



# Supporting Independence & Opportunity:

Draft Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015 - 2019

## Foreword:

*Kent County Council (KCC) is widely considered to be one of the strongest member-led councils in the country.*

Through documents such *'The Next Five Years'*, *'Towards 2010'* and *'Bold Steps for Kent'* the elected members of the County Council have set out their ambitions for Kent and driven the strategic direction of the Council.

This Corporate Outcomes Framework, and the Commissioning Framework that sits alongside it, replace *Bold Steps for Kent* as the Strategic Statement for KCC.

It is however a very different Strategic Statement from those that have gone before. It reflects the need for KCC to become a very different type of council over the next five years - to become a strategic commissioning authority.

If we are to remain ambitious for Kent, committed to securing high-quality services for our residents and supporting the most vulnerable to live independently in our local communities wherever possible, then KCC's role must change.

Our focus must be on the outcomes we want to achieve and ensuring that every pound spent in Kent is delivering those improved outcomes for Kent's residents, communities and businesses.

Who delivers services in support of meeting those outcomes will depend on who is best placed to achieve them from across the public, private and voluntary sector.

The discipline of commissioning applied across the whole council at a strategic level will help elected members make those difficult commissioning decisions, as the council continues to face at least another five years of austerity and budget reductions.

This Corporate Outcomes Framework articulates the vision and priorities of the council into a single set of

outcomes which will act as a beacon, guiding the work of our commissioners, partners and services in a time of increasing complexity and financial challenge.

It builds upon the transformation already being delivered through our Facing the Challenge programme to redesign and reshape our services around the principles of demand management, prevention and value for money.

Most importantly, our intention is to keep the draft outcomes framework as simple as possible to promote greater accountability and transparency.

This simplicity will drive accountability both within KCC, and of KCC, by our residents and our partners.

Most importantly, it provides the mandate for our commissioners and providers across the public, private and voluntary sectors to innovate and radically redesign what we do and how we do it, to meet these outcomes for Kent.

**Paul Carter**  
**Leader, Kent County Council**

## Background:

Over the past four years Kent County Council (KCC) has made £350m in savings whilst continuing to provide effective services for Kent's residents, businesses and communities.

However, the council's finances will remain under the significant pressure for many years to come. KCC needs to make a further £206m in savings over the next three years alone, with significant further savings beyond the next three years also very likely.

Alongside the financial challenge, the population is increasingly older, increasingly living with long-term health conditions, with greater expectations about how to access services, and how services can be provided, requires a radically different offer from that traditionally provided by public services.

Given the scale of these financial and service delivery challenges, KCC needs to become a council that is increasingly agile and adaptable to change itself, and a council that is able to shape and reshape the services it provides to meet the changing needs of Kent residents, business and communities.

In July 2013 County Council approved Facing the Challenge: Whole Council Transformation, which set out its ambition to become a strategic commissioning authority by 2020.

By becoming a strategic commissioning authority KCC can become the leaner, more agile and outcome focused organisation it needs to be to successfully meet the financial and public service challenges it faces. It will ensure KCC aligns the resources at its disposal, and those it can leverage through more effective partnership working across the public, private and voluntary sector of Kent, to best meet the needs of Kent residents and communities.

In May 2014, Facing the Challenge: Towards a Strategic Commissioning Authority set out that KCC would begin to operate as a strategic commissioning authority from April 2015.

A necessary part of operating as a strategic commissioning authority is to have a **clear statement of the high-level outcomes that the County Council is seeking to achieve**, alongside the new Commissioning Framework, which sets out the high-level approach to ensure effective and consistent standard of commissioning.

The intention is that this draft Corporate Outcomes Framework is **approved for consultation by County Council in December 2014**, and subject to changes resulting from the consultation process, ask County Council to approve the final framework in March 2015.

## Introduction:

The Corporate Outcomes Framework links the vision and priorities of the council to a series of strategic and supporting outcomes that will drive the commissioning and service delivery across KCC.

This will help KCC, the public, our providers and partners to:

- Be clear about what KCC is seeking to achieve as an organisation
- Provide a framework for deciding where KCC should focus our effort
- Drive the commissioning and design of KCC's in-house and externally commissioned services.

Unlike previous strategic statements, this outcomes framework does not attempt to set out the detail of how these outcomes will be achieved.

This will emerge through the strategic commissioning and strategic planning process of the council, as directors and commissioners plan, with elected members, residents, service users and providers how to design and deliver innovative new services to meet these outcomes.

## Our vision and approach:

Our vision is for Kent to be a county which promotes independence and maximises opportunity for all residents, businesses and communities.

It is critical that public services do not inadvertently trap people in dependency or promote a dependency culture.

The services commissioned and provided by KCC, either by ourselves or jointly with our partners, should focus on helping individuals, families and communities to be resilient and support themselves wherever possible.

For the most vulnerable in our society, who are less resilient and will always need some support, then we will ensure that they are well supported, safe, socially included and treated with dignity and respect.

