

By: Alex King, Deputy Leader  
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee - 26 September 2008

Subject: KCC International Activities Annual Report 2007/08

## **For Information**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. This International Activities Annual Report is the third annual report covering the diverse range of international work in which KCC is involved.
- 1.2. The report uses the headlines contained in the recent Audit Commission Corporate Assessment report relating to International work i.e. 'An outward-looking authority'; 'Promoting the interests of the county'; 'The opportunities and challenges of the Corridor to Europe transport links' and 'Encouraging best practice'.
- 1.3. The report provides an overview of the international work across the whole of the County Council ranging from staff exchanges in adult social care with Seattle, the Kent campaign for the 2012 games, working towards the reintroduction of Eurostar services to and from Ashford through to showcasing best practice in Kent such as Gateways and Telehealth on an international stage.
- 1.4. The intention is to formally publish the report following debate at this Committee incorporating the views of Members and other comments, observations.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Corporate Policy Overview Committee is invited to:
  - NOTE the 2007-8 Annual Report and to comment on its contents and the future challenges it has identified.

# **KCC INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2007/8**

**International Kent  
Global Reach – Local Benefit**



## Foreword

This is the third International Activities Annual Report covering KCC's diverse range of International work across all Directorates over the past year which, in June 2008, saw the publication of the Audit Commission's Corporate Assessment Report as part of the CPA exercise. This paid particular tribute to KCC's participation in the international arena which was seen as:

- 'unusually outward-looking for new ways of achieving better outcomes for local people using extensive European and wider partnership projects, including with the US States of Virginia, Washington and Massachusetts'
- 'widely recognised and appreciated by partners for its sub-regional, regional, national and Europe-wide activity in promoting the interests of the county. This has brought large amounts of national and regional funding to support initiatives and successful lobbying over various transport issues'
- 'acutely aware of the strategic opportunities and challenges of the 'Corridor to Europe' transport links that cross the county from London to Dover and the Channel Tunnel'
- 'adopting commercial approaches to customer service and contact. A high proportion of the Council's middle managers have had opportunities to see practice elsewhere, including abroad'.

The following month also saw the celebration of Kent's 21 years of involvement in Europe at the Kent Brussels office in International House. The event recalled as 'pioneering and visionary' the decision in 1987 to sign a formal Co-operation Agreement with the region of Nord-Pas de Calais ahead of the opening of the Channel Tunnel.

Maintaining this outward-looking focus will however, be a key challenge in the coming year in the face of an increasingly difficult overall domestic economic climate, a tough three-year settlement from the Government and growing demands for services.

One way of ensuring this will be through the continuing delivery of real benefits to the people of Kent from our International activity. This year, for example, saw the launch of a number of EU programmes which have the potential to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the corporate and local priorities within 'Vision for Kent' and 'Towards 2010'. Provided KCC is prepared to invest sufficient time and resources, a realistic funding target in the next programming period 2007-13 should be of the order of €100 million, matching and perhaps exceeding the performance of recent years.

International activity is however about more than access to funding sources, however valuable. It also offers opportunities for strategic relationships, new ideas, exchange of knowledge and experience. As the Audit Commission recognised, the wider benefits provided by our strategic perspective and role in International Affairs is where the real added-value lies for the County.

Alex King  
Deputy Leader of the Council

Peter Gilroy  
Chief Executive

## **Key Milestones in 2007-8**

- Anniversary celebrations on 16 July 2008 of 21 years of Kent working in Europe;
- Closure of Kent's 2000-6 projects and launch of new EU Structural Funds programmes for 2007-13 – includes KCC success in Pre-qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) process for South East ERDF Competitiveness Programme;
- Announcement by Eurostar on 31 July 2008 of the reintroduction of a daily direct Eurostar service between Ashford International and Brussels from 14 December 2008;
- Successful hosting by KCC of EBN Congress 2007 in Canterbury on 20-22 June 2007;
- KCC leads UK participation in Virginia's US 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorations May-June 2007;
- KCC has significant presence at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in May 2007, showcasing Kent to 1,006,195 visitors;
- KCC organises a successful trade mission to Washington and Virginia in June 2007m, £20,000 worth of business secured and estimated orders of around £300,000 are expected;
- Establishment of new International Advisory Board on 30 July 2008

