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To: Environment, Highways & Waste Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee
8 April 2011

Subject: Core Monitoring Report

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: The third Core Monitoring report covering the period up to the end of December 2010 is presented, providing performance information and trends in a number of key service areas together with a commentary by the Corporate Director.

1. Introduction

1.1. The third Core Monitoring report, updated to include information for the period up to the end of December 2010, was reported to Cabinet on 4 April 2011.

1.2. The report includes all of the indicators that were in the September 2010 report which was considered by this Committee at its meeting on 18 January 2011. The format and presentation of the information has been modified slightly in certain areas with the intention of making it clearer and more concise.

1.3. As with the two previous Core Monitoring reports the objective is to pick out a number of key areas of activity for Member's attention rather than seeking to provide information about, and comments on, all of the performance management information that is used operationally within the Directorate.

1.4. A new Performance Management Framework, based around KCC's strategic statement, Bold Steps for Kent, will be developed over the next few months and a separate report on this has been included within the papers for this meeting of the Committee.

2. Core Monitoring

2.1. Page 4 in the Cabinet Core Monitoring report sets out the approach adopted for the Red/Amber/Green (RAG) and Direction of Travel (DoT) assessments, while pages 5 to 7 give an overall KCC-wide summary of performance.

2.2. Pages 8 to 17 examine a number of cross-KCC indicators, one of which is complaint monitoring where the number of complaints regarding Kent Highway Services (KHS) are significantly higher than those for other KCC services. The total number of complaints regarding KHS amounts to around 1% of the total number of enquiries that KHS receives and this is comparable to that in other highway authorities many of whom will, like Kent,

have experienced an increase in complaints following the adverse weather of the last two winters.

2.3. Each of the individual indicator pages now includes a Data Notes section which provides technical information relating to the indicator and data. A new header section has also been included for each indicator which highlights the current RAG status.

2.4. The data for the three waste measures now excludes the year to March 2008 figures (which are available if required) but includes averages for authorities in the south-east. As with previous reports there is a degree of overlap between the different time periods, with the 12 month figures for the period to March 2009 and March 2010 being discrete and non-overlapping while the data for the 12 months ending March, September and December 2010 have some overlap. In all cases the graphs and data tables give the figures for 12-month periods so while there is some overlap between different datasets they can be fairly compared.

2.5. The peak journey time data now shows the 2009 and 2010 information in a slightly different way to enable comparisons to be made more easily. The next Core Monitoring report will incorporate a further refinement through the inclusion of monthly averages and different monthly thresholds to better take account of the marked seasonality that affects this measure.

2.6. Information on performance related to streetlight repairs that are the responsibility of the network operator UK Power Networks rather than KHS have been allocated a separate page. In terms of overall numbers of faults and subsequent repairs the majority (95% or more) occur on streetlights for which KHS is responsible because the network operator is only responsible for a small minority of the streetlights in Kent.

2.7. At the last meeting of this committee on 18 January 2011 Members asked for additional information on some of the Core Monitoring data and an update on plans that were in place to improve performance for those services that had a red RAG rating. These will be covered at the meeting so that the Committee has the benefit of receiving the most up-to-date information available.

2.8. Extracts of the sections on council-wide and Environment, Highways & Waste indicators from the Core Monitoring report that was presented to Cabinet on 4 April 2011 are appended to this report.

3. Data Quality and Interpretation

3.1. Minor amendments have been made to the Maidstone travel time data for the first two quarters of 2010 which reflect improvements in the analysis. The changes are small and relatively insignificant.

3.2. Most of the data included in the Core Monitoring forms part of the management information that is used, in a variety of forms, by managers and leadership teams within the Directorate. In some cases the data used is provisional and it may be subject to revision at a future date, but provisional data is only used where we believe any future adjustments will be relatively minor.

3.3. The final Audit Report on Data Quality was published on 23 December 2010 and the overall assurance level was high, the top rating available, with five of the six risk areas

receiving the high rating and one the second category, substantial. On the basis of this report it is reasonable to say that key controls are in place and are effectively applied, data is sound, and the risks of poor quality data being produced and used are low.

3.4. Where comparative or national data is used it is extracted from published information that is already in the public domain. Sources of this information include government departments, national indicators and the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

4. Future Reporting

4.1. The Core Monitoring report is part of our overall transparency agenda and it is important that it is both clear and comprehensible. We would therefore welcome any suggestions that would make it more useful and informative. These will also be fed into the development of the new Performance Management Framework referred to in 1.4.

5. Recommendation

5.1. Members are asked to NOTE and DISCUSS the December 2010 Core Monitoring report for Environment, Highways & Waste and make any suggestions, amendments or recommendations they feel appropriate.

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Background papers:

Core Monitoring report presented to Cabinet 13 September 2010:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/council-and-democracy/Transparency%20project/KCC%20Core%20Monitoring%20Report%20-%20June.pdf>

Core Monitoring report presented to Cabinet 29 November 2010:

<https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/council-and-democracy/Transparency%20project/KCC%20Core%20Monitor%20Cabinet%20NOV10%20FINAL.pdf>

Core Monitoring report presented to Cabinet 4 April 2011.