

By: Paul Carter, Leader of the Council

To: Cabinet – 23rd March 2015

Subject: Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)

Summary: Following public consultation, this report seeks agreement to endorse "*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*" as the five year strategic statement for the County Council, which sets the vision and outcomes we want to achieve for the residents, businesses and communities of Kent.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the following:

- To note the findings of the public consultation and subsequent changes to the draft strategic statement as set out in the report.
- Agree to recommend to County Council that they approve "*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*" (Appendix 1) as the five year strategic statement for KCC.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 KCC has had a series of strategic statements which set out the administration's ambitions and priorities for the medium term. This is a key part of our policy framework and guides the strategic and business planning process of the County Council. The previous strategic statement '*Bold Steps for Kent*' was closed by County Council in May 2014, to ensure the focus was on delivering our transformation programme '*Facing the Challenge*'.
- 1.2 In December 2014, County Council agreed to launch a public consultation on a new draft strategic statement, which focused on the outcomes we want to achieve for the residents, businesses and communities of Kent.
- 1.3 In response to the feedback from the consultation provided by residents and staff, the strategic statement has been revised and updated. Cabinet is asked to recommend that County Council approves '*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*' as KCC's new strategic statement for the next five years.

2. APPROACH

- 2.1 '*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*' (Appendix 1) is a very different strategic statement to those which have come before, as it reflects the changes we need to make to become an outcome focused organisation. We have received positive feedback that the document is shorter, simpler and more transparent about what we want to achieve. Outcomes help us focus on the end result we want to achieve for the people of Kent.

- 2.2 Our focus is on improving lives by ensuring that every pound spent in Kent is achieving better outcomes for Kent’s residents, businesses and communities. As long as those outcomes are supported by the right services, at the right quality and right cost, they could be delivered by KCC, the public, private or voluntary and community sector.
- 2.3 With significant and sustained financial and service delivery challenges ahead, it is even more important we are outcome focused, so we can work with our partners and providers to innovate and radically redesign our services. The outcomes will help us focus on the issues that really matter by targeting limited resources where they will have the greatest impact.
- 2.4 This strategic statement deliberately does not set out the detail of **how** we will design and deliver services – this will be embedded in our strategies, policies, commissioning plans and business plans. This is the way we will put the strategic statement into practice by ensuring all our activity is focused on improving outcomes. This will help our staff, partners and providers to understand and be focused on the contribution they play towards achieving our vision.
- 2.5 We have developed a simple and clear structure for the strategic statement, which can be summarised in a diagram on a single page:
- **Our vision** – what we want to achieve as an organisation
 - **Our strategic outcomes** – what we want to achieve for the people of Kent
 - **Our supporting outcomes** – underpin the delivery of the strategic outcomes
 - **Our business plan priorities** – a number of strategic, cross cutting actions that will help deliver the supporting outcomes
 - **Our approach** – the way we want to work as a council to deliver these outcomes
- 2.6 The aim has been to not create additional layers of activity on top of our extensive transformation, so the outcomes align to the various National Outcome Frameworks and build on those we have already identified in our existing strategies, policies and transformation blueprints.

3. CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 3.1 Lake Market Research were commissioned to undertake the consultation on the draft strategic statement, which ran for five weeks from 21st January to 20th February 2015. The consultation consisted of three phases of research:

Residents Deliberative Workshops	Staff Deliberative Workshop	Online Questionnaire
An in-depth qualitative assessment of resident opinions via face to face deliberative workshops	An in-depth qualitative assessment of KCC staff opinions via deliberative workshops	The use of an online consultation questionnaire (also available in hard copy) hosted on the Consultation area of the KCC website

