

1 Communities Directorate 2010/11

The Communities Directorate included a wide range of services. Some services are “universal” such as Kent Libraries and Archives, consumer advice and registering births, marriages and deaths. Some are more directly targeted towards particular client groups who are vulnerable or require particular support services, for example, the Youth Offending Service (YOS).

Some manage both of these relationships, for example the Youth Service, Community Wardens and the Adult Education Service. Others such as Trading Standards and YOS also have a regulatory role. There are also teams whose roles are strategic or involve commissioning external providers, for example, Emergency Planning; Sport, Leisure and Olympics; Arts Development and KDAAT. Their direct day-to-day contact with residents and end-users in the county is therefore limited but they nevertheless ensure that the views and aspirations of their stakeholders are well understood.

This paper gives a short summary of the consultation and involvement activities carried out by the Directorate between April 2010 and March 2011.

1.1 Consultation

The Directorate undertook the following formal “set-piece” consultations during 2010/11:

- Kent Libraries and Archives maintained its consultation and engagement activity (including equality analyses) with communities about the layout and service provision being planned within several **library building projects**.
- **KDAAT** [consulted](#) with partners, service providers and service users on proposals to change the way services are commissioned and delivered in West Kent. A number of changes were made to the draft service specification as a result of the feedback received during the consultation.
- Community Learning and Skills carried out a consultation with learners and non-learners as part of its review into **adult education concessions** available for older customers. The process was started in Q4 2010/11, with fieldwork carried out during April and May 2011. The consultation informed [the decision](#) taken by the Cabinet Member on 9 June 2011 and highlighted the need to promote the range of existing support packages available to mitigate the impact of the change.
- **Kent School Games** (see *box below*)

1.2 Participative events

- **Youth Takeover Week** – in November 2010, Kent Youth Service worked closely with the Office for the Children’s Commissioner to

organise a number of events during which young people shadowed officers and Members from across KCC to gain real insight into the decision making that takes place each day. A “Question Time” style event was also held, giving young people an opportunity to come along and put their questions to KCC Cabinet Members and the Chair of the British Youth Council.

- **dance 4 your life** is a dance and health programme especially designed for young people aged 14 years old. It focused on young people taking part in creative dance and research based activity. dance 4 your life took place across the North Kent Local Authority Arts Partnership region. The [final research report and recommendations](#) is available on KCC's website.
- **User Groups and Forums** – several services run or host standing user groups or forums to help them better understand the views and opinions of service users. They are often asked for comments on particular issues or plans, and will also raise their own points with the services. Kent Libraries, KDAAT, Community Learning and Skills and the Youth Service all have groups and forums in place.
- **Kent Youth Theatre Festival** (*see box below*)

1.3 *Ongoing engagement and research*

- Continuing consultation and engagement to inform the development of *Involving the Whole Community; the **Kent Approach to Literacy and Reading***. [Further details are due to be published on kent.gov.uk shortly.]
- **Youth Service User Evaluation** is really about the day-to-day business of running a youth centre or project and engaging young people with regular feedback and evaluation on the session they have just participated in. This took place with a range of methodologies across the Service and feedback was used regularly in session and programme design and delivery.
- **YOS participation** involves ongoing “business as usual” activities undertaken to better understand the reasons why children and young people are either at risk of or involved in offending and to identify their service requirements. The learning from the aggregated outcomes has been used to inform two recent reports, one on the Deter Young Offender Cohort and the other on the custodial population – these were prepared to assist YOS in reviewing the needs of these populations and our capacity through the partnership arrangements to meet them.
- **CLS Learners’ Views Survey** under Framework for Excellence – collects learners’ views about the various aspects of the learning journey (doing so is a requirement of the Skills Funding Agency - SFA). Learners taking qualification courses had access to an online SFA survey via an external website. All teachers advised learners of website and details for access. We are still awaiting the results from the SFA.
- **Sport, Leisure and Olympics** held discussions with District leisure officers, the 2012 Sport Sectoral Task Group and district Sports Development officers about the 17 day gap between the end of the

Olympic Games and the beginning of the Paralympic Games. These discussions led from what activities partners would be doing in that period to a wider concept of developing 2012 as the Kent Year of Sport, that all partners could link to.

1.4 Feedback and evaluation

Much of the Directorate's consultation and involvement activity tended to be embedded, ongoing work such as user groups, comment cards and satisfaction surveys.

