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To: Environment, Highways & Waste - Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee
22 November 2011

Subject: Kent Environment Strategy

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report summarises midyear progress towards delivery of the Kent Environment Strategy plus gaps and challenges to delivery for scrutiny by the Enterprise and Environment POSC. It outlines potential opportunities for Members to get involved. Members are asked to review and challenge, providing feedback on progress and discussion of future Member involvement in delivery of the strategy.

1. Background

1.1. A paper on KCC's progress towards delivering its commitments under the Kent Environment Strategy was presented to the Enterprise and Environment POSC in July.

1.2. This paper gives a midyear update on Kent wide progress. Progress relates to actions outlined specifically in the Kent Environment Strategy and its implementation plan and by no means captures the totality of activity across Kent. The Kent Environment Strategy and implementation plan are available at:

www.kent.gov.uk/kentenvironmentstrategy

1.3. The Kent Environment Strategy has three Themes and 10 priorities. Appendix 1 gives key progress highlights against expected outcomes and is RAG rated. Currently four of the priorities are green, five amber and one red. The priority which is red relates to the Kent Design Guide and new development. The Kent Design Guide review is currently delayed, and therefore it has not been updated to include changes relating to issues such as energy, low carbon technologies, water, waste and climate change.

2. Gaps and Challenges to the delivery of the Kent Environment Strategy

2.1. This is a fast moving agenda and many areas of policy, such as the emerging Green Deal are still unclear or subject to rapid change e.g. the Feed In Tariff. For Kent to deliver real improvement another step change in approach is needed to accelerate progress. An element of informed evidence based risk must be taken, for example piloting new low carbon technologies.

2.2. Resources at all levels and across the public, private and voluntary sector are stretched. External funding is needed in order to deliver real change. The public sector has a key role in attracting external funding of all types into Kent.

2.3. As already identified in external discussions through the Kent Partnership and lately the Kent Forum, strong and visible leadership is crucial. The public sector, business and communities need to examine in full the way they operate and behave, identifying smarter ways of working and new ways of delivering services. Identifying accountable leads to take action forward and champions to challenge progress within public sector bodies will be crucial.

2.4. Required behaviour needs to be embedded in existing and new processes across the public sector to ensure environmental considerations are mainstreamed. 'Bolting on' environment considerations in the final stages of policy, programme and project development leads to less than satisfactory environmental outcomes and often increased costs.

2.5. Much will need to be developed in partnership and will require meaningful engagement with residents and businesses.

2.6. In addition, the environment and related issues such as high energy prices and water metering continues to remain an important concern for the public, business and the voluntary sector.

3. Current Guidance and Information Available

3.1. A number of tools have been or are being developed to help Members and key decision makers. These include:

- KCC's Environmental Performance Report – outlining progress in KCC delivering the Kent Environment Strategy (due end of November 2011).
- Climate Change – A Guide for Kent's Decision Makers – available at www.kent.gov.uk/climatechange and distributed through the Information Point.
- Kent Environment Strategy Area Briefings – focusing on KCC activity in each District (in development).

Members are asked to:

1. Review and provide feedback on progress, including the level of ambition being delivered
2. Highlight any gaps in delivery and any further opportunities
3. Identify what further support they need to be able to actively participate in the delivery of the Kent Environment Strategy

Background documents:

Kent Environment Strategy
POSC Paper July 2011

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APPENDIX 1 – KENT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY MID YEAR PROGRESS

THEME 1: LIVING WELL WITHIN OUR ENVIRONMENTAL LIMITS (Lead The Environment Agency – London and Southern Region)

KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
<p>Priority 1: Make homes and public sector buildings in Kent energy and water efficient, and cut costs for residents and taxpayers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radically simplify the energy efficiency funding and support landscape for Kent residents and support the development of and access to innovative finance mechanisms such as the Green Deal Ensure all new public buildings are water and energy efficient Maximise the energy and water efficiency of existing public sector capital assets through rationalisation and retrofit 	<p>The retrofitting potential of Kent has been established to ward level enabling effective targeting of help and advice to residents. Over 60% of homes in Kent are inadequately insulated. If all homes were fully insulated this could realise over £70m savings for residents, and equates to £600m+ of 'business'.</p> <p>Energy efficiency has been incorporated into the new Handy Man and Home Improvement Agency service coordinated by KCC. This will increase the number of referrals of vulnerable residents for free or subsidised energy efficiency help and advice.</p> <p>A Kent wide communications campaign has been developed targeting high priority areas, particularly the fuel poor. The first pilot phase of a Kent wide retrofit programme undertaken in 2010-11 demonstrated potential savings of almost £50k.</p> <p>The KCC Energy Water Investment Fund has invested over £1.7m in energy efficiency and renewable energy installations in the KCC estate, with life time savings of just over £4m. The potential of extending this fund to the wider public sector is being investigated.</p>	<p>Public sector and residents saving money through energy efficiency in public buildings and homes.</p> <p>Fewer vulnerable residents in fuel poverty.</p> <p>Stimulation of the green economy and carbon reduction.</p> <p>Key results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £50k of potential savings for residents from retrofit pilot. Over £4m savings from energy improvements in the KCC estate. <p>STATUS: GREEN</p>
<p>Priority 2: New developments and infrastructure in Kent are cost effective, low carbon and resource efficient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help the public and business sector respond to the opportunities and challenges of national legislation to ensure that new developments are affordable and efficient Ensure that 'smart mobility' including easy access to local services, public transport/broadband is at the core of all new developments, where feasible 	<p>Kent Design is being reviewed to reflect emerging environmental priorities.</p>	<p>Resource efficient, but affordable development.</p> <p>Stimulation of the green economy in Kent.</p> <p>STATUS: RED</p>
KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
Priority 3: Turn Kent's waste into new resources and		Reduced waste to