- 3.2 The consultation closely followed the format of previous budget consultation exercises. A consultation questionnaire was placed online which received 56 responses to the online questionnaire, including 29 responses from individuals/residents and 16 from staff. Such a response rate was not unexpected given previous difficulties on attracting responses to previous strategic statements (such as Bold Steps for Kent) given the public respond pro-actively to specific service changes or issues and identify less with strategic documents. As such, a series of deliberative workshops with residents (and one workshop with KCC staff) were held across west, east and mid-Kent, with residents recruited to reflect a statistically accurate cross section of the Kent population.
- 3.3 The aim of the consultation was to gain insight into informed public opinion on KCC's vision and priorities for the future, as well as to provide feedback for recommendations to make the strategic statement simple, clear and accessible to a wider audience.
- 3.4 85 residents and 39 staff attended the workshops. Both staff and residents displayed many similarities in their feedback – both broadly supporting the content of the draft outcomes, but raising consistent issues about tone, wording and outcomes they thought should be strengthened or emphasised. Whilst the online questionnaire findings had a focus on individual circumstances and concerns, the feedback was broadly consistent with the deliberative sessions, agreeing that the right outcomes and supporting outcomes had been put forward.

4. CONSULTATION FINDINGS

4.1 *Awareness and Communication*

Residents were genuinely pleased to be involved in a process that helps shape our future direction, and found it to be a positive learning experience about the role of the Council. They felt it was important that they find out how their views influenced the document, and that they had more opportunities to be involved and engaged to share their views in the future.

One early conclusion from the research was that awareness raising of the document and the future strategy of the council was key. Awareness about KCC's strategic direction was fairly low, and people considered the previous documents we have published to be onerous and difficult to understand. People were positive about the changes we have made to try and simplify the document, and made constructive comments to encourage further changes to shorten the strategic statement, to reduce jargon and change language that didn't resonate with them.

People felt it was important that we keep documents clear and simple so that they can be understood by a wider audience and in particular so staff understand how strategic documents make a difference, what they need to do as a result and their personal contribution to improving outcomes. As with residents, feedback about how staff views have helped to shape the document is very important, as some staff have been disenchanted about consultation in the past. Therefore we will provide all

respondents with a follow-up report which clearly sets out “You said, we did” so they can see how their views helped influence the strategic statement.

Both residents and staff felt that the document needs to be different if it is to be widely communicated to all residents in Kent, particularly to engage young people. It will be important to consider mechanisms to ensure that the information is disseminated and understood by a wider audience than previous strategic statements.

The deliberative events highlighted that we need to do more to raise awareness of KCC’s role and the services deliver with our partners, that we do more to promote our successes and provide information so residents can tell if we are on track and making progress against our vision.

4.2 ***Difficult Financial Challenges***

People felt that the strategic statement should be realistic about the current financial climate and we should show that we recognise the changes in the economic landscape. They felt it was important that we are honest about the budget difficulties we face, and that the outcomes were rephrased to reflect this – for example suggesting that people aspire to a “good” rather than “high” quality of life, and removing the term “prosperity”.

There was an interesting perception issue, with residents and staff feeling that the economic situation in Kent was still very difficult within the communities they live in and for the service users they support, despite evidence that Kent business and the Kent economy is growing.

4.3 ***Title & Vision***

The consultation showed that the vast majority of people felt that the previous working title “*Supporting Independence and Opportunity*” needed to be changed. People strongly associated the term “independence” with a document purely about social care, disability or older people. Young people reported that they did not identify or feel engagement with the title. Some people directly associated the word “opportunity” with business or education.

Feedback from the deliberative events was to find a title that better explained the purpose of the document. They did not respond to the way we initially described it as an “outcomes framework” and felt that “strategic statement” helped them better understand that this was about KCC’s strategic direction and vision for the future. Residents and staff helped to provide alternative title suggestions.

The feedback on the vision was consistent with conversations about the title. The draft vision was “*Kent is a county which promotes independence and maximises opportunity for all residents, businesses and communities*”. People felt the vision should be updated, asked for the phrases ‘independence’ and ‘opportunity’ to be changed, and for the vision to set out a clearer intention statement about what KCC will do in the future.