In order to tackle dependency we must also promote opportunity.

We will promote opportunity by ensuring that Kent young people have the education and skills necessary to support Kent businesses to be increasingly competitive in the national and international economy.

By helping Kent businesses increase economic growth and deliver new jobs across the whole of Kent, and by ensuring the physical, social, cultural and environmental infrastructure is protected, we can make Kent an attractive place to live and work.

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- **Promote personal and family responsibility:**

The services we commission and provide must focus on promoting personal and family responsibility. Our aim is for individuals and families to be resilient and support themselves without the need for support from the council. Where support is needed, our services should be focused on pro-active interventions that allow individuals and families to become independent quickly, and not

require long-term support from the council. For the most vulnerable in our communities, where long-term support is required, then our services should always enable people to live as independently as possible.

- **Focus on prevention and supporting independent living:**

Prevention is always better than cure. KCC services, whether commissioned or provided in-house, should focus on prevention as the best way to support independent living, protect Kent's infrastructure and natural assets, and also protect the interests of the Kent taxpayer by avoiding the need for expensive service interventions once things have gone wrong.

- **Maximise social value from the services we commission:**

KCC services have a social purpose and therefore KCC must become smarter at determining social value through the commissioning process, especially where the council is seeking to leverage social value through the commissioning of services from external providers (for example, in the form of requiring providers to take on apprentices).

- **Commission and design services with our partners:**

KCC is one part of a much wider network of public service delivery across Kent, and if we are to meet the needs of our residents and communities within the resources available to Kent as a whole, then we must jointly commission, design and deliver services with our partners.

- **Maximise the value of the Kent tax pound:**

It is vital that our services deliver value for money for the taxpayer. If the resources of the County Council can be used to deliver better outcomes and provide savings to the Kent taxpayer through our partners (e.g. NHS) rather than through KCC directly, then we should seek to do so.

- **Recognise that no one size fits all and small can be beautiful:**

Kent is a socially and economically diverse county. Service delivery, commissioning and what constitutes success may be different and look different across parts of the county or for different groups of residents. One size fits all solutions are unlikely to be the most effective way to overcome the big challenges, and it is important that we tailor solutions to need.

- **Be a strong voice for Kent nationally and internationally:**

We will be a strong voice for Kent ensuring the county receives its fair share of resources from central government and doesn't face a disproportionate hit in public spending reductions, as well as benefiting from devolution and maximising additional funding coming into the county.

- **Deliver back office services at the lowest possible cost – to maximize resource to the front line:**

By moving our back office services to new delivery arrangements which promote greater efficiency, increase commercial trading and generate new income, we can deliver our back office at the lowest possible cost and maximise the resources available for front line services.

## KCC as a strategic commissioning authority:

Becoming a strategic commissioning authority does not mean KCC will play no role in providing services, or will simply be a passive buyer of services from the private sector.

Instead it means building a stronger understanding of community and user needs, being clear about the outcomes we want to achieve, and commissioning from a range of providers – whether in-house and external, and from across the public, private and voluntary sector - that can best deliver these outcomes. It's not just about being a strong client, but also about being a trusted partner.

We want our commissioning activity to shape markets and build relationships with a diverse range of providers who can bring innovative thinking into our services design and commissioning.

Only through strong relationships between our service users, our partners and our providers can we deliver the outcomes we want to achieve within the resources that we have available. In order to monitor the corporate health of KCC as a strategic commissioning authority, we will regularly monitor:

- The volume and spend of services commissioned jointly with our public sector partners
- The number of VCS and Kent SME providers competing for contracts listed on the Kent Business Portal
- The total amount spent on goods and services with the VCS and Kent SME both directly by KCC and through the KCC supply chain
- Feedback from service providers regarding KCC's role as an effective commissioner and a good client.

## Links to National Outcomes Frameworks and KCC Transformation:

It is important to recognise that the Corporate Outcomes Framework does not sit in isolation from the national priorities which the council is committed to supporting.

As such, the Corporate Outcomes Framework is aligned to the:

- National Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework
- National Children's Outcomes Framework
- National Public Health Outcomes Framework
- The National Indicator Set for Local Government

Also important is the significant amount of change and activity already ongoing within KCC through the 'Facing the Challenge' transformation programme.

As a result, the Corporate Outcomes Framework is reflective of the council's strategies and service transformation blueprints (which set out how we are transforming our services under the Facing the Challenge programme), including:

- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Kent and Medway Draft Growth Strategy
- Social Care Accommodation Strategy
- Kent Pioneer Programme and Better Care Fund Plan
- Child Poverty Strategy
- 0-25 Transformation Blueprint
- Growth, Environment and Transport Transformation Blueprint
- Adults Transformation Blueprint
- Preventative Services Prospectus

Our aim is not to cut across or layer significant new priorities or programmes on top of the existing and extensive transformation activity already being delivered by the council.