# **Themes, Challenges and Opportunities for the coming year**

Including those arising from activities undertaken during 2007/8, the key issues identified for the authority's International and European work in the coming year are:

- Maintaining the authority's outward looking international focus in the face of a difficult domestic economic climate;
- Developing the profile, services and client base of the new Kent Brussels Office facilities in International House;
- Securing external funding in support of KCC and Kent strategic and local priorities;
- Continuing to develop strategic partnerships in Europe and Internationally toward concrete projects of mutual benefit;
- Maintaining KCC's International profile and influence against an increasingly 'regional agenda' and lack of democratic accountability;
- Taking a leadership role, including through a new International Advisory Board, and other fora, to achieve a coherent and consistent approach to International activity across Kent;
- Learning from Best Practice.
- Olympics
- China

# Summary of Activities

## 1 An outward-looking authority

### *Celebrating 21 years of Kent working in Europe*

1.1 KCC celebrated the 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of its involvement in Europe with a reception and conference at the Kent Brussels Office in International House on 16 July 2008. The event recalled as 'pioneering and visionary' the decision in 1987 to sign a formal Co-operation Agreement with the region of Nord-Pas de Calais ahead of the opening of the Channel Tunnel. This had brought considerable economic and social benefits to Kent and, indeed, led directly to KCC becoming the first county in the UK to secure funding under the EU's Interreg programme.



1.2 The event encompassed a range of contributions, including from KCC Chief Executives, past and present; Nord-Pas de Calais; the UK Permanent Representation to the EU and Richard Ashworth, Conservative MEP for South East England, as well as a media perspective from the 'Ten Alps' company responsible for 'Kent TV'. A consistent theme from speakers was that local authorities and the people they represent, are not immune or isolated from global issues such as mass inward migration, demographic change, international transport corridors or climate change. KCC Chief Executive Peter Gilroy stressed that 'we must keep our doors open and let the fresh air of the global world in.'



1.3 The move of the Kent Brussels Office to new premises also provides a platform for reinvigorating Kent's future presence on the European stage and internationally, for influencing decision-makers and representing the county's strategic objectives. The 21 Years' celebration similarly helped to launch a forward programme of events, policy seminars, partnership meetings, exchanges of best practice and Kent 'showcases'. The key challenge over the next year will be to develop the profile,

services and client base of the new Kent Brussels Office facilities in International House.

### *Kent-Virginia Project*

1.4 Virginia's 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2007 provided a focus for raising Kent's profile in the US and to support the development of long term links. KCC's significant presence at the Commemorations (in particular the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and the Queen's State Visit in May 2007), followed on from its establishment of the Jamestown 2007 British Committee and Jamestown UK Foundation, both high profile national and international groups.



1.5 Since the signing of a renewed Memorandum of Understanding between the Governor of Virginia and the Leader of KCC on 14 November 2006, other project achievements in 2007/08 have included:

- Locate in Kent (see below) signed a cooperation agreement with Greater Richmond Partnership in February 2007.
- A successful trade mission (Trade Force) organised in partnership with Essex CC and part-funded by UK Trade & Investment visited Washington and Virginia in June 2007. £20,000 worth of business was secured along with two significant Letters of Intent. Estimated orders of around £300,000 are expected.
- Following a Statement of Intent signed between KCC and the Virginia Department of Human Resources in July 2006, initial staff exchanges took place in May and June 2007.
- Following the establishment of initial links and the identification of the most viable opportunities, ongoing activities will be for individual KCC Directorates to take forward within their own resources and Business Plans.
- A strong link has been forged with Virginia Tourism Corporation and Kent continues to increase its share of US tourism against the national trend.

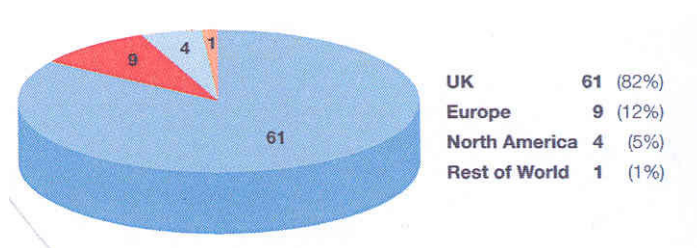
### *Inward Investment*

1.6 Locate in Kent (LiK) is Kent's investment promotion agency and one of the most successful in the UK. As outlined in its Annual Report for 2007-08, the company has had a good year in which there were 75 successes compared with 72 in 2006/07 and 2,356 jobs created – a 42% increase on last year – and 1,296 retained.