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The title needed to reflect what the document was about. • That the vision needed to be clearer about what KCC will do differently. • That we needed to change the words “supporting independence” • That “opportunity” was strongly associated with business and education. • That we should call it a strategic statement rather than an outcomes framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Leader has decided to change the title to: “Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council’s Strategic Statement 2015-2020”. • We have changed the vision statement to: “Our focus is on improving lives by ensuring that every pound spent in Kent is delivering better outcomes for Kent’s residents, businesses and communities”.

4.4 **Intention**

Residents supported bold statements about outcomes. They asked for a change to more strongly worded intent based statements that specifically referenced KCC’s role (e.g. “*Kent County Council will..., Kent County Council aims to...*”). Whilst we have responded to this feedback by changing and strengthening the language in the supporting outcomes to be bolder and more positive, it is difficult to limit them to KCC’s individual role.

We know that improving outcomes cannot be delivered in isolation, and that to tackle financial and service delivery challenges such as prevention, demand management and integration effectively we need to work even closer together with our partners and providers across the public, private and voluntary sector. We want to appreciate and acknowledge the contribution that not only KCC but many others make towards improving outcomes in our reporting. As such, we have kept many of the supporting outcomes focused on “Kent” as a whole, and acknowledged our role in the future will sometimes be about supporting or enabling rather than direct delivery.

4.5 **Strategic Outcomes**

People broadly supported the content of the three strategic outcomes and felt the intention was positive and they focused on the right issues. Some people questioned how we will deliver these outcomes in the current economic climate, particularly how they could be achieved in areas of deprivation and inequality. They felt that all three outcomes were positive in that they supported people at the start and end of their life, and every life stage.

People positively supported the first strategic outcome **“Children and young people in Kent get the best start in life”**, which they felt was a priority for the County Council. Most people agreed with the wording, or something very similar, so this outcome remains unchanged.

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both children and young people are important. • That you agreed with the wording of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have kept the wording for this strategic outcome unchanged.

this strategic outcome.	
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The original wording of the second strategic outcome was *“Kent communities benefit from increasing prosperity by being in-work, health and enjoying a high quality of life”*. Whilst people agreed with the intention of the outcome, they strongly felt the wording needed to be changed to be more realistic and reflective of the economic challenges we face. Both residents and staff made specific comments about the phrases “increasing prosperity” and “high quality of life” – feeling a “good quality of life” was more appropriate. A perception issue was raised, particularly in East Kent and by young people, about individuals not believing or feeling the benefits of growth, despite evidence to the contrary on both the national economic recovery and Kent economy.

There was some debate about the phrase “in-work” but the comments supported the fact employment is important and we know that statistically being in-work greatly improves people’s life chances and reduces health inequalities in a number of ways (for example improving mental health and wellbeing).

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We needed to change the words “increasing prosperity” and “high quality of life”. • We needed to make the outcome more realistic. • That the current financial reality for some people is still very difficult and some people – especially young people - don’t always feel the benefits of growth. • That encouraging work and creating more jobs is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have changed the wording of the strategic outcome to: “Kent communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life”.

The original wording for the third strategic outcome was *“Older and vulnerable residents are safe, supported to live well and independently”*. Most people understood the sentiment of the outcome and agreed with the intention behind the words. They felt that it was important that people did not feel they were forced to live independently inappropriately, and that they had more choice about their levels of independence. Young people felt it was important that “independence” didn’t imply “alone or isolated” and that older people feel supported.

Some people did not understand what the phrase “live well” meant and how it could be assessed.

Others only directly associated the term “vulnerable” with older people, rather than all life stages (for example mental health), so we have strengthened the wording of the supporting outcomes across all three strategic outcomes to reflect this.

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You agreed it was important to support older and vulnerable people. Choice is really important so people can make informed options about their level of independence and are not forced to be independent inappropriately. We needed to change the phrase “live well”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have changed the wording of the strategic outcome to: “Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently”. We have changed the wording of supporting outcomes across the three strategic outcomes so it is clearer ‘vulnerable’ means all life stages.