jobs for Kent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximise the use and value of materials in the waste stream and create opportunities to contribute to the green economy Establish the economic potential of Kent's waste resources, and develop action plans to unlock economic opportunities for Kent Maximise the contribution the better use of materials can make to the developing green economy across the SE7 area 	<p>Initial key waste materials priorities agreed across SE7 councils in Aug 2011.</p> <p>Business case work with partners to reveal the economic potential of key materials will report to SE7 leaders in Jan 2012.</p>	<p>landfill.</p> <p>Lower waste disposal costs to local authorities.</p> <p>Realised economic potential of waste.</p> <p>STATUS: GREEN</p>
Priority 4: Reduce the ecological footprint of what we consume <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use public sector purchasing power to support and drive change where a clear business case exists Develop a programme to address the rapid growth of water demand within the Kent horticulture and agriculture sector Set up an environmental engagement programme with the aim of saving Kent's public sector, residents and businesses money and reducing the impact of Kent's consumption, in particular food 	<p>Set up and delivering KCC supply chain programme to support businesses to use fewer resources and be more competitive. Assisted almost 500 businesses over the last year, identifying average savings of £2-4k per year, totalling £1-2m.</p> <p>KCC have developed a targeted certified environmental management scheme to assist Kent Suppliers – STEM(Steps to Environmental Management).</p> <p>Developing a long term Estate Strategy to identify future energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities that could stimulate the growth of the green economy in Kent.</p> <p>Developing a number of behaviour change communications campaigns to tackle key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retrofitting – energy efficiency in homes (above) Water use and efficiency 	<p>Savings for Kent businesses, increased competitiveness and stimulation of the green economy through piloting of new low carbon technologies.</p> <p>Raised awareness of what residents can do to save money and cut carbon.</p> <p>Key Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over £1m of savings for Kent businesses. 500+ businesses assisted. <p>STATUS: AMBER</p>
THEME 2: MEETING THE CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE (Lead Kent County Council)		
KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
Priority 5: Reduce Future Carbon Emissions	A Renewable Energy Resource and Opportunity Study for Kent	Increased uptake of renewable energy and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Local Carbon Framework • Keep traffic moving and reduce need to travel • Renewable energy support programme 	<p>undertaken to assess the potential for renewables in Kent. A strategic framework and action plan is being developed alongside to realise the potential. Key delivery output of the Energy Select Committee last year.</p> <p>Kent was successful with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) and is now developing projects to deliver Growth Without Gridlock, including a number of capital schemes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £100k for cycle storage and facilities at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and East Kent Hospital NHS Trust. • £35k to support Community Rail Partnerships. • £70k to support smart ticketing. • Approximately £100k to support access through footpaths and cycleways e.g. footway/cycleway to Maidstone Hospital. 	<p>stimulation of the sector in Kent.</p> <p>Reduced congestion and carbon emissions through uptake of sustainable transport alternatives.</p> <p>Key Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renewable energy strategy for Kent. • Over £300k for sustainable transport measures. <p>STATUS: AMBER</p>
<p>Priority 6: Manage the impacts of climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Kent Adaptation Action Plan • Develop reporting and monitoring • Deliver the KAAP 	<p>An action plan to deal with the impacts and opportunities of climate change such as severe weather events, or the development of new technologies has been developed. The Kent Adaptation Action Plan has been developed in partnership and agreed by all partners.</p> <p>To support the Kent Adaptation Action Plan a Severe Weather Impacts Monitoring System (SWIMS) has been launched online. The monitoring system will capture impacts, and look at how Kent could adapt to manage better. This is now being used by partners across Kent.</p>	<p>Kent is aware of climate change impacts and is adapting to ensure resilience of communities, business and services, and realising opportunities.</p> <p>Key Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWIMS - an innovative database. <p>STATUS: GREEN</p>
<p>KES Priority</p>	<p>Key Progress Highlights</p>	<p>Desired Outcome</p>
<p>Priority 7: Support the development of green jobs, skills and businesses in Kent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent prospectuses 	<p>An overarching Low Carbon Technologies prospectus is being developed looking at the opportunities for Kent in this sector. This will build on the success of the offshore wind prospectus already developed and highlight the potential opportunities for Kent both in terms of inward investment and also existing Kent businesses.</p>	<p>Growth in the low carbon sector in Kent.</p> <p>Up skilling of the Kent community to be able</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a single conversation Increase skills and qualifications 	<p>The prospectus will be ready early in 2012.</p> <p>A Low Carbon Sector Event was held in May to assess the needs of the low carbon sector in Kent, in order to inform the development of a tailored support programme – Low Carbon Kent. This has also been informed by further survey information from 600+ businesses in Kent.</p> <p>Green Chain http://www.greenchain.org.uk has been established to promote Kent's green business. There are currently over 80 companies registered and are being promoted.</p> <p>The Kent Downs Woodfuel Pathfinder has been developed, using EU funding – a partnership between Kent Downs AONB, the Forestry Commission and KCC. The Pathfinder is working to support the woodfuel industry in Kent. So far support has been provided for 40 sites and a local firewood supplier has won a contract of £500k over 3 years.</p> <p>The 14-19 Innovation Unit has produced a sector skills strategy for the Low Carbon Technology and Environmental Goods and Services Sector. The strategy has been used in a variety of forms to help inform the curriculum development of providers within the 12 Kent districts.</p> <p>Swale Skills Centre offers a flagship apprenticeship in the wind energy sector, training 10 apprentices employed by DONG energy, a key partner in the London Array.</p> <p>A sustainable technologies masterclass was held in summer 2011 with schools from each of the Districts in Kent developing their skills in engineering for sustainable technologies.</p>	<p>to take advantage of upcoming opportunities.</p> <p>Key Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 600 businesses engaged with to assess support needs. 80 green companies being promoted through Green Chain. 40 woodfuel sites supported, with a £.500k firewood contract being won by a local business. 10 apprentices employed by DONG energy through Swale Skills Centre. <p>STATUS: AMBER</p>