Jobs created and retained were of a high quality – 50% were in knowledge based sectors, up by 24% on 2006-07.

- 1.7 Although successes are still predominantly from the UK, this year the percentage of overseas successes was up from 14% to 19% with the number of successes originating from Europe up from 4 to 9 (including, for example, the relocation of French company Commedia, a supplier of credit card payment systems and software, to a 12,500 sq ft distribution facility at Northdown in Eureka, Ashford creating 50 new jobs and retaining 80 jobs). However, the importance of overseas investment becomes more evident when looking at jobs and capital investment, with 51% of all jobs and 87% of investment coming from overseas. LiK this year also launched a three year campaign in North West Europe involving events, PR and lead generation. As a result the percentage of overseas projects in the pipeline now stands at 21.4% compared to 16.9% last year.

Successes by Country of Origin 2007-8



- 1.8 The Deputy Leader is developing links with the International Economic Development Council, speaking at its annual conference in Phoenix, Arizona in a joint presentation with the Fairfax County Economic Development CEO on international trade and investment.

### ***Emerging links with China – Threats and Opportunities***

- 1.9 Over the past year, several opportunities for links with China have been investigated. Meetings have been held between officers in the Chief Executive's Department and business consultants who specialise in working with China. Oxford University also conducted some research on behalf of KCC to provide an introduction to the potential opportunities and issues of working with China. It was decided not to pursue the various opportunities discussed at this time, but to monitor the situation and identify future opportunities.
- 1.10 However, various other activities relating to China have taken place over the last year including:

- Olympics – KCC’s Head of Sport, Leisure and Olympics visited Beijing and Macao during the 2008 Olympics. The aim of his trip was primarily to develop links with other nations offering pre-games training camps for 2012 (see Section 1.10 for further details.) As part of this trip, he also attended the China Travel Trade and Media Conference, on behalf of Visit Kent to create new links for Kent with the China travel trade.
- Links with the Chinese Ambassador - Ambassador Fu Ying is a former student of the University of Kent, and the university has strengthened its links with China through this relationship. Ambassador Fu Ying expressed interest in forming a relationship between Kent and her home region of Inner Mongolia. International Affairs Group have had a meeting with the Chinese Embassy about this, and work is on-going to further investigate this proposal. A stakeholder dinner with Ambassador Fu Ying is being organised by UKC/KCC.

***Kent Campaign for the 2012 Games - International activities and benefits***

1.11 The Olympic Games and Paralympic Games are a truly international affair, with some 206 countries taking part. As London prepares to host the 2012 Games, the Kent Campaign for the 2012 Games, led and managed by the Communities Directorate through the Sport, Leisure and Olympics service, is working to maximise the international opportunities for Kent as below:

- Approximately 30% of the anticipated visitors during the six week period of the Games will be international. The Campaign, through KCC and Visit Kent, have been working with Visit Britain to ensure we are well placed to capture our share of that market. More importantly is the nine year tourism window around the Games, which Kent has been using since 2006 as a catalyst to enhance Kent tourism. This includes programmes such as the Greeters programme, Big Day Out and the London campaign (hitting international visitors to the capital.)
- The Games provide an opportunity to stage Pre Games Training Camps, which generate long term relationships with nations to achieve educational, sporting and cultural exchanges over the longer term. This will raise Kent’s international profile, and pride within local communities. Packages are being developed to maximise the support we can provide for Pre Games Training Camps to include best

value accommodation, transport, and sports science. Kent has 31 officially recognised Olympic Pre Games Training Camps in the County, more than any other English county, and more than each of Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales. We also have 7 officially recognised Paralympic Pre Games Training Camps. The Kent Campaign will be supporting all 38 camps plus visits of international sports squads already taking place. Kent has recently hosted the Saudi Arabian judo team, the Slovenian gymnastics team, and sports teams from Iceland, France, Canada, America and New Zealand. A Kent Pre Games Training Camp DVD has been produced to promote the county as a destination for international teams.