4.6

Emphasis & Importance of the Supporting Outcomes

The deliberative events in particular provided constructive and insightful feedback about the draft supporting outcomes. This was extremely helpful to identify areas that are particularly important for residents that we needed to strengthen and which issues we needed to emphasise. There were a number of comments about changing the phrasing and wording, which we address in **Section 5**.

One of the key areas which residents focused on was the issue of mental health – particularly education and raising awareness, supporting families and carers and ensuring people have early access to the assessment and treatment they need. They made it clear that this should not be targeted specifically at the elderly as mental health issues occur across all ages and the document should reflect this.

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health is important across all life stages. It is important we support families, carers and the wider community, as well as individuals. Early assessment and treatment is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We agree that mental health is an important priority so we have changed the wording of the supporting outcomes across all three strategic outcomes to clarify it is a priority for every life stage. We have added a new supporting outcome about supporting families and carers. We have changed the emphasis of the supporting outcome to be about early assessment and treatment: “People with mental health issues and dementia are assessed and treated earlier and are supported to live well”.

Young people felt that many of the draft supporting outcomes excluded them by referencing children, but not young people. They wanted to see more outcomes that were relevant to their age group to help address young people’s needs – particularly around access to education, training and work opportunities. They felt more needs to be done to help raise awareness of the services and support we provide to help young people make the transition to working life, with more opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and placements. We have responded to this by changing the wording of many of the supporting outcomes to directly reference young people, and highlighting the issues they had identified as most important.

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to directly reference young people more in the supporting outcomes. • Choice and access to education, training and work opportunities is important. • We need to do more to raise awareness of services to support young people make the transition to adulthood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have included more specific references about young people, as well as children. • We have strengthened wording about choice and access to education, training and work opportunities in the supporting outcome, and ensured this issue is reflected in our business plan priorities. • We will consider how we can better communicate what we do and what support is available for young people.

People made positive suggestions about combining or merging supporting outcomes together where they felt the issues were connected (for example bringing together skills, infrastructure and business growth), or identifying where supporting outcomes needed to be split to better highlight a particular issue (for example splitting the outcome on quality of life to create a specific outcome on the environment).

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We needed to split the supporting outcome on growth so there is a specific outcome on lowering levels of deprivation. • We need to specify support for Kent business growth, as well as all communities feeling the benefits of economic growth. • We needed to combine outcomes on growth, skills and infrastructure as these issues are connected. • We needed to split the supporting outcome on quality of life so there is a specific outcome on the environment, and change the wording so it was more positive and ambitious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have created a new outcome about deprivation: “All Kent’s communities benefit from economic growth and lower levels of deprivation”. • We have changed the emphasis of the supporting outcomes to be clearer about supporting Kent business growth. • We have removed two supporting outcomes on skills and infrastructure, and combined them with the outcome on Kent business growth. • We have created a new outcome about the environment: “Kent’s physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors”.

The consultation has helped to identify issues that people felt were so important that they deserved a new supporting outcome, for example to recognise support needed for carers, family and the wider caring community for mental health and dementia sufferers. There were also constructive suggestions from residents about priorities for action for KCC that will help us to help deliver better outcomes for older and vulnerable people – specifically those with mental health issues and dementia. We will ensure these are reflected in our strategic Business Plan Priorities (see **Section 6**).

You Said	We Did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We needed a new outcome which was about supporting families and carers. • A priority should be encouraging and enabling new technologies for the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have created a new supporting outcome: “Families and carers of vulnerable and older people have access to the advice, information and support they need”.