- **Library Satisfaction Surveys** - the annual Library User survey (February 2011) highlighted some very positive customer perceptions of the library service. This is evident from the investment in the service through the Modernisation Programme, upgrades in ICT and improvements in the books. Staff helpfulness and overall satisfaction with the service have increased in the 2011 results. Other satisfaction surveys were carried out for remote services and Ask A Kent Librarian.
- The **Youth Service User Survey** highlighted the importance of specific services to local young people and also identified the key factors behind attendance as well as the main outcomes young people experienced through being involved in youth work. The results were used to inform curriculum development and the final report was circulated to all youth centres who took part and discussed at all area team meetings and Youth Advisory Groups
- **Youth Service peer inspection** - The Peer Inspection of Voluntary Organisations took place in October 2010 with final report published in December 2010. An inspection programme was agreed and young inspectors were trained and supported to carry out the inspection alongside officers. The results informed the development and planning of work within the voluntary sector and development of service review planning and the report was discussed at Youth Advisory Group meetings.
- **Registration Service** – carried out its usual series of satisfaction and customer feedback surveys across the range of its services and ceremonies. Results remain strong with satisfaction levels in typically in the 90% – 100% range. Results have been used, for example, to inform the Service's marketing strategy and to inform decision-making around rolling out the pilot scheme to train Library staff to register births and deaths across Kent.

Evaluating and improving what we do

Kent School Games 2010 consultation

The Sport Leisure and Olympics service leads a Kent School Games Executive Group, made up of partners and other stakeholders. This group is used to discuss and disseminate plans. Senior Managers on the Group also report to the Cabinet Members for Communities and CFE on progress.



Kent School Games 2010 consultation also included:

- Reporting and feedback on welfare issues, with health and safety advisors
- Informal feedback from young people participating in the 2010 games
- Formal monitoring and evaluation of the Games, via professionals and adult volunteers involved in the running of the Games e.g. Team Managers (including School Sport Partnership staff), Sports Managers and facility managers.

While feedback was generally positive, some recommendations have been made to the Kent School Games Executive Board. The results are being used to help inform and shape the development of the Kent School games in 2012, for example around welfare arrangements and administration.



Shaping services

KDAAT West Kent substance misuse service specification

This consultation aimed to find out what service users, their families, friends & carers, drug workers, organisations providing drug or alcohol treatment services, local organisations and anyone who wishes to express a view felt about the proposed service model set out in the draft service specification.



The key principles for the West Kent Substance Misuse Service were developed through discussions with the KDAAT partnership's Adult Joint Commissioning Group (JCG), Executive Board and with:

- Kent's Community Safety Partnerships
- Local GPs
- KDAAT's Service User Expert Group

A public and stakeholder consultation on the full draft service specification was launched on 1 February 2011 and closed on 4 March. Publicity for the consultation included:

- An email alert to all drug and alcohol service providers
- Internal and external partners
- Information, documents and forms published on the KDAAT website
- Consultation directory on the KCC consultation database
- Alerts to the Kent Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Newsletter items in Inside Track, and NHS West Kent's PCT newsletter
- KDAAT Service redesign newsletter
- KCC external website and intranet

Responses to the consultation were gathered through:

- Five public consultation events across Kent
- An event for service providers
- Online response forms on the KDAAT website

The feedback received at the consultation events highlighted some misunderstandings among staff and service users about the purpose and requirement of competitive tendering within KDAAT's commissioning cycle. KDAAT is seeking to address this by developing an easy to understand guide to the KDAAT commissioning framework.

Specific feedback and examples of how it changed the Service Specification are outlined in the [Consultation Report available from KDAAT's website](#)

Youth participation

Kent County Youth Theatre Festival 2010

Kent County Youth Theatre Festival 2010 took place on 3 and 4 July in Maidstone and was a great success!

250 young people from across Kent came together for a weekend of workshops and performances. The theme was 'Welcoming the World' and the festival achieved the Inspire Mark, which means it was officially part of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games!



Artists delivered workshops including Mask, Physical theatre, Musical theatre, Ensemble Theatre, Set Design and Contemporary Dance. Participants enjoyed professional performances from StopGAP – the leading European Dance and Disability Company and Propeller - Edward Hall's all male physical Shakespeare company. 14 Youth Theatres offered a spectacular collaborative performance which included a procession and a mass performance in British Sign Language.

Kent Arts Development captured feedback and comments on the festival and surrounding programme, in terms of delivery, impact and value, and how a festival and programme could be developed, improved and impact widened. Film, evaluation forms and 1:1s were used to capture feedback from young people, youth arts leaders and artists.

