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To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee –17 March

Subject: Gateways update

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update on the progress of the Gateways across Kent and present feedback from users.

For Information

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Gateway offers a convenient public service point in a retail-based location using the latest innovative technologies and working with District and Borough councils, Police, Fire, Health, Voluntary Sector, Job Centre Plus, Department of Work & Pensions and a range of other partners, including the private sector. The focus is on shaping services to fit around customer need.
- 1.2 Gateway operates on the principle that services follow customer need, not the other way round. Compared to traditional one stop shops it offers convenient physical access to front line customer advisors and officers from over 30 different agencies / delivery partners covering central and local government and voluntary sector. It is also planned to extend this to private sector partners (eg. Pharmacies)
- 1.3 Gateway is complementary to web, telephone and traditional home visiting and it unites services under a neutral brand, removing the confusion of a myriad of public service organisations.
- 1.4 Gateway has attracted a lot of national and international attention. Gateway was one of the 16 front-office innovations showcased nationally at the FOSS (Front-Office Shared Services) Event in May 2007 by the Cabinet Office, IDeA and the LGA.
- 1.5 Gateway also made it into the top 10 out of hundreds of entries in the Innovation category for the IDeA and Audit Commission awards this year and will be showcased on their website.

2. Context

- 2.1 Nationally, Gateway is a simple and powerful expression of the Varney and White paper transformation agenda. By putting the customer at the heart of the services and delivering them in collaboration with other relevant partners, the service can be slicker, more immediate, more convenient to the customer and less intrusive on a busy customers' time. In Kent, Gateways are one of the Towards 2010 targets and enable delivery of a range of partnership activity.
- 2.2 The Gateway concept is one way to devolve power to the communities and give greater control to the customer.
- 2.3 Locally, KCC has a mandate to encourage the joining up of public services which is strongly supported and delivered by the Gateway concept.
- 2.4 Additionally, Gateways are a key part of delivering the office transformation strategy as they provide a generic, central and multi-agency access point that enables rationalisation of other parts of the office estate.

3. Progress to Date

- 3.1 Huge progress has been made in making inter-agency connections and ensuring that the right services are situated in the right areas. This is achieved by partnership planning prior to opening a gateway and managed by an advisory board which comprises major stakeholders at county level from Police, Health, DWP, Business, the Voluntary sector as well as Kent County Council and District Council partners. Significant work is undertaken during the planning phase for a Gateway using Mosaic technology and detailed customer analysis as well as consultation in order to ensure the operation of each Gateway delivers the best possible services in the most efficient and effective way.
- 3.2 The Gateway partners have agreed on a management framework comprising 12 principles:
 - Partnership Structure
 - Cross agency brand
 - Service Offer
 - Meet and Greet
 - Service desks
 - Operational management per gateway location
 - Gateway Strategy advisory board
 - Management Development
 - Common Customer record
 - Performance indicators
 - Marketing
 - IT and Facilities

(see Gateway Strategy for Kent for further detail).

- 3.3 **Ashford Gateway** opened in October 2005 and there are over 5,000 customers per month, with more than 60% of the visitors regularly using one or more services. We have learned a lot from the experience of Ashford Gateway and future Gateways are building on this and becoming more sophisticated.
- 3.4 The **Mobile Gateway**, which will cover rural Mid Kent in its widest sense from Shepway to Ashford to Tunbridge Wells, was launched at the County Show in July 2007. It will begin on its fixed route in April. It is currently being used to raise awareness and understanding of Gateways amongst customers in areas where new “fixed” Gateways are going to be opening in 2008 (Thanet, Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone & Tenterden) and amongst staff from the partner organisations involved.
- 3.5 **Thanet’s Gateway Plus** (including the library) opened on 7 January 2008 and in its first day had **2,500 customers**. It is sited in Cecil Square, and the official launch took place 14th-16th February.. The anticipated footfall is **400,000 a year**, with the current weekly average running at 9,000 visitors. Library issues are up 28% with customers able to access District Council services, NHS, Adult Social Care and DPW, Credit Union, CAB Kiosk, with Supported Employment and Registrars beginning regular services by April 2008.

4. Future Developments

The Gateway project has been divided into two phases: phase one from April 2007 to March 2009 and phase 2 from April 2009 to March 2012. By that time, there will be 17 Gateways across Kent (including 3 mobiles). The effective use of the budget for Gateways and strong progress with partner commitment has enabled us to use the budget to achieve more i.e. Tenterden Gateway and possibilities with libraries around Cranbrook and Swanley (to be confirmed).

- 4.1 **Tenterden Rural Gateway** – is planned to open in summer 2008. This Gateway will be the first to have a **rural Post Office** within it. It will also be the site for the local **library, Tourist Information and Ashford Borough Council**.
- 4.2 **Maidstone Gateway** – opens September 2008. This is sited on Kings Street next door to the Chequers Centre and the bus depot. The **anticipated footfall is 350,000** a year. Exchange prior to formal Licence agreement for the building has now been achieved, and development continues on service model.
- 4.3 **Tunbridge Wells Gateway** – opens October 2008. This is sited on Grosvenor Road, near to the main pedestrian entrance for Royal Victoria Place. The **anticipated footfall is 300,000** per year.