- The Kent Campaign is campaigning for the Olympic Torch to enter the UK through Dover come 2012, as it did in 1948 when London last hosted the Games. Cross channel discussions have taken place about how we can work together with French partners to further the campaign, and we are working with Dover Local Children's Strategic Partnership on cross channel schools' elements of the campaign. The Campaign is also staging a high profile event in Dover to support the national launch of the Cultural Olympiad, and again this is being used as an opportunity to proactively promote international activity.
- Additionally the Campaign is exploring how best to maximise the international elements around the Cultural Olympiad per se, as well as joint working with Locate in Kent and the UKTI to discover how best to exploit the Inward Investment opportunities.
- Finally, the Head of the Sport, Leisure and Olympics service spent a week in China during the Olympic Games, as part of an official South East delegation with Visit Britain. A range of international opportunities were fruitfully explored including the areas above, as well as gaining a better understanding of how Kent can go about delivering real international profile through the 20,000 to 30,000 accredited and non-accredited media that will attend London 2012.

### *EBN Congress*

1.12 The European Business Network (EBN) is a non-profit making association based in Brussels which represents Business Innovation Centres across Europe. The "Global Innovation Bridges" EBN Congress was held in Canterbury from 20-22 June 2007. This focused notably on encouraging the engagement of

the various levels of government in the EU with small businesses and international partners and driving innovation in the public sector. England had never before hosted this prestigious event nor had EBN featured the transatlantic connection with the United States. Kent's bid to welcome the Congress in 2007 was won against stiff competition from several European capital cities, including Budapest (which hosted it in 2008).



EBN Opening Ceremony

1.13 The keynote speaker, Shadow Technology Minister Charles Hendry, told delegates that securing the conference was a great testimony to KCC's work in the 'Kent Year of Innovation' as one of the most dynamic and successful counties in the country. The event has firmly placed Kent on the international map as a place for SMEs interested in working internationally to do business and relocate. Delegates became aware of Kent's proximity to both London and Continental Europe and the benefits to business that this could bring. The event also marketed Canterbury as a business tourism and international conference venue and EBN was the first large international multi-venue conference the city has hosted. As well as longer term tourism, trade and business opportunities for the city and county, spend by delegates is estimated at £150,000 during their 3-day stay.



EBN Exhibition Stands

### *International Advisory Board*

1.14 A new International Advisory Board including representatives from leading organisations in Kent such as Locate in Kent (LIK), Kent Tourism Association (KTA) and the University of Kent has been established and met for the first time on 30 July. The aims of the Board, which will meet 3 or 4 times a year, will be:

- 'to provide a Forum to share experiences/work on International activity in Kent to achieve a coherent and consistent approach';
- 'to take advantage of new opportunities and to 'stay ahead in a changing game';
- 'to ensure Kent emerges from the economic downturn in a strong position to take advantage of new opportunities'

## **2 Promoting the interests of the county**

### *European Structural Funds 2000-06*

- 2.1 This is the last year of spending running to 31 December 2008 for the range of programmes for which Kent has been eligible in the 2000-2006 EU Structural Funds programming period, and for which some £100 million has been secured for the county. These include Objective 2, Interreg IIIA, Interreg IIIB, Interreg IIIC, Urban II, and Leader+ under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as well as the European Social Fund (ESF).
- 2.2 At the last meeting of the South East's Joint Europe Committee (see below) the Head of European Programmes at GOSE had reported a current total potential underspend in ERDF-funded SE programmes of £31.9 million out of a total budget of £153.8 million, i.e. over 20%.
- 2.3 GOSE has advised that it was working to avoid decommitment of this funding, including by recycling unspent funds, However, this does raise additional concerns over the future effectiveness of the regional management of the Funds in the new programming period 2007 - 2013, as exemplified in GOSE's unsatisfactory handling of committee arrangements (see below) and delays in agreeing the new programmes.

### *The new programmes 2007-2013*

- 2.4 Most of the new EU Structural Funds programmes for 2007-13 for which Kent is eligible were due to be approved this year by the European Commission. These include the Interreg IVA France (Channel) England and '2 Seas' cross-border cooperation programmes launched respectively in Rouen on 24 January 2008 and Dunkerque on 24 April 2008. The South East ERDF Competitiveness Programme was launched in Winchester on 14 May 2008. KCC's International Affairs Group has been actively influencing and providing input to these new programmes. In particular, KCC was the only UK local authority representative on the Member State Working Group developing the '2 Seas' programme, otherwise comprised of UK central government and regional bodies. KCC recently learnt that it was successful in SEEDA's Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) process and will now be invited to submit projects to the Competitiveness Programme against specifications approved by the Steering Committee.

