

3.34 PUBLIC HEALTH

In progressing towards the MTP priorities listed by theme in Section 1, the following service-specific objectives and priorities demonstrate how the Portfolio will focus activities and continue to deliver core services to the highest standard possible.

3.34.1 Overall objectives of the Portfolio

- To provide strategic leadership in tackling the public health issues in the County, in partnership with the NHS;
- To work with partners to implement the strategies outlined in Living Life to the Full, which was agreed by Kent County Council on 6 September 2007 and subsequently agreed by the 2 PCT Boards in Kent;
- To influence the strategies and plans of Kent County Council, all Local Government, NHS, Public Sector and Voluntary Health Sector Organisations with a view to contributing to the improvement of health and reducing health inequalities;
- To build on existing partnerships with district councils and the voluntary sector to support the delivery of health improvement outcomes especially through the Local Area Agreements (Kent Agreement Outcome 16 - To promote the health of Kent's residents and reduce health inequalities by addressing variations in health across the County);
- Ensure co-ordination of Choosing Health activity across NHS and KCC and monitor progress. Lead on monitoring and performance management of Public Health targets in "Kent Agreement 2";
- Identify key public health priorities and targets for the Kent Agreement;
- Progress work on the portfolio specific and relevant cross cutting targets in the "Towards 2010" plan;
- To highlight and mainstream good practice across all organisations and agencies throughout Kent;
- To establish an effective system of information sharing and analysis to promote good evidence based practice, including a Kent Public Health Observatory; and
- To develop policy and new methods that promote more effective public health interventions.

3.34.2 Medium Term Service Priorities

- To promote the concept of healthier living in Kent and highlight the effect of obesity by taking forward the recommendations arising out of the Kent County Council Obesity Select Committee completed during the latter part of 2006;
- To promote a greater awareness of the effects of drugs and alcohol on the health of people by establishing an Informal Members Group to review the studies carried out elsewhere within the Country and advertise that at a seminar(s) involving businesses from all sectors of the community;
- To underpin County Council awareness of the issues surrounding Public Health by working with Directorates and Cabinet Members on all issues

- concerning Public Health and provide clarity about current public health activity;
- To establish a Public Health Team, Public Health Observatory and Public Health Partnership Board (for the latter involving representatives from the NHS, KCC, Kent district councils, Voluntary Organisations and relevant local businesses) to ensure all aspects of Public Health are considered. This leads to the production of an Annual Public Health Plan;
 - To work with colleagues in the NHS, Voluntary Organisations and District Councils with a view to ensuring Local Involvement Networks are established throughout Kent on a local basis to replace the Patient & Public Involvement Forums which are due to cease at the end of March 2008;
 - To ensure that an external body is commissioned to undertake an annual-for-three-years independent evaluation of the Public Health Department; and
 - To assist the transfer of resources from the acute sector into preventative services through the Local Delivery Plan process.

3.34.3 Risk Assessment

The Key Risks to the work carried out within the Public Health Department are:

- The establishment of a Public Health Department is to enable clarity of functions between KCC and PCT's. As such the Department is working at the cutting edge;
- The raising of public expectations needs to be handled very carefully about what can be achieved;
- Different styles of management and administration between the three partners;
- In light of the role of the Public Health Department there are only extremely limited funds available. The role is to encourage and initiate rather than arrange and fund. Any ideas or concepts must therefore be funded from elsewhere, bringing with it the need to liaise very closely with a range of partners across local and central government to ensure commitment to any scheme;
- Financial issues for both the NHS and the County Council which could affect the delivery of joint plans;
- Loss of focus on outcomes; and
- Essentially the department is a small unit relying on effective partnerships to deliver its agenda and problems that affect key partners (funding, organisational change, changing priorities etc.), have a significant impact upon the department.

3.35 CORPORATE SUPPORT AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

In progressing towards the MTP priorities listed by theme in Section 1, the following service-specific objectives and priorities demonstrate how the Portfolio will focus activities and continue to deliver core services to the highest standard possible.

3.35.1 Overall Objectives of the Portfolio

The overall objective of the Portfolio is the continued provision of efficient services in support of the front-line business of the service portfolios. The County Council's European and international relationships are also managed within this portfolio.

For Corporate Support and External Affairs the key objectives are focussed upon:

- Delivering KCC's Strategy for Staff, refocusing elements when appropriate to support the delivery of excellent front line customer services to the people of Kent;
- Working collaboratively with the business to deliver value for money ICT products and services that enable KCC to better serve the people of Kent;
- Offering advice and guidance on the use of Information Technology to maximize the business benefits of current systems and support the delivery of new products and services;
- Maximising the benefits to Kent of the County Council's European and international work; and
- Roll-out the Gateway model across the County.