- 4.4 **Ashford Gateway Plus** – the expansion of Ashford Gateway into a new, larger site is being planned for 2010. This will be located on the current library site and is part of the wider library project that is being undertaken.
- 4.5 **Dover Gateway** – planned for March 2009. This will be located in the heart of the Dover regeneration area, complimenting the services currently delivered at the existing Dover Discovery centre.
- 4.6 Pre-planning for phase two of Gateway has highlighted keen interest in:
- Canterbury – options around Herne Bay regeneration
 - Sevenoaks, including Swanley
 - Gravesend
 - Tonbridge & Malling
 - Shepway (Folkestone)
 - The planned redevelopment of Dartford town centre and new community hubs in Thames Gateway present strong opportunities.
- 4.6 KCC, Swale, Gravesham, Thanet & Tunbridge Wells are working in partnership with Pas de Nord de Calais to develop a joint Interreg bid to explore “customer profiling”.

5. Feedback

- 5.1 Feedback from customers has been overwhelmingly positive since the first Gateway launched in 2005. The feedback also confirms that Gateways are meeting many of the aims they set out to achieve, particularly around cross agency referrals.
- 5.2 “The Skills Plus centre at Ashford Gateway has proved really popular and numbers of adults attending regularly to improve their skills have exceeded our expectations. I believe the Gateway concept enables us to reach more people in a way that fits with their busy lives and I am keen to see Adult Education feature in more Gateway developments.”
(Head of Service - Adult Education)
- 5.3 A young woman came into Gateway in September 2006, facing homelessness following a relationship breakdown. While looking at job notices in Park Mall, saw Gateway and came in for housing advice. Within the hour, the officer found her a solution. She could not qualify for a council house but could get a loan to secure a private one bed rental accommodation. She then used the Internet to apply for the job. Her comment:”This is a genuine help centre. There is help without being labelled.”
- 5.4 *GP and Dental Surgery inquiry gets operation sorted:* One individual mentioned that her friends’ operation had been cancelled 3 times. She was put in touch with the right individual and the rescheduled operation went ahead. The PCT manager had gone out of her way to help. The customer came back just to report positive feedback.

- 5.5 *Housing benefit to voluntary work:* A lady experiencing serious mental health problems came in to see Housing Advice. She was worried about losing her housing benefit but could not face pressure at work. Referral to Volunteer Centre placed her in a low pressure job with the Red Cross until she could build up confidence while retaining her housing benefit.
- 5.6 *A stepping board for a disabled widow:* A woman with disability lost her husband. She had never needed to support herself in the past. She saw Adult Education for creative writing and they encouraged her to try Maths. She discovered a talent for the subject and is expecting to get an A for GCSE. She is confident of getting a job. "I was shattered after my husband passed away. They made me believe in myself. Gateway isn't just about learning, it's my social life. It's been a real stepping board."

6. Funding & Business Case

- 6.1 Whilst the current Ashford Gateway is funded almost entirely by KCC, all other projects are jointly funded, with the district councils generally being the other major player. The split of costs is generally working out as 50:50 between the district and county council, although some of this will be recouped from other partners taking up space within the sites.
- 6.2 **The links with Office Transformation ensure there are estate costs to be saved and this is the case in a range of future projects** (e.g. working with KCC directorates, the district/borough councils and other public sector partners in Tunbridge Wells, Tenterden and Ashford Gateway Plus)
- 6.3 Each project has its own project plan and these are developed in partnership.
- 6.4 The original business case for Ashford Gateway (which was developed in 2004) has evolved as we are learning from each new Gateway. A revised business case is available (although this is currently being updated in light of experiences and opportunities gained from Thanet Gateway Plus and involvement of additional partners)
- 6.5 The total Gateway capital input for Gateways for Phase 1 (MTFP) and indicative annual revenue costs are outlined below.

| Gateways - Summary | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 |
|----------------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ |
| Capital - Approved Cash Limit | | 1,000,000 | 2,500,000 |
| Capital - re-phasing | | | 236,100 |
| Capital - bid | | | |
| Capital - forecast | 0 | 763,900 | 1,891,000 |
| | | | |
| Capital (surplus)\deficit | 0 | -236,100 | -845,100 |
| | | | |
| Revenue - Approved Cash Limit | | 572,000 | 722,000 |
| Revenue - roll forward | | | 38,400 |
| Revenue - Bid | | | |
| Revenue - forecast | 0 | 533,600 | 762,400 |
| | | | |
| Revenue (surplus)\deficit | 0 | -38,400 | -302,000 |

(Surplus will be rolled-forward

to support Phase 2 planning)

7. Summary

- 7.1 The Gateways opened so far have been very positively received by both partners and customers and are exceeding initial aims. The multi agency working concept is proving beneficial to all parties and is being nationally recognised as an exemplar.
- 7.2 Progress on new sites is proceeding as expected and partners are now approaching us to be involved, which is excellent news for the long-term success of Gateways, and for the quality of experience and service customers receive.

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March 2008