mar
RED Policy & Overview Scrutiny Committee										
EHW Policy & Overview Scrutiny Committee										
Kent Partnership										
Public Service Board										
Kent Economic Board										
Kent & Medway Chief Executives										
All Kent Local Strategic Partnerships ¹										
Formal Open Consultation										
KPOG Policy Forum										
Kent Environment Directors Group										
Kent Rural Board										
Kent Biodiversity Partnership										
Environment Stakeholder Group ²										
Stakeholder Workshops										
Kent Environment Strategy Project Board										
Strategy emailed to all Kent Partnership										

¹ Dates available on request

² Includes 3 District Representatives – East, West and Mid Kent.