

**By:** The KCC Environment Board  
Keith Ferrin – Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways & Waste  
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**To:** Environment and Regeneration Policy Overview Committee  
31March 2009

**Subject:** **A summary of progress in delivery of KCC’s Environment Policy, including climate change and an overview of next steps for KCC and Environment and Regeneration.**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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**Summary:** **The Kent County Council Environment Policy was agreed by Cabinet in December 2007. As part of that process KCC committed to reviewing progress on implementation on an annual basis. This report highlights what significant progress has been made to date on delivering the Environment Policy (including climate change) and sets out priorities for the next 3 years (2009-2012), together with the specific role and contribution of Environment and Regeneration Directorate.**

**Recommendation:** That Members:

- a. Note progress to date and the general shape of the ‘Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan’ going forward;
- b. Agree the proposed next steps for **Environment and Regeneration Directorate.**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. In December 2007 Kent County Council agreed a new Environment Policy (Annex 1). It was agreed by Cabinet that progress in implementing this policy would be reported annually together with any recommendations for amendments.
- 1.2. In addition to this, in September 2008, the Cabinet Working Group on Climate Change took papers to each of the five Directorate Policy Overview Committees (POCs) that summarised progress to date in each directorate in response to climate change, and sought support for and commitment to next steps. All five papers were approved by the respective Committees in their entirety and have become the basis for continued programmes of work in each Directorate, with ongoing support from the central climate change programme team. Each Directorate is required to report progress to their POC on a six-monthly basis commencing March 2009.
- 1.3. This paper seeks to combine these two processes providing one update for ‘sustainability and climate change’ as well as fulfilling requirements of the KCC ISO14001 reporting process.

1.4. Included in this report are recommendations as to strategic priorities for KCC for the next three years, together with an indication of the specific role of Environment and Regeneration (E&R) and any potential changes needed to the existing KCC Environment Policy.

## **2. Changing Policy Context**

2.1. Since agreeing the KCC Environment Policy a number of new policy drivers have arisen.

2.2. The Climate Change Act 2008 creates a platform to increase momentum both internally and externally for mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. It includes a new target of an 80% reduction in emissions by 2050 (26% by 2020) compared to 1990 levels which will require a review of current KCC policy (we currently have a 60% target). This translates to a 4% reduction per year.

2.3. The Carbon Reduction Commitment is a new, legally binding climate change and energy saving scheme affecting all large businesses and public sector organisations. KCC will be required to submit annual data statements on a self-certified basis and purchase carbon credits to cover our total annual emissions. It is currently anticipated that the purchase of Carbon Allowances will cost KCC around £1.3 million per annum, plus our performance will be listed in a league table each year, which will effectively determine whether we are 'refunded' or not (*or equivalent explanation*)

2.4. Kent Agreement 2 includes two targets related to climate change NI 186: CO2 emissions within Kent and NI 188: Preparing to adapt to climate change. These targets are being delivered through a pan Kent partnership with the public and private sectors.

2.5. The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) replaces the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) from 2009. CAA is a new approach that will provide the first independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there and include Kent performance on environment and climate change

2.6. Chapter 6 of Unlocking Kent's Potential: Opportunities and Challenges - Kent's Framework for Regeneration 2009-2020 is focussed on the climate challenge and highlights some of the critical opportunities.

## **3. Overview of KCC's Environment Policy**

3.1. The agreed vision of KCC's Environment Policy is '*to stabilise and progressively reduce our environmental footprint: to progressively reduce our carbon dioxide emissions and make sure our estate and services are adapted to the future impacts and opportunities of climate change: and to contribute positively to Kent's character, local environmental quality and natural environment.*' Significant progress has been made. Highlights are given below under each of the Environment Policy headings. Annex 2 gives more detail and assessment against the targets.

### 3.2. Our Decisions

- Achievement of ISO14001 accreditation for all of KCC by the end of April 2009.
- Sustainability and climate change included in every Directorate's induction and business planning process.

### 3.3. Our Estate

- 5% decrease in office carbon emissions since 2004.
- Over £1 million pounds invested or committed to energy efficiency measures giving lifetime savings of £1.1m and 6695 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>
- Over 25 renewable energy initiatives including 10 solar and 4 biomass boilers
- 50% recycling rate at County Hall

### 3.4. Our Travel and Transport

- On course to achieve a reduction in business miles across KCC for 2008-9
- 642 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved through Kent Car Share

### 3.5. Our Procurement

- Achievement of Level 3 on the flexible framework.
- Environmental business support programme set up to assist KCC's supply chain

### 3.6. Our Construction

- Development of a sustainable construction policy
- Almost all KCC buildings are designed to BREEAM Very Good

### 3.7. Our Workforce

- Over 150 green guardians across KCC, a 100% increase in 2008, with several 'Green Teams' set up and almost 100 staff attending a cross KCC 'Good Deeds Grow' event.