3.35.2 Medium Term Service Priorities

- Ensure the successful implementation of the "Towards 2010" initiatives delegated to the portfolio;
- Assist with work on "The Kent Agreement 2" targets;
- Establishing and promoting Gateways to enhance public access to all public services;
- Providing across the organisation a robust, agile and modern ICT environment, in response to directorate demand and service modernisation;
- The use of ICT infrastructure to free up staff through greater flexibility and innovation leading to more devolution and empowerment to the appropriate level within the organisation, and automating routine tasks;
- Delivery of access to the most cost effective technology to achieve maximum service benefits from technology investment;
- Underpin KCC's programme of efficiency review and organisational change through working with Directorates to enable the migration of services to electronic service delivery (via the web etc.), building on process improvements delivered through the value for money programme;
- Support of service functions to realise the potential ICT systems and infrastructure implemented in support of modern flexible working practices such as wireless networking, remote access and home working;
- Develop HR systems and procedures that enhance and support directorate priorities;
- Deliver the workforce development strategy that will identify future leadership potential and meet the business needs of the future;
- Contribute to the organisation retaining its 4 star CPA rating;
- Embed into the organisation valued management development programmes;

- Maximise efficiencies and enhance personnel services through the integrated Employee Services Centre;
- Maximise opportunities to generate new (external) income;
- Continue to lead and develop KCC's and Kent's participation in the EU Interreg IV programmes; franco-british cross-border programme (IVA); transnational co-operation programme (IVB); and inter-regional co-operation programme (IVC); and
- Maximise the uptake of European funding to support the work of KCC directorates and partners in Kent.

3.35.3 Risk Assessment

The most significant risks faced by the Portfolio are:

- Increasing demand for IT services in response to the modernisation agenda;
- Ability to retain flexibility to respond to both increases and decreases in demand from service directorates without disproportionately increasing costs or exposure to future costs;
- Renewal of the WAN /LAN contract; and
- Reduction of European funds coming into Kent.

3.36 POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

In progressing towards the MTP priorities listed by theme in Section 1, the following service-specific objectives and priorities demonstrate how the Portfolio will focus activities and continue to deliver core services to the highest standard possible.

3.36.1 Overall Objectives of the Portfolio

The Policy and Performance function provides the County Council with the strategic capacity to ensure it continues to be a high performing organisation with a relentless focus on service delivery, service improvement and in putting the customer first, all of which requires robust internal performance management and policy co-ordination. The Portfolio is focused on challenging the status quo as a means of driving change and securing the best for Kent residents by influencing the national political agenda.

The Kent Partnership is grouped with this portfolio for business purposes and the work of both units is jointly co-ordinated.

The County Council's Legal and Democratic Services and Localism functions also operate from within this portfolio.

Thus, key objectives include:

- Providing the corporate policy framework to guide long-term change within the Authority in order to deliver political and policy objectives;

- Through dynamic public policy support, ensuring the development and implementation of UK and European legislation in the interest of Kent's residents and businesses;
- Continuing to deliver a robust performance management framework to underpin and sustain the excellence status of KCC in service delivery;
- Ensuring policy co-ordination within the Authority and between its local, District, County, Regional and national partners;
- Securing new levels of enhanced partnership working to deliver corporate objectives;
- Promoting understanding of KCC and its role and services among Kent residents and increase awareness of the reputation of KCC as an excellent authority amongst Kent and national organisations and key influencers;
- Supporting the democratic process by providing a comprehensive legal, Member support and secretariat service in all areas of the council's business; and
- Drive and support the Localism agenda including delivering the outcomes from the Informal Member Group – Going Local.

3.36.2 Medium Term Service Priorities

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act receiving Royal Assent in November 2007, the publication of Government's Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 and the new "Governance of Britain" proposed legislative programme all herald important legislative changes for the County Council.

Thus, the portfolio has the following priorities:

- Give support, intelligence and guidance to senior Members and officers in shaping KCC's approach to meeting the challenges in implementing the Act and related statutory and non-statutory guidance;
- Provide high level policy capacity across the county council, identifying and understanding the new challenges facing Kent and stimulating thinking to develop new ways of delivering improved services;
- Maximise the benefits of the intelligence-led corporate policy formulation capacity of the County Council;
- Bind the work of partners into co-ordinated joint action on behalf of the communities of Kent to influence both Government and those who influence Government to support key Kent policies and programmes;
- Initiate and guide joint action by the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to deliver the key corporate policy objectives in the "Vision for Kent", "Towards 2010", "The Kent Agreement 2" and Annual Plan;
- Strengthen the community leadership role of the County Council through the Kent Partnership;
- Co-ordinate and support the work of the Kent Public Service Board in their work to improve local services and secure cost efficiencies to be reinvested in frontline service;
- Develop and undertake some form of consumer monitoring through the Kent Residents' Panel, and other forms of consumer intelligence feedback as a key feedback loop into service improvements;