- 2.5 Under the European Social Fund (ESF), KCC has also been awarded a contract by the Learning & Skills Council to deliver innovative learning and development in particular to employees of small companies in the Kent and Medway area. The contract is worth £761,000 over three years.
- 2.6 IAG has also been seeking to ensure that KCC is properly represented on the Programmes' decision-making bodies, the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMS) and Programme Steering Committee (PSC). KCC is a member of the S.E. Competitiveness Programme PMC, but continues with the support of French partners, to seek permanent representation on the Interreg Committees rather than the unsatisfactory part-time representation allocated by GOSE under its 'rotational' system.
- 2.7 Despite previous efforts at 'simplification' the European Commission's administrative requirements for the new programmes have become even more onerous. In particular, 'Lead Partners' (and as a strategic authority, KCC might be expected to assume this role in many cases) will now be directly responsible for the overall delivery and sound financial management of projects. Not least to avoid 'claw back' of funding it is therefore especially important that participating KCC Directorates understand the new rules applying to programmes and adhere to a corporate approach to submitting and delivering projects. Following an IAG Information Seminar for Directorates on 12 June 2008 to outline the new requirements, a Guidance Note has been produced and endorsed by KCC Resources Directors, setting out the way in which projects should be implemented (inc. claims, control procedures, use of the Euro, match-funding etc.).
- 2.8 Previous reports to this Committee have outlined the opportunities available to KCC from the new programmes in support of the authority's priorities and a target of €100 million of EU funding into Kent for 2007-13 has been proposed. In this regard, a number of significant KCC projects (summarised at Annex 1) seeking a total of €4.7 million in ERDF funding were submitted in July 2008 to the First Call for projects under the Interreg '2-Seas programme. These include in particular projects aimed at the further expansion of personalised public services and tourism development. A proposed project between Kent TV and Focus TV in West Flanders is expected to be among those KCC projects submitted to the Second Call to be launched in October 2008.

## *Joint Europe Committee*

- 2.9 The South East Joint Europe Committee (JEC) was created in 2000 as a joint regional committee between the Assembly and SEEDA in order to provide a common focus for influencing European policy. The JEC subsequently became a three-way joint committee with representation from four sub-regional partnerships.
- 2.10 The last meeting of the JEC on 4 June 2008 announced the ending of the Assembly's participation in, and administration of, the JEC from 16 July 2008 and therefore of the existence of the JEC in its current form.
- 2.11 There is however a desire from both SEEDA and the other SE local authorities to maintain such an EU network at S.E. level. This is therefore also an opportunity for KCC to lead and set the European agenda for the South East by establishing a new grouping, building on the positive references to the authority's European and International work in the Corporate Assessment Report.

## **3 The opportunities and challenges of the 'Corridor to Europe' transport links**

### *The Ashford Eurostar Campaign*

- 3.1 Since the opening of Ebbsfleet International Station and the ending of direct train services from Ashford to Brussels in November 2007, the County Council has worked long and patiently with passengers, the business sector, public sector bodies, MPs and MEPs to make the case for the reintroduction of Ashford to Brussels services in 2008.
- 3.2 This culminated on 31 July 2008 in an announcement by Eurostar of the reintroduction of a direct daily service between Ashford and Brussels from 14 December 2008, the date of the international winter timetable change. Whilst Eurostar will be monitoring the take-up and viability of the new service, this announcement is clearly excellent news in the shorter term for business and tourism in Kent, especially in the run-up to the 2012 Olympics. However, in the longer term, KCC and its European



Ashford International Station

partners have been seeking to secure a more equally balanced relationship with the rail operators and an understanding of the needs of intermediate stations.

- 3.3 In this regard, at meetings in Brussels on 10 October and 12 December 2007 between KCC, Nord-Pas de Calais and the City of Breda (NL), it was agreed to establish a new European network focussed on the Paris-Brussels-Cologne-Amsterdam - London high-speed line. The network would provide a collective platform for contacts with governments and rail companies and be open to European local authorities with intermediate stations and will provide additional support for the maintenance of the Ashford-Brussels service. In advance of a planned meeting with the European Commission in November 2008, a Declaration of Intent and celebration of the official launch of the European Cities and Regions with intermediate stations will be signed in Breda on 25 September 2008.