### 3.8. Our Community Leadership

- More than half of Kent schools with some form of Eco Schools Award
- Approximately 8803 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved and £278,568 of economic benefits achieved as a result of the Low Carbon Communities pilot programme.

3.9. The Environment Policy also contains a number of specific targets: 10% reduction in carbon, 7% reduction in water use; 10% reduction in waste and a 50% recycling rate, all by 2010. Currently all targets are on track apart from carbon reduction which remains rated red with the last annual Towards 2010 monitoring showing only a 3% decrease.

#### **4. Emerging Priorities for KCC over the next Three Years**

4.1. The sustainability and climate change agenda is broad and far reaching in terms of both risk and opportunity for KCC. Five key Themes and a number of objectives are therefore proposed for the next 3 years to progress and integrate the delivery of the Environment Policy and climate change challenges:

- Leadership and Environmental Management
- Meeting the Climate Challenge
- Water Wise and Efficient
- Towards Zero Waste to Landfill
- High Quality Landscapes

4.2. Annex 3 provides a summary of the Five Themes. A draft Sustainability and Climate Change three year plan is currently being put together for consultation at the end of March 2009. This will incorporate issues and concerns raised by Members at this Committee meeting. The remainder of this paper focuses on action Environment and Regeneration has been involved in and it is proposed should contribute to in the future.

#### **5. Progress on specific action owned directly by Environment and Regeneration**

5.1. **Our Decisions** – Environment and Regeneration was the first Directorate to achieve ISO14001 and has been accredited now for 3 years. This year Kent Highways Alliance will be included. E&R lead ISO14001 corporately, and have driven the inclusion of environmental priorities in induction and business planning processes as part of the overarching role of the E&R Greener Kent Business Unit.

In addition, Greener Kent continues to provide the Secretariat Function for the KCC Environment Board, driving improvement and innovation in environmental performance as well as jointly leading on delivery of the Climate Change agenda.

5.2. **Our Estate** – E&R houses and jointly coordinates the Energy Water Investment Fund for KCC with Laser and leads the way in implementing energy efficiency measures and piloting new low carbon technologies.

In particular, Kent Highways Alliance have replaced traffic lights with LEDs giving 70% savings in CO<sub>2</sub>, installed a biomass boiler at the Ashford Highways depot, and are developing a pilot project for LED street lights linked to the Low Carbon Communities initiative. Country Parks have assessed all their key sites, and are in the process of implementing all possible energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy opportunities in addition to the wind turbine and biomass boiler at Shorne Country Park. Coupled with this Greener Kent have developed a Green Office Audit which has now been rolled out across the whole of the KCC Estate.

5.3. **Our Travel and Transport** – E&R were the first Directorate to put in place a 10% reduction in business miles target, and early indications are that a decrease has been achieved. Kent Highways Alliance have introduced smarter working technology to increase efficiency through better driver behaviour and improved logistics planning.

The Sustainable Transport Team continues to drive reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> through Kent car share which has saved over 600 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> and their Travel Planning service continues to assist KCC units and Kent businesses to reduce their impact of travel.

5.4. **Our Procurement** – E&R through the Kent Sustainable Business Partnership which it coordinates through Greener Kent has been instrumental in driving forward environmental management support to its supply chain as part of Backing Kent Business. Working with the Environment Agency and Business Link Kent E&R have assisted over 60 businesses last year, generating average annual savings of around £6000, and 23 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. Targeted assistance has also been provided to KASS care homes and several sports clubs linked to the Sports Development Unit.

5.5. **Our Construction** - Kent Design, linked to the KCC Sustainable Construction Policy will be key in driving forward CO<sub>2</sub> reductions in the KCC Estate and Kent. The current review of support, advice and guidance available under Kent Design will enable the public sector in Kent as well as the private sector to more effectively climate proof new development as well and major refurbishments and ensure Kent is playing a leading role in the incorporate of new low carbon and sustainable technologies.

5.6. **Our Workforce** - E&R has 20 Green Guardians and 1 Green Team in Country Parks. Greener Kent team continues to develop a cross directorate environment changing attitudes and behaviours programme including training and awareness toolkits. In February Good Deeds Grow - an awareness raising event attracted over 100 delegates from across KCC to discuss environmental performance.

5.7. **Community Leadership** – E&R have the lead for the Environmental Excellence indicators within the Kent Local Area Agreement and are working with partners across Kent to ensure delivery. In addition, E&R lead or have developed specific actions for certain aspects of the Kent Agreement 2 including taking forward recommendations from the KCC Flood Risk Select Committee, developing a public/private water action plan for Kent and jointly leading on the Climate Change and the delivery of Chapter 6 of the KCC Draft Regeneration Framework. Specific programmes include Eco Schools which now works with two thirds of Kent Schools and over half of Kent schools have some form of accreditation and the Kent Sustainable Business Partnership.