- Actively contribute to the creation and operation of the Kent and Medway Citizen's Panel;
- Give leadership and support to the consultation and community engagement processes across KCC;
- Co-ordinate critical monitoring reports for the "Towards 2010" targets;
- Progress work on the delivery, governance and performance framework for "The Kent Agreement 2" which starts in April 2008;
- Manage the annual unit Business Planning process across KCC;
- Publish the KCC Annual Plan;
- Contribute to national activity such as the LAA Performance Management Framework; CPA development;
- Ensure preparation for CPA in order to maintain 4 star status;
- Provide proactive legal advice and representation to staff in all directorates;
- Increase our external income from provision of legal services; and
- Co-ordinate our compliance with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

3.36.3 Risk Assessment

The key risks to manage are:

- The failure of KCC to retain its CPA four star status and subsequent impacts on reputation, freedoms and flexibilities, staff morale and ultimately on service delivery;
- The effect of legislative and Government changes on the health and function of the County Council arising from the Local Government White Paper, Lyons Inquiry and CSR07;
- Reduction of European funds coming into Kent; and
- Underperformance on "The Kent Agreement 2" leading to smaller financial rewards than anticipated as well as loss of reputation.

3.37 FINANCE

In progressing towards the MTP priorities listed by theme in Section 1, the following service-specific objectives and priorities demonstrate how the Portfolio will focus activities and continue to deliver core services to the highest standard possible.

3.37.1 Overall Objectives of the Portfolio

The overall objective of the portfolio is to manage the corporate finances of the Authority and to provide a property strategy to support the delivery of KCC's business.

For the Finance Portfolio the key objectives are focused upon:

- Participation in the continued development of both service and corporate policy and provide a lead role in the development of medium term planning;

- Develop a strategic approach to demonstrating value for money in the delivery of the Council's services;
- Develop an excellent finance function through staff development and performance management;
- Continue the excellent performance of the in-house treasury management function to reduce borrowing costs and increase investment income;
- Promote proactive approaches to risk management across the Council;
- Optimise external funding;
- Improve Kent's share of resources and funding;
- Support service delivery by providing an independent and objective evaluation of our clients' ability to accomplish their business objectives and manage their risks effectively;
- Through Commercial Services, continue the key role of market regulator through its presence as an operator in the market place, as well as direct intervention. In this manner it is able to pursue best value to both Kent County Council and its partners;
- Use Commercial Services to generate increased external income to support the County Council's budget; and
- Strategically manage Kent's property portfolio.

3.37.2 Medium Term Service Priorities

- Assist with the work in delivering the targets of the "Towards 2010" plan;
- Assist with work on "The Kent Agreement 2" targets;
- Support activities that will deliver the Supporting Independence Programme;
- Embed processes within the Council to demonstrate value for money and achievement of Government and local efficiency targets;
- Through the further development of the Oracle financial and associated business systems improve the quality of financial information available to Members and service managers, and streamline financial processes to reduce the amount of manual intervention;
- As the administering authority for the Kent Pension Fund continue to develop the investment strategy to meet strategic investment objectives and deliver high quality administrative services;
- Developing shared services and exploring new and innovative work with partners which contribute to income generation;
- Develop audit services that will contribute towards the council's ability to stay excellent, including value for money reviews and fraud awareness training;
- Sustaining and re-invigorating our core businesses and rigorously exploiting opportunities for new business will be major drivers for the next three years;
- Identifying and progressing opportunities for new areas of income generation, including those enabled by limited company status and other changes in legislation;
- Closer working with other service partners in Local Government, the Health Sector, Police and Fire, and in so doing, to reduce duplication of effort and bureaucracy in line with the efficiency agenda;
- Continued effective market regulation, moving into new markets as necessary to improve value and choice for KCC;

- Property Asset Management strategy aimed at maximizing the value of the portfolio through intelligent investment and usage policies;
- Development of Office Transformation Strategy aimed at releasing value and maximizing flexible workspace opportunities;
- Support the delivery of a large and varied Capital Programme including key regeneration driven investments such as Turner Contemporary; and
- Maximising flexible workplace opportunities.

3.37.3 Risk Assessment

The following represents our major budget risks:

- Changes to interest rates, affecting the cost of borrowing and investment returns;
- Ability to retain flexibility to respond to both increases and decreases in demand from service directorates without disproportionately increasing costs or exposure to costs;
- Property Group external contracts for Estates and Environmental Management to be renewed/replaced;
- Resolving realistic SLAs with front-line directorates alongside revenue savings requirements;
- Possible changes in the accounting treatment of some treasury management activity;
- Change in External Audit provision;
- Dependency upon delivery of capital receipts as per agreed programme with implications upon cash flow of non-delivery;
- Ability of the Enterprise Fund to identify and realise receipts for fund investment; and
- Non payment from Government of asylum costs incurred in Kent in addressing this national issue.