



By: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Business Strategy,
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and Support

To: Cabinet – 15th April 2013

Subject: Annual Business Plans 2013/14

Purpose: This paper summarises the business planning process and final annual business plans for 2013/14, following engagement with Cabinet Committees, and approval by individual Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members.

Cabinet is asked to APPROVE the 2013/14 business plans as a key decision.

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet’s approval of the Annual Business Plans for 2013/14.
- 1.2 This year, the business planning process has been co-ordinated and supported by Business Strategy, who have worked closely with Directors and Heads of Service to help them to develop their annual business plans, supported by a new management guide on business & financial planning, which sets out a refreshed template and guidance.
- 1.3 Responding to feedback from Directors and Members as part of the review of the 2012/13 business planning process last summer, a number of iterative improvements were made to enhance the process and ensure it was as simple, clear and light touch as possible. The emphasis this year has been on:
 - Divisional level plans – unless exceptional business need (ELS has service unit level plans, as agreed with the Corporate Director)
 - Starting the process much earlier in the year, allowing more time for development and discussion

- Early engagement of Cabinet Committees in shaping headline priorities and pre-scrutiny of early substantive draft plans (the first time this has happened, rather than scrutiny after formal approval by Cabinet)
- Greater consistency across business plans, as a result of a single template and guidance note
- Emphasis on tangible SMART actions and milestones
- Better reporting of risk within business plans, providing improved alignment between business plans and individual service, divisional and corporate risks registers
- Reducing duplication and increasing efficiency by building on existing performance management and risk management processes with Business Intelligence, such as drawing on KPI's from existing performance dashboards
- Emphasising cross cutting links in business plans – particularly strengthening references to transformation programmes and the new 'Section G' to illustrate where actions cannot be achieved without the support of other divisions – to help divisions plan ahead earlier for future capacity and demands
- A single point of contact, advice and quality assurance from Business Strategy including collective quality assurance and early feedback to Directors and Heads of Service on draft plans

1.4 The key steps of the 2012/13 business planning round are summarised below:

July 2012	Review of 2012/13 business planning process
August 2012	Refresh of business & financial planning management guide, including new template
October 2012	Early engagement with Directors & Heads of Service to develop headline priorities
November 2012	Cabinet Committees help to shape headline priorities
December 2012	Draft business plans developed, based on the headline priorities
January 2013	Cabinet Committees consider draft substantive plans
February 2013	Quality assurance by Business Strategy – draft plans amended and finalised by Directors/Head of Service
March 2013	Final plans approved by individual Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members
April 2013	Formal approval by Cabinet

2. PUBLICATION:

- 2.1 The final business plans for 2013/14 have been approved by individual Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members. Hard copies of the plans have been made available to the Chairman, the Leader, Opposition Group Leaders and two copies have been placed in the Members lounge. Further copies for inspection by Cabinet Members, the media and the public are available around the Cabinet room. Hard copies of the full set of business plans are available to the public on request.
- 2.3 Following precedent set over the past few years, once the plans are approved, Policy & Strategic Relationships will ensure they are posted online at Kent.gov as public documents (www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/council_spending/financial_publications.aspx). The plans will then be used to inform team and individual action setting as part of the appraisal process for 2013/14.

3. FURTHER IMPROVING BUSINESS PLANNING:

- 3.1 Improving business plans and business planning is an iterative process. The 2013/14 business plans are a strong starting point for future development and business planning will continue to be refined and improved through an annual review process. Following an internal audit of the business planning process, due to start in April - May 2013, we will take stock and review the 2013/14 process to make further improvements for 2014/15 planning round. This will include updating any documentation and refreshing the supporting management guide to further aid the effective development of business plans in the future.

4. RECOMENDATION:

- 4.1 On the basis of each Cabinet Member's recommendation, Cabinet is asked to agree the Annual Business Plans for 2013/14 as listed in Appendix A.

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Appendix A:

The following Business Plans are submitted for approval:

[All business plans are available to view on line as individual plans or as a pack containing all plans]

FSC

- Public Health
- Strategic Commissioning
- Specialist Children's Services
- Learning Disability & Mental Health
- Older People & Physical Disability

C&C

- Communication & Community Engagement
- Customer Services
- Service Improvement

E&E

- Highways & Transportation
- Planning & Environment
- Waste Resource Management

BSS

- Business Strategy
- Economic Development
- Finance & Procurement
- Governance & Law
- Human Resources
- Information & Communication Technology
- Property & Infrastructure Support

ELS

- Advocacy & Entitlement
- Education Psychology
- Fair Access
- Provision Planning & Operations
- Skills & Employability
- Special Educational Needs
- Standards & School Improvement