## 6. Future Challenges and Opportunities for Environment and Regeneration

6.1. Once KCC has its full accreditation to ISO 14001 in April the challenge will be to not only maintain accreditation but to demonstrate significant best practice and exemplars to demonstrate where KCC are leading. E&R's role in particular will focus on ensuring the delivery of the emerging priorities outlined in Section 4. In particular this will include:

- Facilitating the removal of barriers and strategic direction for the achievement of the Environmental Excellence National Indicators in relation to KCC, especially those relating to climate change
- Ensuring Effective implementation of the Display Energy Certificates Action Plans, and reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> from KCC buildings
- Encouraging strong Leadership and support for the development of 'smarter working' across KCC.
- Promoting more sustainable procurement, and assessment of the carbon impact of third party services
- Enabling support and reward for staff engagement and behaviour change through personal development, Ways to Success and reward

6.2. E&R are well placed to not only stimulate this across KCC, but also to lead the way in the Directorate through Highways, Waste and Country Parks in particular. As part of this E&R working with Corporate Health and Safety will look at how we can pilot combining environment with health and safety to make best use of resources.

6.3. Strong community leadership, especially in relation to the Kent Agreement 2 Indicators will be key. E&R need to ensure KCC is leading the way in the public sector in Kent, as well as working proactively with Kent business and residents especially in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Demonstrating how procurement can be used as an agent of change will be significant.

6.4. In a challenging environment, it will be increasingly important for E&R to demonstrate that a sustainable environment and economic regeneration can go hand in hand. Partnership therefore with CED to deliver real change through Chapter 6 – Meeting the Climate Challenge of the draft KCC Regeneration Framework will be a significant part of E&R's work going forward.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1. Kent County Council has made good progress towards the implementation of the KCC Environment Policy and achievement of KCC's Climate Change Commitments. However, the Towards 2010 10% carbon reduction target remains rated RED, and in the face of increasing policy, economic and regulatory drivers it is recommended that a significant proportion of activity for KCC and Environment and Regeneration over the next 3 years should focus on this area.

7.2. Though there will be a need to revise the KCC Environment Policy and the KCC Climate Change Policy in light of new Government Climate Change targets, it is recommended that this is the focus in 2010 when more information is available.

## 8. Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- c. Note progress to date and the general shape of the Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan going forward;
- d. Agree the proposed next steps for Environment and Regeneration, in particular as outlined at **Section 6.**

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Background Papers:

- E&R POC Paper – September 2008

## **Annex 1: KCC's Environment Policy**

### **Kent County Council Environment Policy**

At Kent County Council, elected members and staff alike recognise that protection and enhancement of the environment is the key to sustaining a high quality of life in Kent. We recognise that our own activities have an impact on the environment, that we have a responsibility to ensure that these impacts are positive, and that our use of natural resources is minimised.

#### **Our vision**

**To stabilise and progressively reduce our environmental footprint; to progressively reduce our carbon dioxide emissions and make sure our estate and services are adapted to the future impacts and opportunities of climate change; and to contribute positively to Kent's character, local environmental quality and natural environment**

We will do this by applying an evidence led approach to sustainability, identifying the potential for cost savings wherever possible and committing to environmental policies and standards in the following areas:

#### **Our decisions**

We will:

- Expect every manager and decision-maker in KCC to demonstrate how they comply with this Policy
- Integrate environmental considerations into our strategic and day-to-day decision-making processes, and give significant weight to them where they conflict with other objectives
- Assess key decisions for their environmental impact, taking a pragmatic whole-life-cost view, and use such assessments to fully inform decision-making
- 'Climate proof' decisions to ensure they reduce our contribution to climate change and help us prepare for the impacts and opportunities of unavoidable climate change, including where appropriate enabling biodiversity and coastal areas to adapt to climate change in line with the KCC Climate Change Action Plan
- Continue to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and statutory duties
- Seek to embrace new environmental technology and methodologies to ensure we are at the leading edge of developments and solutions, within a well-managed risk-analysis and cost-benefit framework

#### **Our estate**

We will:

- Reduce energy use within our estate to meet carbon reduction targets of 10% by 2010 and 20% by 2015
- Increase the proportion of the energy needs of our existing estate met from renewable sources
- Reduce water use by 7.5% by 2010 across our estate
- Reduce waste generation across our estate by 10% by 2010, and increase the proportion of our corporate waste which is reused or recycled to 50% by 2010
- Maximise the efficient use of land in our Estate by reusing previously developed land and buildings wherever practical, before using greenfield land.

