

To: Communities Policy Overview Committee – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2008

From: Paul Carter, Leader of the County Council  
Peter Gilroy, Chief Executive

Subject: **Consideration of the draft KCC Annual Plan 2008/09 and process for publishing the final approved version**

Classification: Unrestricted

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**Summary:**

This report sets out the background and process for publishing the KCC Annual Plan 2008/09. A copy of the latest draft is attached, to enable Members to make comment prior to its approval at County Council on 19 June 2008.

**FOR INFORMATION AND COMMENT**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Local Government Act 1999 introduced the statutory requirement for authorities to produce an annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) by 30 June each year and the contents were at that time tightly prescriptive. In subsequent years these requirements have been steadily reduced and this will be the last year that authorities will be required to prepare and approve a BVPP.

1.2 Kent's BVPP is known as the KCC Annual Plan and it has, over the years, continued to go further than the reducing statutory minimum BVPP content requirements by bringing together all KCC priorities together in one document. As such it is an important mechanism for incorporating elements of Towards 2010, the Kent Agreement, Supporting Independence Programme, Vision for Kent and other priorities and thus acts as a bridge between KCC's strategic objectives and corporate priorities and its service and financial plans. It also reports upon progress made against many priorities for the previous financial year as well as setting new targets for the current year and beyond. It is a central part of the Authority's performance management processes bringing together performance information and comparing KCC with other authorities.

1.3 The Annual Plan follows the Towards 2010 format with Directorate and Portfolio information being allocated under Towards 2010 headings. The principal audiences are KCC's staff and Members as well as groups and organisations with an interest in our activities. It is also a public document and potentially an important means of communicating with local people directly.

**2. ROLE OF POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEES**

2.1 For the last four years the draft Annual Plan has been presented to the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee (POCC) to enable Members to make any comments they think are appropriate prior to its approval at County Council. This year the process has

been amended and the draft Annual Plan is being submitted to individual Policy Overview Committees (POCs) before the County Council approval meeting. This will enable each committee to focus specifically on areas which are the responsibility of their committee in relation to the policy objectives and targets set.

2.2 It is recommended that Members send their comments and questions in advance of the Communities POC meeting in 2 June 2008. This will allow responses to be provided to Members on the day, wherever possible, and these should be sent to Mark Scrivener, Business Information Manager, preferably by email to [mark.scrivener@kent.gov.uk](mailto:mark.scrivener@kent.gov.uk). There will still, however, be an opportunity for Members to make additional comments at the POC meeting.

### **3. COMPLETION, APPROVAL AND PUBLICATION PROCESS**

3.1 The KCC Annual Plan 2008/09 is fairly close to completion. There are some small gaps within the performance indicator (PI) tables but these will be completed shortly.

3.2 The Constitution states that the Leader shall submit a draft Annual Plan to County Council. The date of this meeting is 19 June. This date is fixed to allow Members to see as full a draft as possible prior to its publication at the end of June.

3.3 The terms of reference of Governance and Audit Committee require it to check compliance of the KCC Annual Plan with the remaining statutory requirements prior to its publication. Authority to do this has been delegated to a small, cross-party group of Governance & Audit Committee members in early June, (as there is no suitable date for this to be undertaken by the full committee prior to the end of June). County Council will be orally informed of their view.

3.4 The document will be proof read and 'Plain English' check undertaken prior to publication. This year the Annual Plan will again be published on CD. The CD will also include information relating to the Vision for Kent, Towards 2010, the new Kent Agreement, Supporting Independence documents, the County Council's Medium Term Plan. A published (hard copy) version of the Annual Plan will also be available.

3.5 Copies of the KCC Annual Plan are sent to all Members of the County Council, the Authority's principal partners and relevant voluntary organisations, senior KCC managers and our external auditors, amongst others. Copies will be sent to all libraries and KCC offices open to the public as in previous years. A copy will also be publicly available on KCC's web-site and on KNET to allow access to all our staff.

### **4. EXTERNAL AUDIT**

4.1 The requirement for BVPPs to be externally audited currently remains. KCC's previous external auditor's reports on the plans in have been unqualified with no statutory recommendations made in the last seven years. An early draft of the Plan will have been made available to our new appointed external auditors, The Audit Commission, in order to ensure KCC meets statutory requirements prior to publication.

### **5. COMMUNITIES SECTIONS IN THE ANNUAL PLAN**

5.1 The sections of particular relevance to this Committee are in Chapter 6 (Enjoying Life) and Chapter 11 (Safer and Stronger Communities). Members will be aware that the services in Communities also contribute to a number of other areas of KCC business, as

reported on in other Chapters in the Plan, and these are highlighted in the text. Appendix 3 notes the Policy Framework documents that are formally within the remit of this Committee

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to

- (i) NOTE the arrangements for publishing the KCC Annual Plan 2008/09.
- (ii) COMMENT on the sections that are relevant to the services within the Communities portfolio

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