

By: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy,
Performance & Health Reform

David Cockburn, Corporate Director for Business Strategy &
Support

To: Corporate POSC

Subject: Asset collaboration

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This paper sets out the current work being undertaken on asset collaboration amongst public agencies within Kent to drive service transformation and efficiencies from property assets.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Kent Forum agreed in summer 2011, a new approach would be adopted to look new ways that asset collaboration could be moved forward with key public sector agencies
- 1.2 A programme was outlined whereby Kent Forum agreed that the Director of Property & Infrastructure Support would meet with all district authorities to explore new opportunities for asset collaboration. The majority of districts were keen to explore opportunities and all organisations have targets to make financial savings from their property estate.
- 1.3 KCC has a target to secure £10 million property revenue savings from its portfolio within 4 years. One of the key strands to delivering this is how we can collaborate on our assets with public partners to drive efficiencies and offer an improved service offer.

2. Progress to date.

- 2.1 Information on public sector property assets have been shared and asset maps have been prepared on a district by district basis. Other public agencies have also been part of this programme although the focus to date has very much been on a district by district basis.
- 2.2 The asset maps have provided the catalyst for Kent public sector partners to consider where current property assets are located, how future services could be provided from fewer property assets in specific areas.
- 2.3 A number of workshops have been held with officers in districts and these have identified short, medium and long term projects for asset rationalisation. It has become apparent there are three or four types of projects that have emerged

across Kent. There are significant opportunities for office rationalisation so agencies co-locate and also to explore under-utilisation and consistent space standards across all agencies. In 2012-2013, there is a suggested programme of co-location of office use across the county.

- 2.4 There is a renewed rigour to look at services provided from Gateways with new ways of delivering services to free up assets in some locations and the asset mapping, customer insight information and discussions with officers have outlined a number of options
- 2.5 From the asset maps, it has been possible to look at the concentration of public assets across the county and historically there may be a cluster of assets in one location across a number of agencies. A number of these services could co-locate or be delivered in a different way and projects are being scoped to assess the deliverability of these. As we move forward it is anticipated that public sector agencies in Kent will be able to share best practice on how to drive efficiencies from property running costs, common office space standards and driving value from facilities management contracts.
- 2.6 In most districts, 5-10 identified projects have been short-listed and work has commenced on these following discussions with individual district Leaders and senior officers to scope these in further detail. Service improvements and financial savings are the key drivers but they must link back to Vision for Kent and Bold Step for Kent objectives.
- 2.7 The asset collaboration work also dovetails with discussions in relation to the Kent Medway Investment Fund and the identification of surplus assets which could be pooled for regeneration outcomes.
- 2.8 It is important to note, that other public agencies such as Kent Police, NHS, PCT etc and some third sector organisations have also been involved in discussions. In the new year it is envisaged that these discussions will be progressed further.
- 2.9 Earlier in the year Kent was successful in its application for the National Capital Asset Pathfinder programme run by Central Government. This allows Kent to access and share best practice from other Local Authorities as well as access into central government departments.

3 Conclusion

- 3.1 There has been significant progress of the implementation of the programme and the focus is now to agree the implementation plan for each district.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to:

NOTE the report regarding the asset collaboration work.

Background Papers:

None

Officer Contacts:

Rebecca Spore

Director of Property & Infrastructure Support