- Protect, enhance and restore biodiversity, the natural and historic environment within both our buildings and open space, including measures that support climate change adaptation
- Minimise light, noise, air and other forms of pollution arising from our estate
- Ensure KCC-owned highways comply with the relevant parts of this Policy

### **Our travel and transport**

We will:

- Reduce our members and employees' need to travel, including through our estate strategy, locations selected for council events, use of public transport, teleconferencing and other sustainable solutions
- Achieve reductions in total business mileage travelled by employees, encourage greater car sharing and other sustainable solutions, without adversely affecting end-user service delivery
- Promote the use of fuel efficient vehicles and technologies through our vehicle fleet and lease car scheme

### **Our procurement**

We will:

- Increase the proportion of goods and services sourced locally where there are environmental or employment benefits and in compliance with broader UK and EU purchasing legislation
- Work with our suppliers to ensure that they are taking action to reduce the environmental impacts of their businesses
- Identify those goods, including timber and paper, which can be obtained from certified sustainable sources and ensure that these supplies are used
- Work with suppliers to develop markets for environmental technologies, goods and services

### **Our construction**

We will:

- Meet high standards of sustainable construction in all new KCC buildings and refurbishments, and in all developments on KCC-owned land. The BREEAM 'very good'/Code for Sustainable Buildings level 3 or equivalent standard is required as a minimum
- Require all new KCC buildings and refurbishments to assess the feasibility of developing on-site renewable energy to help meet energy needs
- Ensure that our estate and roads are planned and managed in ways which minimise the risk of flooding and do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere
- Seek to avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity and comply with policy and legislative requirements

### **Our workforce**

We will:

- Ensure that our members and employees understand the implications of environmental legislation and regulation, and exceed minimum environmental standards where possible
- Ensure that environmental awareness is raised and good environmental behaviour encouraged through our corporate training, performance appraisal and reward strategies
- Raise awareness of how to comply with all relevant environmental legislation and statutory duties

## **Our leadership role in the community**

We will:

- Lead Kent's communities to a better understanding of the importance of our environment and help them value and enhance the environment locally and globally
- Set out and deliver a vision of environmental excellence with our partners in the Kent Partnership through regular review and implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy

We will set out detailed action plans and guidance for delivery of these commitments, so that colleagues across KCC have a clear basis for decision-making.

This Policy is owned by the KCC Environment Board who may choose to call decision-makers to account for compliance with these commitments and escalate as necessary to the Leader and Chief Executive. Any proposed exceptions to this Policy will need to provide a sound business case based on whole-life economic, social and environmental costs and benefits.

Kent County Council's Corporate Environmental Performance Group will oversee provision of advice and support, monitoring and reporting. In particular, the Group will lead embedding of these commitments in ISO14001 accreditation for the County Council as a whole by 2010. The Group will report via the KCC Environment Board to the Leader and Chief Executive.



Paul Carter  
Leader

Peter Gilroy  
Chief Executive

Published December 2007. This Policy and its successful implementation will be reviewed annually by the KCC Environment Board, escalating any changes as necessary to the Leader and Chief Executive.

Theme	ANNEX 2 - Progress Against the KCC Environment Policy (March 2009)	KCC Policy	Future Challenge
<b>Our Decisions</b>	<p>Achievement of ISO14001 accreditation for all of KCC by the end of April 2009.</p> <p>Sustainability and climate change included in every Directorates induction and business planning</p> <p>Sustainability Appraisal Guidance for Key Decisions</p>	AMBER	AMBER
<b>Our Estate</b>	<p>5% decrease in office carbon emissions since 2004.</p> <p>56 energy projects, £1 million+ invested or committed with £1.1m and 6695 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved over the project life time</p> <p>Over 25 renewable energy initiatives including 10 solar and 4 biomass boilers</p> <p>50% recycling rate at County Hall</p>	AMBER	RED
<b>Our Travel and Transport</b>	<p>On course to achieve a reduction in business miles across KCC for 2008-9</p> <p>642 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved through Kent Car Share</p>	GREEN	RED
<b>Our Procurement</b>	<p>Achievement of Level 3 on the flexible framework.</p> <p>Environmental business support programme set up to assist KCC's supply chain</p>	AMBER	AMBER
<b>Our Construction</b>	<p>Development of a sustainable construction policy</p> <p>Almost all KCC buildings are designed to BREEAM Very Good</p>	GREEN	AMBER
<b>Our Workforce</b>	<p>Over 150 green guardians, 100% increase includes Several 'Green Teams'</p> <p>QSA Environment Categories planned for every Directorate</p> <p>Environment 'Way to Success'</p>	GREEN	AMBER
<b>Our Community Leadership</b>	<p>More than half of Kent schools with some form of Eco Schools Award</p> <p>Almost 8803 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> saved, £278,568 of economic benefits from Low Carbon Communities</p>	GREEN	AMBER

**Annex 3: Sustainability and Climate Change – Five Key Themes**