## **4 Encouraging best practice**

### *International Professional Development*

- 4.1 The Teachers' International Professional Development (TIPD) programme, funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), offers teachers a unique opportunity to get first hand experience of education internationally. Participants visit schools, meet teachers, educationalists and policy makers and get the opportunity to reflect on and examine their own practice in the light of international experience. Visits are organised during school holidays. Kent has an allocation of 54 places each year, but is often offered extra places, unused by other local authorities. In 2007-2008 Kent had 67 places and visited Turkey, Switzerland, Egypt, Sweden, Canada and Latvia.



- 4.2 Visits arranged as part of the 'Link:Ed' project, which was a very successful three-year cross-border Interreg IIIA project, finished in December 2007. Professional development was a key element of this project and provided an excellent opportunity for Kent Teachers and Educationalists to exchange best practice with colleagues and counterparts in France. Over the three-year period 16 study visits were arranged for Kent Delegates to visit Nord Pas de Calais (59 teachers took part in 2007-2008).

- 4.3 In addition, other CFE Directorate visits were organised to observe good practice on issues such as teenage pregnancy and to forge links aimed at shared policy making or to attend conferences to update professional thinking. Many of these opportunities were grant funded. Kent Head Teachers take opportunities to join visits organised by the National College of School Leaders and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. During the summer, 12 schools participated in a study tour to Singapore, visiting education establishments and attending the International Conference on Teaching and Learning with Technology.

#### *International Staff Exchange Programmes*

- 4.4 The Seattle exchange programme, which has a focus on mental health and adults with learning disabilities, continued to make a valuable contribution in 2007-8 to the staff care package, notably around the motivation and retention of staff. Opportunities were made available to four members of staff from KASS during this financial year, offering personal and professional development and best practice exchange.
- 4.5 The 'Chemin de Vie' Interreg IIIA project, part financed by ERDF, closed this year tallying over 900 cross-border beneficiary and staff contacts with partner organisations in northern France. For KASS staff, this project has been a valuable platform from which to observe and discuss each other's socio-professional context, and the techniques and procedures adopted. Opportunities for operational staff to meet with their counterparts in Pas de Calais were postponed due to the restructuring of social services within the French local authority. However, the desire remains to develop a programme of visits centred around service provision for older people and adults with learning disabilities.
- 4.6 Following an inaugural visit to King County Council, Washington by a member of staff in the Democratic Services Unit in September 2006, KCC hosted a reciprocal exchange from Council Member Larry Gossett and County Auditor Cheryle Broom in May 2008. The purpose of the visit was for our American partners to learn about the priorities facing Kent County Council, how we are being strategic and cutting edge in addressing them and gathering information on best practice that could be of value to King County.

It was also a relationship-building visit to develop understanding and strengthen the links between the two Counties, which have many ancestral linkages and similar contemporary challenges. Within King County Council is the City of Kent and work is just

starting to look at how we might foster KCC's relationship with this city to our mutual benefit.

### *PASCAL International Observatory*

4.7 KCC is a founding member of the PASCAL International Observatory, along with the Scottish Executive, Victoria State Government, University of Stirling and the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The purpose of the PASCAL alliance is to share research and policy development initiatives on an international level with a specific focus on social capital, place management and learning regions. The start-up phase of the PASCAL International Observatory project ended with the commencement of subscription services in summer 2007. KCC will continue to be involved as a PASCAL Executive Board member helping to steer the future direction of the alliance.

In addition to raising KCC's profile internationally across the key themes of the alliance, the project has also produced a number of key achievements to date. These include the delivery of six international conferences focusing on information sharing and best practice - all of these sessions have included representation/speakers from Kent. Contribution was also made at the Kent Thameside PASCAL event, and a team will be taking forward the project to set up an advisory group to support delivery. In addition, KCC has been heavily involved in producing both online and hard copy literature pertaining to PASCAL, with a series of three books published by NIACE including a forward from KCC's Leader in the most recent publication.

KCC continues to participate in a range of engagement activities including the OECD 14 Region Pure Study which focuses on the role of universities in regional development. The council has also successfully established links with the Victoria State Government with a number of ministerial visits to Kent.