Instead, the Corporate Outcomes Framework synthesises and brings together the broad range of outcomes that have been identified across KCC services for local communities and client groups, and brings them into a single framework.

There will need to be strong alignment between our strategies and plans to the outcomes set out in this framework, and we will update our strategies and plans to reflect these outcomes in this framework as necessary.

## Draft Outcomes:

'Bold Steps for Kent' was built around three strategic ambitions of Supporting the Economy to Grow, Protecting the Vulnerable and Putting the Citizen in Control – and this focus on three strategic ambitions provided a simple and effective narrative that was recognised by members, our staff, partners and the wider public.

To replicate this simple narrative in the outcomes framework, there are three strategic or population-level outcomes which then frame a wider subset of supporting outcomes:

- **Children and young people in Kent get the best start in life**
- **Kent communities benefit from increasing prosperity by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a high quality of life**
- **Older and vulnerable residents are safe, supported to live well and independently.**

The vision, approach, strategic and supporting outcomes are summarised in **Diagram 1** on the next page.

**Diagram 1: Summary of Draft Corporate Outcomes Framework:**



## Delivering these outcomes:

We need to ensure that the strategic and supporting outcomes in this framework drive the commissioning and service delivery of the authority, and that there is a 'golden thread' running through our plans and strategies that links delivery to these outcomes.

We will therefore ensure our strategic planning process is aligned to the outcomes in this framework through:

- Making this **Outcomes Framework** the strategic statement for KCC, the agreed policy of County Council.
- Updating our **strategies and strategic plans** and our **transformation blueprints** to ensure a clear alignment to the outcomes in this framework.
- Our **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)** and annual budget setting process will set out the resources available to support the delivery of these outcomes.
- Continue to develop annual **Directorate Business Plans** which set how the services each KCC directorate commissions and provides support the delivery of these outcomes.
- **Service level commissioning and business plans** will set out how individual KCC services, whether provided in-house or externally, will contribute to the delivery of these outcomes.

## Reporting progress:

Delivering outcomes requires a rounded view to be taken, recognising that outcomes can be influenced by a range of factors, not just the efforts of a single service provider.

As such, moving to an outcomes based commissioning approach requires a stronger focus on evaluation, alongside performance and contract management.

When evaluating progress in delivering outcomes, three questions need to be considered to come to a balanced judgment:

1. **How much did we do? (Quantity)**
2. **How well did we do? (Quality)**
3. **Is anyone better off? (Quality and quantity of effect)**

In evaluating KCC's impact on these outcomes, it will be necessary to consider a broad evidence base, including the indicators that KCC can influence directly, as well as those that are relevant to the outcome but may not be directly controllable by KCC services or commissioning.

Targets for specific indicators relating to the delivery of specific KCC services will continue to be set through our strategic planning process and monitored through our corporate performance framework.

However, given the emphasis on evaluation, reporting progress against the Corporate Outcomes Framework will focus on the overall direction of travel of the county, balanced against the resources expended and the impact achieved.

Progress against the Corporate Outcomes Framework will be reported through an annual report to County Council.

To support the delivery of a first annual report, a benchmarking exercise will be undertaken to provide an evidence base of current progress against these outcomes, and provide a framework for future annual reports to County Council.

## Links to the Commissioning Framework:

If this Corporate Outcomes Framework sets out the 'what' we want to achieve, then the Commissioning Framework is the other side of the same coin. It sets out the 'how' we want to achieve these outcomes by ensuring a consistent standard and approach to commissioning.

The standards the Commissioning Framework sets out are:

1. **Focused on outcomes for residents**
2. **A consistent commissioning approach to planning, designing and evaluating services**
3. **The right people involved at the right stage of commissioning**
4. **Open-minded about how best to provide services**
5. **High-quality, robust evidence informing our decisions**
6. **Hold all services to account for the delivery of KCC's strategic outcomes**
7. **Customers at the heart of our commissioning approach**
8. **A commitment to building capacity**
9. **We will maximise social value**
10. **Our supply chains will be sustainable and effective**

By ensuring that our commissioning meets these standards, KCC can become a high performing strategic commissioning authority which has the evidence base upon which to effectively commission and de-commission services as the needs of Kent residents and our key client group change over time.

## Consultation Questions:

We want to know what you think of the strategic and supporting outcomes outlined in this document, and how KCC should measure progress in achieving these outcomes. Therefore, we are asking three simple questions regarding this draft Outcomes Framework. These are:

- Do you think these are the **right** outcomes for Kent, and what KCC services should be working towards achieving?
- Are any outcomes that you think important for Kent **missing**, or should any of the draft outcomes have greater **emphasis** than others?
- What do you think it is important that KCC should **measure** to track our progress in delivering the draft outcomes?

The answers to these questions during the consultation period will inform the design of the final Corporate Outcomes Framework for KCC.

The final Corporate Outcomes Framework which will be considered by County Council at its meeting in March 2015.

November 2014

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