<p>older and vulnerable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A priority should be education of the Kent community on mental health and dementia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have introduced two new strategic business plan priorities to ensure these two issues are delivered through our business plans.
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4.7 **Strategic Commissioning Authority**

During the consultation workshops, the opportunity was taken to ask residents their views on KCC becoming a strategic commissioning authority, given the strategic statement is important to this approach. Whilst there was clear dislike of the phrase, which residents felt to be jargon, there was strong support across all groups for embedding the principles of good commissioning more widely across the council, which was simply seen as good-business practice. There were very few concerns raised about seeking alternative providers *if* they were the *best* provider to deliver the service and provide value for money.

However, there were three clear caveats to this strong support. Firstly, that KCC is strongly mindful about size of profit margin that providers, especially from the private sector, can earn from KCC contracts, and a clear preference for small-medium sized Kent businesses having greater opportunities to deliver services and not be squeezed out by national providers (which are largely associated with service failure). Secondly, that KCC should have the skills and ability to manage contracts effectively, drive value for money and ensure consistent service quality (there was quite a significant degree of scepticism from residents that such capability exists). Thirdly, that KCC should remain accountable for the services it provides and commissions, with members of the public being able to contact or raise issues about services with the council directly or through elected Members.

5 **KEY CHANGES TO THE SUPPORTING OUTCOMES**

5.1 The consultation provided a number of constructive suggestions to help improve the wording of the supporting outcomes, to make them clearer, more relevant and more appropriate. People had strong associations and reactions to specific words and phrases, and we were open to making these changes to ensure the strategic statement is as meaningful and engaging as possible.

5.2 Wherever possible we have endeavoured to respond to the majority of issues raised with the supporting outcomes, however it is not always possible to respond to every suggestion. The consultation sometimes highlighted alternative or conflicting suggestions from different groups. In some cases we felt the wording needed to remain if it supported a particular need, issue or political priority (e.g. closing the attainment gap between disadvantaged young people and their peers). That said, almost all the supporting outcomes were strengthened as a direct result of the consultation feedback. The changes that have been made have helped to create a much improved strategic statement.

5.3 The new wording for each supporting outcome, and the rationale for the change is set out below, under each strategic outcome:

5.4 ***Children & young people in Kent get the best start in life***

New Supporting Outcome	Rationale for Change
Kent communities are resilient and provide strong and safe environments to successfully raise children and young people	Staff felt that it was important that wider communities were resilient, not just individual families and that this was more inclusive. Residents thought it was important this outcome specifically mentioned young people as well as children. There was some concern about the phrase 'resilient' but there was no agreement on an alternative.
We keep vulnerable families out of crisis and more children and young people out of KCC care	Residents felt this was a very important issue and staff felt it supported their work on early intervention and prevention. People thought it was important this outcome specifically mentioned young people as well as children. Not everyone agreed with the phrase 'vulnerable' but most of the alternative suggestions put forward continued to use this phrase.
The attainment gap between disadvantaged young people and their peers continues to close	People had an issue with the term 'vulnerable' and this was changed to 'disadvantaged' to reflect the need to close the gap in particular areas of deprivation and disadvantage across Kent. As a phrase 'attainment gap' was not well understood and some people disagreed that this should focus on a particular section of society. However this remains a key priority for the County Council, as we know if we improve educational attainment, we can improve disadvantaged young people's life chances in a whole range of ways. Alternative suggestions focused on improving life chances for all young people so they can achieve their potential, which has been picked up in other supporting outcomes.
All children, irrespective of background, are ready for school at age 5	People felt the outcome could be simplified so we have removed the phrase "so they fully benefit from the opportunities education provides". Some people disliked the phrase "irrespective of background" but this remains as we know we have a particular need to close the gap in school readiness for children from disadvantaged areas.
Children and young people have better physical and mental health	People agreed with the sentiment, but felt that young people should be specifically referenced as well as children. Mental health was identified as a particular priority for all life stages so this has been added here. The original wording referenced 'joined up care' but people felt this was a priority for how we deliver, rather than the end result we want to achieve, so this is reflected in the business plan priorities rather than the outcome.
All children and young people are engaged, thrive and achieve their potential through academic and vocational education	People didn't respond well to the original phrase "maximise their potential". People felt it was particularly important this outcome focused on vocational education, not just academic education. They felt that choice and access to opportunities was the critical issue which has been addressed

