

By: Paul Carter, Leader of the County Council
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

To: County Council – 21 June 2007

Subject: KCC Annual Plan 2007/08

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report attaches the final draft of the KCC Annual Plan 2007/08 for approval.

FOR DECISION

1. Introduction

The Local Government Act 1999 introduced the statutory requirement for authorities to produce a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). The contents are strictly prescribed. Kent's BVPP is known as the KCC Annual Plan. The statutory deadline for publication is 30 June.

The principal audiences are KCC's staff and Members as well as partners, groups and organisations with an interest in our activities. It is nevertheless a public document and potentially an important means of communicating with local people directly.

The Constitution states that the Leader shall submit a draft Annual Plan to County Council. This meeting of the Council to approve the plan has been arranged to allow Members to see as near final a draft as possible.

2. Purpose of the KCC Annual Plan

The KCC Annual Plan goes further than the statutory minimum BVPP content requirements. It brings existing KCC planning processes together in one document and is an important mechanism for incorporating elements of Towards 2010, Kent Agreement, Supporting Independence Programme, Vision for Kent and other Directorate priorities, for example.

It acts as a bridge between KCC's strategic objectives and corporate priorities and its service and financial plans, and avoids duplicating large amounts of detailed information contained elsewhere. It reports upon progress made against many priorities for the previous financial year as well as setting new targets for the current year and beyond. Much of the information included is therefore taken from existing Member approved information sources.

The KCC Annual Plan is also a central part of the Authority's performance management processes bringing together performance information and comparing KCC with other authorities.

This year the Annual Plan will follow the Towards 2010 layout with Directorate and Portfolio information being allocated under Towards 2010 headings. Previously the Annual Plan was set out under Next Four Years headings.

4. Completion of the Plan

This year the Annual Plan will be published on CD. The CD will also include the Vision for Kent, Towards 2010, The Kent Agreement and the Supporting Independence documents to enable easy reference. A published hard copy of the Annual Plan will also be available on request.

The final published version will be in colour and will contain relevant illustrations.

5. Approval and publication

Cabinet will consider the KCC Annual Plan on 18 June 2007 and its views will be reported orally at this meeting. There will also be an oral report on the view of the Governance and Audit Committee Group of Members who met on 7 June to consider the Plan's compliance with statutory requirements.

A copy of the draft Plan was made available to a special meeting of the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee (POCC) on 7 June 2007 for discussion prior to County Council as we have done in previous years. The approved version will be submitted to each Policy Overview Committee (POC) in July 2007, as also done in previous years. This is to enable those committees to review formally the performance of the council's services in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets. It will also be an opportunity to seek Members' views on any changes that may be incorporated into the next Plan. At the POCC meeting on 7 June it was agreed that next years draft Annual Plan will be presented to the POC's prior to County Council.

Following approval, copies will be sent to all Members of the County Council, the Authority's principal partners and relevant voluntary organisations, senior KCC managers and our external auditors, amongst others. The Plan will also be available on KCC's website before the end of June 2007. This will be a web-based version to enable better access to the public and other interested parties. A copy will also be available on KNET to allow access to all our staff.

5. External Audit

BVPPs are subject to external audit. The audit is restricted largely to whether the Plan complies with statutory requirements.

KCC's previous external auditor's, Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC), reports on the last seven years Plans have been unqualified with no statutory recommendations in the last six years. An early draft of the Plan was made available to our new appointed external auditors, The Audit Commission in order to ensure KCC meets statutory requirements prior to publication.

7. Recommendations

County Council is asked to APPROVE the KCC Annual Plan 2007/08.

Contact officer:-

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