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To: Corporate Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee 8 April 2010

Subject: Total Place Update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update on the Total Place pilot and future direction of Total Place

For Information

1. Introduction

1.1 Kent was selected as one of 13 pilots for Total Place by central government. The pilots began in summer 2009 and culminated in the submission of a final report on the 5th February 2010. The aim of the Total Place initiative is to look at a “whole area” approach to public services and how that approach can lead to better services for less money.

1.2 Kent County Council has worked closely with partners across the public sector in Kent including, district and borough councils, NHS, Fire, Police and central government departments. The Public Service Board and Kent Partnership are committed to the Total Place initiative.

1.3 As part of the pilot exercise, Kent were required to examine aspects of public service delivery in a geographical area, looking for potential efficiency gains and customer service improvements that could be achieved through closer collaboration, alongside the barriers that prevent realisation and delivery of these benefits.

1.4 At the heart of Kent’s proposition is the citizen both as a consumer and shaper of future public services. They are our first and last consideration. In order to provide focus to the work, lead Authorities were asked to identify ‘themes’ within which the total place concept could be developed.

The themes chosen for Kent were: -

- Gateway (multi-channel)
- Margate Central and Cliftonville West
- Single Asset Management Strategy

In addition the report reflected on the burden of regulation and inspection on the public sector.

2. Outline of Report

2.1 The Final Report as submitted to Government is attached as Appendix 1. It outlines the bold aspirations of Total Place in Kent. The proposition represents an opportunity to radically change the way public services are offered, procured and delivered across the public sector. It offers local and central government significant revenue and capital gains over the next five years whilst at the same time improving quality and outcomes from public services. This is profoundly important at a time when public resources are reducing. It is important to highlight however that the aspirations will be further developed and delivered with partners across Kent and with national government. The proposals and suggestions are not prescriptive.

The aspirations can be summarised as follows: -

2.2 Gateway (multichannel)

The Gateway initiative puts the citizen first – making access to public services simpler, friendly and more effective – and is achieved through strong working relationships between public service organisations.

The initiative is transforming access to services whether via the web, telephone or by visiting one of the ‘high street’ facilities being rolled out across Kent.

Savings linked to the Gateway initiative can be achieved as a result of bringing services closer together including the opportunity to redesign service provision across partners, resulting in a reduced need for buildings, call centres and websites.

For example, redesigning just one process around ‘redundancy’ across public sector partners indicates potential savings of £2.2m through reducing duplication and visits required to support the citizen. If similar levels of saving across all processes can be realised then there is potential for significant efficiency across partners.

2.3 Margate Central and Cliftonville West

Once a flourishing sea-side resort, Margate now experiences some of the highest levels of social deprivation and benefit dependency in the UK.

Kent aims to totally transform this area by challenging those national policies which exacerbate the problem rather than assisting the cure, and through the implementation of fundamental changes to the traditional way in which services are delivered to residents.

Our proposals to Government seek the power to declare the area as a designated “Special Intervention Area” providing clear and distinct powers and flexibilities in order to drive the pace of change around housing, worklessness and public service reform. We also seek public policy change to stop the placement of vulnerable people in these two wards by other authorities within Kent and other authorities nationally.

Improving the quality of residents’ lives is the key driver for the project, as well as looking at reducing costs.

For example, reducing Margate’s £48m annual benefits bill to Kent’s average levels would save around £37m per year.

2.4 Single Asset Management Strategy

This theme aims to make better use of land and buildings used by the public sector in Kent, estimated by to worth more than £5bn.

It looks at options for sharing these assets more effectively, using buildings outside of normal opening hours and the potential for more efficient accommodation to support public service modernisation.

The sale of surplus property could release significant sums of money – in the region of £200-280m once associated costs have been taken into account, plus another £40m can be made from the reduction of annual running costs.

In addition to these three themes, pilot areas were also asked to examine the following:

2.5 Counting Exercise

The annual public expenditure in Kent across the public sector is £8.25 billion. It also holds over £5 billion of capital assets. Kent has counted expenditure across the public sector for some years as a result of the Public Service Board and the original Public Service Agreement. The aim of Total Place is to maximise the outcomes of this expenditure to Kent residents.

2.6 The Burden of Inspection and Regulation

Work to date indicates a conservative cost of £7m on inspection and regulation across the public sector in Kent, this figure likely to increase as more information from partners.

We believe with a root and branch review and a more proportionate system, we could save up to 50% of this figure locally.

2.7 Barriers to Progress

The total place pilot has identified a number of key barriers to progress within each of these themes, and these have been included and illustrated within the final report. A number of these barriers that can be resolved locally but others will need commitment from central government.

3. Potential Savings

A summary of the potential financial savings identified through the Total Place pilot is as follows: -

- Significant savings can be achieved through the Gateway theme – based on the analysis of one process (redundancy) that shows a £2.2 million (one third) saving, predicted savings are in the region of tens of millions of pounds across the public sector in Kent. This supports the Asset Management theme and the Gateway principles will also enable savings across channels of access and the transformation of professional services.
- Revenue savings of approximately £40 million could be realised across Kent through the rationalisation of assets.
- Based on the global asset base of approximately £5bn and the Swale Deep Dive, indicative gross capital receipts suggest £720-£780m could be achieved over the next five years. Our current broad evaluation suggests £200m-£280m net savings given the current focus on asset management through “Putting the Front Line First: smarter government”.
- Significant revenue savings over the next ten years through the Cliftonville West and Margate Central theme (figures to come following local analysis).
- With the estimated conservative cost of £7 million on inspection and regulation, we believe with a root and branch review and a more proportionate system, we could save up to 50% of this figure locally (i.e. £3.5m).

4. Next Steps

The significant progress made by Total Place pilot authorities has been recognised within the Budget statement issued on 24 March and its associated documentation.

The Government has committed to further work with Kent on some of the key findings of the pilot including :-

- Further work on asset rationalisation models
- Joint exploration of closer working with Job Centre plus in Kent
- The potential to reduce the burden of inspection and regulation
- The potential for “single offer” and “innovative policy offers” for places/neighbourhoods such as Margate.

Total Place is a partnership initiative and how the aspirations within the Total Place submission are delivered will be determined by Kent partners in discussion with central government departments. This will be a partnership of the willing and we believe that taking many small steps will deliver a radical vision and long-term sustainable efficiency gains. The Kent Partnership and Kent Public Service Board have a key role to play to drive this forward.

5. Summary

Total Place is a continuation of the modernising and transformation that has been taking place with Kent over the last ten years. The golden thread through all themes is one of fundamentally improving the customer experience and personalisation of public services whilst maximising the opportunity that 21st century technology brings, thereby reducing both transactional and infrastructure costs. This is set against a vision for the Kent region as set out in “Unlocking Kent’s Potential”.

Kent has ambitious plans and unique opportunities over the next twenty years that look beyond the current economic climate. Kent will continue to move forward through innovation that will drive forward a stronger improved economy, improved living standards and a great place to live and work.

Total Place provides increased momentum through much closer partnership working where the imperative will be to deliver more for less. It also offers and opportunity for a fundamental positive shift in relationships between local government, other agencies and central government. Tackling the obstacles identified in the report is the vital prerequisite for success.

6. Recommendations

Members are asked to note progress on this key activity for Kent.

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