	by changing the following outcome. Residents suggested that engagement in education, supporting all children and young people to “thrive” and “achieve their potential” were all important, so we have reflected this in the revised wording.
Kent young people are confident and ambitious with choices and access to work, education and training opportunities	Residents said that one of the most critical issues for young people was choice and access to work, education and training opportunities. People felt this was important to support young people in their transition to adulthood and to help them get ready for working life. People didn’t respond to the phrase “21 st century world of work” so this has been removed. Some people felt that not everyone could be “confident and ambitious” but it was felt that it was important to retain this to keep the outcome bold and aspirational, and this wording was supported in alternative suggestions from residents.

5.5 ***Kent’s communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life***

New Supporting Outcome	Rationale for Change
Physical and mental health is improved by supporting people to take more responsibility for their own health and wellbeing	Mental health was identified as a particular priority for all life stages so this has been added here. Residents wanted a more positive, intention based statement so we have changed this from “ill health is prevented” to “health is improved”. They also felt that poor health cannot always be prevented for people with particular conditions, so we have removed that phrase. People liked the message people should be focused on taking personal responsibility for their own health.
Kent business growth is supported by having access to a well skilled local workforce with improved transport, broadband and necessary infrastructure	People felt supporting Kent businesses growth and bringing new business investment into Kent was specifically important, but felt that this wasn’t reflected in the original wording. They suggested reordering the outcome to put Kent business growth first, then merging the other outcomes on skills and infrastructure together as they felt the issues were connected. People didn’t understand the phrase “knowledge intensive sector” so this was removed.
All Kent’s communities benefit from economic growth and lower levels of deprivation	People felt that they didn’t always feel the benefits of growth in the communities where they live and work, and feel lowering deprivation is a key issue which justified its own supporting outcome. They felt that the economy could be very buoyant overall but there would still be areas with high levels of deprivation that we needed to tackle.
Kent residents enjoy a good quality of life, and more people benefit from greater social,	Residents had issues with the term “high quality of life” and wanted to change this to “good quality of life” to be more reflective of the current economic

cultural and sporting opportunities	climate. People felt that social, cultural and sporting opportunities should be included.
We support well planned housing growth so Kent residents can live in the home of their choice	People disliked the phrase “hard working families” and asked for this to be removed. They felt this was about giving all residents the opportunity to live in a home of their choice, including all forms of housing tenure, whereas the original wording implied home ownership which feels unachievable for some people, particularly for young people in the current financial climate. We felt it was important that growth is well planned to create quality communities – not just about increasing housing numbers, so the wording has changed to reflect this.
Kent’s physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors	Residents felt that the natural environment was important, that this had been overlooked in the draft document and should be separated from the broader outcome on quality of life. People felt it could be more ambitious and suggested this should be seen as an opportunity to ‘enhance’ and ‘enjoy’ the environment, not just protect it.

5.6 ***Older and vulnerable residents are safe and supported with choices to live independently***

New Supporting Outcome	Rationale for Change
Those with long-term conditions are supported to manage their conditions through access to good quality care and support	People supported the intention of this outcome but felt it could be simplified by removing the phrase “high quality of life” which they found not to be reflective of the current financial climate.
People with mental health issues and dementia are assessed and treated earlier and are supported to live well	People felt mental health was an important issue across all life stages, and strongly supported having an outcome on this issue. They felt that early assessment and treatment was a particular issue. People wanted to remove the phrase “ill” mental health, which they felt was unnecessary.
Families and carers of vulnerable and older people have access to the advice, information and support they need	Residents and staff both strongly felt that supporting families and carers was very important, in addition to supporting individuals and that this justified a new outcome. People felt that knowing how to access the right information and who to go to for advice was also important.
Older and vulnerable residents feel socially included	People suggested that we remove the phrase “socially excluded”. Residents felt it was important that people feel valued, respected and part of their community and more could be done to promote opportunities to engage older and vulnerable people within their local community.
More people receive quality care at home avoiding unnecessary admissions to hospital and care homes	There was strong support for this outcome. People suggested removing the phrase “costly” as this could imply people are seen as a financial burden and this was about providing quality care, not just