### *Showcasing Kent Innovations*

4.8 KCC is committed to learning and sharing best practice internationally in order to continually improve its services. This year, there has been a lot of interest in Gateways and Telehealth. One of the KASS Managers responsible for implementing the Whole System



Demonstrator programme in Kent addressed the UK-Taiwan Telehealth conference in September 2007 to exchange views and ideas on improving public health and social care through integrated technology and innovation. The conference highlighted the similar challenges facing the UK and Taiwan in managing an ageing population.

KCC was also the only local authority invited to speak at a United Nations seminar 'Citizenship in Future Cities and Settlements' in New York in February 2008. The emphasis of the seminar was on improving the quality of cities for older people and carers in the future, and the KCC speech suggested how Gateways could promote better public access to achieve this.

Bringing Telehealth and Gateways together, in August 2008 the Director of Strategic Development and Public Access visited Toronto, Canada on a fact-finding exercise to see examples of Telehealth technology being used in community sites, with the aim of introducing Telehealth into Gateways. The trip also showcased best practice in using Telehealth technology to monitor the health of staff members, and new technology being used in contact centres to automatically alert members of the public to road works, school closures etc. These examples of best practise are currently being explored to see how they could be implemented in Kent.

In October 2008, the Chief Executive will be addressing the International Canadian Health Conference to share KCC's latest developments in innovation and best practice.

- 4.9 Following a visit from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Force (RCMP) to KCC, a delegation from KCC Communities and Kent Police was invited to Richmond, Canada by the RCMP in April 2008. The purpose of the visit was to gain frontline understanding of Richmond's approach to community wellbeing, crime prevention and their Youth and Restorative Justice systems. A further objective of the visit was to present the Kent model of neighbourhood policing and Community Wardens. Following the visit, various actions are being put into place to develop in Kent the successful approaches that the delegation observed in Richmond, building on best practice. Staff exchanges are also being discussed.

Annex 1 :Examples of new KCC projects under the Interreg IVA Cross-border Programme 2007-13

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Project Summary</b>	<b>Partner Details</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Cross – Border Observatory to Optimise Public Service Delivery	In support of the development of personalised public services, partners will work together to understand communities and localities through the use of sophisticated software tools such as customer profiling and segmentation, mapping and access to public facilities. The aim is to improve customer satisfaction with public sector services, to gain further understanding of customers wants and needs, and how services can be positioned to meet these needs.	KCC Strategic Development Unit (CED)  Conseil Général du Pas de Calais  All Kent Districts	Total Budget: £3.2m  KCC Budget: £960K  KCC ERDF requested: £480K
Coast	A tourism project which aims: - To reinvigorate tourism in the coastal areas of Kent and West Flanders, resulting in increased visitor spend and additional employment opportunities - To capitalise, in sustainable tourism terms, on the unique coastal environments and maritime traditions and characteristics of both regions	KCC Tourism (E&R)  Visit Kent Ltd.  Westtoear (West Flanders Tourism Authority)	Total Budget: £5.3m  KCC/Visit Kent Budget: £3m  KCC/Visit Kent ERDF requested: £1.5m
TTRIP	A tourism research project which aims to: - To share research knowledge and expertise to best effect - To work together to produce research which will help to guide destination marketing and development decisions across the Region Transmanche - To map out future directions for making the best possible use of new technology in support of sustainable tourism development - To improve intelligence on current and potential tourism industry performance to help to underpin investment decisions	KCC Tourism (E&R)  Comité Régional de Tourisme Nord-Pas de Calais	Total Budget: £1.5m  KCC Budget: £600K  KCC ERDF requested: £300K
EARTH	A tourism project aiming: - To develop and embed a responsible approach to tourism destination development and marketing centred on sustainable	- KCC Tourism (E&R) - Visit Kent Ltd - Comité Régional de	Total Budget: £12.4m

	<p>tourism and taking equal account of visitors, the industry, the community and the environment</p> <p>- To make Region Transmanche an exemplary destination in terms of sustainable tourism to in preparation for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympics Games, thereby maximising the potential visitor benefits of the Games</p>	<p>Tourisme Nord-Pas de Calais</p> <p>- Comité Départemental Tourisme Nord</p> <p>- Comité Départemental Tourisme Pas de Calais</p>	<p>KCC/Visit Kent Budget: £5.5m</p> <p>KCC/Visit Kent ERDF requested: £2.75m</p>
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