

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Communities Policy Overview Committee held on Thursday, 27 September 2007 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent.

PRESENT: Mr P W A Lake (Chairman), Mr L Christie, (Vice-Chairman), Mr A R Chell, Mr J Curwood, (Substitute for Mr R E King), Mr D A Hirst, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr C J Law, Mrs E M Tweed and Mr B P Wood.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Honey, Managing Director accompanied by Mr D Crilley, Director Of Community Cultural Services, Mr C Hespe, Head Of Leisure Services, Mrs C Kincaid, County Co-Ordinator Kent Volunteers, Mrs A Slaven, Director of Youth Offending and Substance Misuse, Mrs G Hopkin, Head of Service, Mr C Bainbridge, Director of Community Safety and Regulatory Services, Mr S Beaumont, County Manager, Community Safety and Mrs C Anley, Head of Libraries, Springfield and Ms C A Singh, Democratic Services Officer (Overview and Scrutiny).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

46. “Towards 2010” Annual Report

(Item B1 – Report by Mr M Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities, and Ms A Honey, Managing Director for Communities)

(1) Members received a summary of the progress relating to the 13 “Towards 2010” targets on which the Communities Directorate takes the lead. It also provided information on other targets in the “Towards 2010” document to which Communities Directorate contributes.

(2) Following the Lead officers’ brief presentations on their targets, Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which were as follows:

(3) **Target 22:** Establish a biennial Kent Youth Games and support Kent sportsmen and women to compete in the 2012 London Olympics and Paralympics.

(Mr C Hespe was present to answer questions on targets 22 and 47)

- What is the difference in the biennial Youth Games and the Kent School Games?

(They are the same).

- The target reads 150 schools are to participate in the Games, how many schools are there in Kent?
- Why were only a quarter of Kent schools participating?

- How many participants are there in the disability Games and how many are in the mainstream schools?

(400 children are participating. There are 18 special schools and 6 designated units from mainstream schools. Mr Hespe advised that this was a minimum target set. The first finals of the Games would be held in 2008 by which time considerably more than 150 schools would be taking part).

- A request was made for a more detailed plan of the targets set relating to 2012 to include: what other authorities were doing, whether this was limited by funds and how did Kent compare?

(4) **Target 47:** Create and launch initiatives that facilitate more competitive sport in schools, support after school sports clubs, and sponsor more inter-school competitions and holiday sports programmes.

(This was a joint target with the Children, Families and Education Directorate)

- “ASK” to be written in full “Advisory Service Kent”.

- What is the proportion of primary and secondary schools?

(The Games are separate for primary and secondary schools. Primary school teachers were not qualified in physical education).

(5) **Target 23:** Facilitate and enhance the development of Kent Youth Theatre activities.

(Mrs S Staples, Lead Officer, was present to answer questions)

- What age range does this apply to? and How do you contact organisations?

(There was not a specific age range so as not to exclude anyone. Contact was made to those people and organisations who we knew of and those who had heard about us on the grapevine).

(6) **Target 25:** Promote Kent as a centre of the arts, encouraging the development of a network of music and cultural venues across the County.

(Mrs S Staples, Lead Officer, was present to answer questions)

- There was no measurable indicator for this target.

- Gravesend was not mentioned in this target.

- A request was made for a report on the reorganisation of the Arts Development Unit to include staffing.

- A suggestion was made that hard to reach groups could be contacted through small theatre groups and for an exchange of any help with encouraging people to train.

- Information was requested on what was being done in the growth areas such as Thamesgateway, etc.

- Members advised that during a Kent TV presentation, Kent was referred to as a good background for films and television programmes.
- How much was Kent County Council investing in the Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury?

(This was a work in progress and no commitment had been made to date, although there was support in principle).

(7) **Target 26:** Modernise the Library Service so it also acts as a focal point for KCC services and widens access to Kent's rich culture.
(Mrs C Anley, Lead Officer was present to answer questions)

- A suggestion was made that a link between the Library Service and the Post Office could be made to avert the possible closure of 59 Post Offices in Kent. Talks would need to be held with PO Ltd and Postwatch. Should this be raised at the Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee?

(Mr Hill advised that KCC was sympathetic with the closure of rural Post Offices but the libraries were not in the same places as the Post Offices. The County Council as a whole would help wherever it could).

- Would the proposed new library in Maidstone incorporate the Archives? Archives material was deteriorating. What is the present situation?

(The Archives will be incorporated in the new Maidstone library. The Archive material was not deteriorating but some of the collections had been outsourced as there was limited space).