	reducing costs.
The health and social care system works together to deliver high quality community services	People suggested removing the phrase “wrap around” and simplifying this. People suggested we use the term “working together” rather than “integrated”. People felt the quality of community health and social care services was important.
Residents have greater choice and control over the health and social care services they receive	This outcome remained unchanged as people felt that giving people greater choice was important rather than just offering standardised routes, although they questioned how we will deliver this in practice.

6 BUSINESS PLAN PRIORITIES AND APPROACH

- 6.1 With fewer resources, it is important that we focus on the issues that really matter. Our Cabinet Members have identified a number of cross cutting strategic business plan priorities, which will be areas of particular focus and improvement to help the council deliver our strategic and supporting outcomes.
- 6.2 A number of strategic business plan priorities are set out in “*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*” (Appendix 1) and they will be reflected in our Directorate Business Plans by May 2015, so everyone in the council is clear on what they need to deliver and focused on their contribution towards improving outcomes.
- 6.3 We know that we can only improve outcomes if we have strong relationships with our service users, partners and providers, so the business plan priorities help to describe how we will work together and how KCC will work differently in the future. The detail of how we achieve this will be set out through our business planning framework.
- 6.4 The strategic statement sets out how we will change our approach and the way we work as a council in order to achieve the business plan priorities and improve outcomes.

7 MEASURING AND REPORTING OUR PROGRESS

- 7.1 Having defined the outcomes and priorities we want to achieve, it is important that we measure our progress, to ensure we are on track to deliver our vision. Moving to an outcomes based approach means a stronger focus on evaluation, alongside performance and contract management. Therefore we need to use a broader evidence base to measure and report our progress, so we can evidence the impact we are making.
- 7.2 We want to create a more rounded narrative about the progress we are making. We will develop and regularly review a suggested basket of measures for each supporting outcome, so we can find appropriate and meaningful measures to help us understand whether we are making a difference. Wherever possible, we will draw on existing measures to reduce the reporting burden and compare our performance within Kent, against our statistical neighbours, the South East and Nationally.

- 7.3 Our staff, residents, partners and providers have helped to test our outcomes, and told us it is important they can continue to have an opportunity to share their views on whether we are an effective commissioner, partner and client. We will develop surveys to inform our reporting so we can listen and respond to their feedback and use this to improve the way we work.
- 7.4 We will balance this alongside contextual evidence to provide an annual report on our progress against the strategic statement to County Council.

8 NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 We will ensure that everyone who responded to the consultation understands how their views influenced the document, and the changes we made as a result.
- 8.2 We will undertake a benchmarking exercise so we can provide an evidence base of current progress against the outcomes. We will track our direction of travel against the measures, balanced against the resources expended and the impact achieved.
- 8.3 We will develop resident, partner and provider surveys to understand what we are doing well, and what we could do better.
- 8.4 We will consider how best to communicate the strategic statement to our staff, partners and residents, so everyone understands what we want to achieve.
- 8.5 We will provide an update on progress with an annual report to County Council in 2016.

9 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendices:

Appendix 1: "Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)"

Background Documents:

- [Facing the Challenge: Towards a Strategic Commissioning Authority, County Council, May 2014](#)
- [Facing the Challenge: Draft Corporate Outcomes Framework for KCC, County Council, 11th December 2014](#)
- [Equalities Impact Assessment, March 2015](#)
- [Lake Market Research Consultation Report, March 2015](#)

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