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THEME 3 – VALUE FROM OUR NATURAL AND LIVING ENVIRONMENT (Lead Kent County Council/Natural England)		
KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
<p>Priority 8: Utilise the full social and economic potential of a high quality natural and historic environment in Kent</p>	<p>A social and economic assessment of the Milton Creek investment has been completed – report is available from http://www.gtqkm.org.uk/projects/milton-creek-evaluation-report/.</p>	<p>A clear business case for investing in green infrastructure.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify how 'natural economy' could support public services and green economy 	<p>A cost benefit analysis is currently underway and will be completed shortly.</p> <p>A Phase 1 study looking at identifying the high level ecosystem services, and associated opportunities and threats, within Thames Gateway Growth Area has been completed.</p> <p>Delivery of Phase 2 of this project which will give a more detailed analysis of services, threats and opportunities and development of policy options and will be through the EU GIFTT project and National Character Areas assessment work by Natural England.</p> <p>A simple and precise communication tool that highlights the value of the natural environment has been completed and is available at http://gtgkm.org.uk/projects/valuing-our-natural-environment/.</p> <p>National Character Areas assessment work by Natural England will provide an initial map at a strategic level of what constitutes 'Eco System Services' in Kent. This will be used to assess at a local level what the natural environment resource is.</p> <p>EU funding has been secured through the Green Infrastructure For Tomorrow Together (GIFTT) project. The project will further develop the economic evaluation tool which will provide a business case for investing in green infrastructure.</p>	<p>Key results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EU funding for development of economic evaluation tool. <p>STATUS: AMBER</p>
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KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
<p>Priority 9: Quality of Kent's natural and heritage capital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish habitats and wildlife networks in Biodiversity Opportunity Areas 	<p>Analysis has been undertaken for biodiversity opportunity areas (BOAs). Report is currently being pulled together to summarise findings and will be completed in November.</p>	<p>To extend, improve and connect existing good quality habitats.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Landscape Character Condition assessment, improve declining areas Reduce the proportion of designated heritage assets at risk 	<p>Funding (£27k) has been secured from the Defra LNP Capacity Building Fund to set up a Local Nature Partnership (LNP) in response to the Government's Natural Environment White Paper published in June 2011. This partnership will provide a framework for delivery of Theme 3 of KES. New LNP targets will be developed.</p> <p>A local landscape group is being pulled together, and this group will conduct a gap analysis to understand current activity and status of landscape character assessment in Kent.</p> <p>A small scale trial of the landscape character assessment (LCA) approach is underway in Medway Gap, which will inform the larger scale approach for the pilot in Kent Downs AONB.</p> <p>Pilot schemes in Medway Gap for recording criminal damage to heritage assets and Heritage Warden Programme.</p> <p>Dover Heritage Strategy for Dover DC has been developed which is piloting rapid assessment approach and local resident involvement.</p>	<p>Key Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £27k funding for Local Nature Partnership. <p>STATUS: AMBER</p>
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KES Priority	Key Progress Highlights	Desired Outcome
<p>Priority 10: Access to benefits of coasts, countryside, green space and heritage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Countryside Access Improvement Plan Enable ready access to green space and the historic environment 	<p>Events in 2011 (Jan-Oct) have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoors Show (Jan) - 4000 visited the Explore Kent stand. Kent's Big Weekend (March) - 15,000 free tickets given to promote and raise awareness of attractions across Kent. Kent Walking Festival (July/Aug) - attended by 1480 people. Bike Week (Aug). Deal Walking Festival (Aug). Numerous events have been provided at Country Parks including Activity Trails, Guided Walks and Archaeology Days at Shorne. Events have also been provided at Historic Sites 	<p>Ensure that Kent residents have access to the benefits of Kent's coasts, countryside, green space and cultural heritage.</p> <p>Key Results:</p>

	<p>including guided tours of Western Heights at Dover.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent's Coastal Week (22-30 Oct). <p>Developing Explore Kent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent on Sunday and Kent Messenger feature a weekly walk or cycle ride. This is delivered through a mutual partnership. • Guided walks database is very popular - 780 walks booked (Jan – Sept). • New information formats: an application was developed and launched in April to allow customers to download walks and cycle rides onto Smartphones. • Delivery of Walk to Win campaign which encouraged people in Dover and Folkestone to exercise more through walking - 1403 entries to the competition. <p>Development of volunteering opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been an increase in volunteers with 300 Countryside Access Wardens and 85 Sustrans Rangers actively engaged. • There are 125 registered Thanet Coast Wardens. • Between April and September Country Parks Volunteers contributed over 9800 hours worth over £65,000. • Over 200 volunteers now regularly support CMP Projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1480 people attended the Kent Walking Festival. • 9-10,000 attended Kent Coastal Week. • 780 guided walks booked. • Over 700 volunteers. • 9800 hours of volunteer time in Country Parks worth over £65,000. <p>STATUS: GREEN</p>
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