(8) **Target 28:** Support and encourage the large number of local and voluntary groups and sports clubs in Kent and **Target 63:** Promote the Kent Volunteers Programme and work with other partners to attract more volunteers.
(Mr C Hespe and Mrs C Kincaid, Lead Officers were present to answer questions)

- Mr Law suggested that Target 28 could be interlinked with "Target 48" and possibly "Target 49", two of the targets led by Mr G Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Public Health, Mr Gilroy Leading MD and Lead Officer, Miss M Peachy.

- Referring to Target 63 – Do you work with BME groups in West Kent?

(Work was being carried out with the BME groups as well as the Race Equality Group and faith groups).

(9) **Target 57:** Build on the successful Kent Community Warden Scheme, supporting Kent Police in their visible Neighbourhood Policing Programme and working with them and the CDRPs to strengthen the Police presence in problem areas.
(Mr S Beaumont, Lead Officer was present for this item and tabled a flyer entitled "Policing Your Neighbourhood")

- Concern was raised about the "Measurable Indicator" from 67%-70%, what did this mean? Did this refer to 70% minimum of visible presence excluding time spent attending meetings and surgeries?

- Concerns were raised regarding the tabled flyer, which referred to the scheme “Policing Your Neighbourhood” currently run in Meopham. Gravesham had the highest crime rate in the town centre but there was not a KCC Warden and there was not a neighbourhood team. Were the priorities right?
- Why is the target for 2008 the same as that for 2006/07?
(The criteria will be reviewed. Deployment of the Community Wardens was carried out by the Kent Police).

(10) **Target 58:** Help maintain Kent’s low level of burglary and car theft and work with off-licence, pub and club owners to reduce alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder, antisocial behaviour and domestic abuse.
(Mr C Bainbridge, Lead Officer was present to answer questions)

- A suggestion was made that the Target should read that we are helping to avoid an increase. If we started when it was 3 in 1,000 we could have done a better job.
- Concern was raised on the penalty issued to Tesco that had not lead to revoking the alcohol licence after selling alcohol to under age children.
(Tesco had appealed and any further action shown breaches KCC having a “second bite of the cherry”).
- Concern was raised regarding the level of crime as a result of alcohol misuse at 54% and including domestic violence rose to 83%. Alcohol abuse played a part in unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, and caused cirrhosis of the liver, and played a large part in a lot of adoption cases. What is the budget for this?
(Ms Honey advised that there was currently a Select Committee on Alcohol Misuse which had yet to publicise its recommendations. There would also be an opportunity to respond to a Government document on alcohol. This subject may also merit further discussion at a future meeting).

(11) **Target 61:** Extend our public awareness campaign to alert people to the activities of rogue traders, particularly those involved in door-to-door sales, and increase the number of offenders prosecuted.
(Mr I Treacher was present for this item)

- *[I did not catch all of this question from Mr Chell]*
Buy with Confidence via KCC website?
[Your answer was]
(This is correct and Consumer South-East too).
- Was there any reaction from businesses who had not subscribed to the “Buy with Confidence Scheme” that they be inferred to as “dodgy” as they were not part of the scheme?
- In Scotland, there were no “cold calling” areas, has KCC looked at this possibility?

- There was no measurable indicator for this target.

(12) **Target 60:** Support young people to reduce the risk of them offending.
(*Mrs G Hopkin was present for this item*)

- Are you happy with this Target?
- Once you have youth in the Youth Justice System do they reappear or do they disappear?
- The indicator is not clear to me – the number of re-offenders could be part of the Target.

(These are national measures. They look at the number of young people who have received reprimands, etc at pre-Court and at the Court stage. There was improvement but the figures may be variable. Re-offenders could be looked at as a factor).

- Should there be two Targets? How many youth offenders and how many re-offend?

(13) **Target 27:** Open the Turner Contemporary Gallery, Margate, in 2009.
(*Mr Hill was present for this item*)

- Members requested details of the investment and regeneration of the old town of Margate mentioned in the Target.
- The title refers to the opening being in 2009 but the text refers to 2010.

(Mr Hill advised that the Gallery would be built by 2009 and opened in 2010).

(14) RESOLVED that:-

- each of the Communities lead Targets, Measurable Indicators and Targets for 2008 be reviewed taking on board the comments detailed in paragraphs 46 (3)-(13) by the drafting officer;
- a detailed report on the reorganisation of the Arts Development Unit to include staffing arrangements be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee; and
- a report on the Arts Development being carried out in the growth areas like Thamesgateway be submitted to a future meeting.

47. Response to the Questionnaire on the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
(*Item B2 – Report by Mr P Carter, Leader of KCC*)

(1) The Committee agreed to defer this item as there was no time remaining for a full discussion.

(Following the meeting it was advised that this report would be discussed at the County Council on 18 October 2007).