

**By:** KCC Environment Board Chair and the Managing Director of Communities Amanda Honey, Cabinet Member for Communities, Mike Hill

**To:** Communities Policy Overview Committee, 17 September 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 the Communities.

**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 the Communities Directorate.

**Recommendations:** 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 the Communities 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. The co-ordination and overall management of KCC's Environment Policy is led by the Environment Board supported by the Environment and Waste Division.
- 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 will seek 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 the Communities Directorate 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: CO<sub>2</sub> 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. The Kent Framework for Regeneration 2009-2020 highlights the climate challenge and potential opportunities as a central cross cutting theme.

## **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 - 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 200 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. This will incorporate issues and concerns raised by Members at this Committee meeting. The remainder of this paper focuses on action the Communities Directorate has been involved in and it is proposed should contribute to in the future.

## 5. Progress on specific action owned directly by the Communities Directorate

5.1. **Our Decisions** – All 15 Services of the Communities Directorate are now accredited to ISO14001, following audit of the second batch in April. The specific Communities Environment Policy, announced in July 2008, triggered a series of advisory workshops and procedures, and a high-level risk assessment. These resulted in Annual Operating Plans adopting, from April 2009, a range of directorate and service-specific commitments on sustainability and climate change. Services are now developing and implementing these, within current budget constraints, and progressively reducing their environmental impacts. Hence, at the recent Communities external audit, the assessor was able to note that:

- Commitment environmental improvement was clear, and Communities were able to demonstrate a wide range of initiatives aimed at sustaining progress and exploring new ideas
- There was strong management commitment to improving environmental impact.

5.2. **Our Estate** – Significant savings have been realised through the introduction of a new IT system in the Libraries & Archives Service. Potential savings are about £450k. Installation of energy efficiency measures within Communities buildings has included installation of energy efficient lighting fixtures however because of the age and condition of most buildings and the cost of undertaking such works roll out of this has been relatively slow. Further invest-to-save measures are being investigated, and the results of the Display Energy Certificate Surveys will aid decision making. The Sustainability and Climate Change Team in KCC continue to work with Communities in improving energy and water efficiency, and installation of renewable energy measures where possible. The Internal EMS Audit programme is continuing its visits to examine premises and workplace practices, aided by two staff from Communities who have taken auditor training. Within 2009 a total of 32 audits across the Communities directorate will be completed. In addition work is underway to trail a joint Health and Safety and Environment Audit programme, with due consideration to adopting this across KCC.

5.3. **Our Travel and Transport** – Communities Directorate have established baseline data on business miles, showing the third highest business mileage in KCC. Last year Communities achieved a reduction in business mileage of

2.85%, or 80 000 miles. The number of staff entitled to 'essential' mileage rates has been reviewed and reduced. A business miles target for 2009-10 is being considered. Managers and many staff increasingly monitor car use for business purposes and actively seek alternatives.

**5.4. Our Procurement/Our Construction** – Communities Directorate are beginning to demonstrate best practice in sustainable construction through their buildings programme. Examples include the Turner Contemporary gallery, whose design, construction and expected operation incorporate many low carbon features. The directorate's schemes for new premises over the next few years include appraisal of higher BREEAM specifications; and encouragement of fresh approaches to service delivery so that capital assets will remain in sustained and economic use. Medium- and long-range planning for new premises, under Local Development Frameworks in conjunction with district councils, has begun to weigh sustainable issues and adaptability to climate change. The Whitstable and Ashford North Youth Centres are both in the process of formally adopting the Eco-Centre status which incorporates working with young people in developing environmental initiatives and actions. Procurement of office consumables is responding to constant pressure to "reduce, re-use and recycle" – for both sustainable policy and financial efficiency reasons. However, switching from paper-based and face-to-face communications to electronic communications is increasing the burden on IT infrastructure. The directorate supports efforts to obtain better quantitative data on waste and recycling from office-based operations, as well as on energy and water usage in premises, in order to fine-tune future initiatives.

**5.5. Our Workforce** – The aspirations in Service Operating Plans to environmental improvements are reflected, where relevant, in Personal Action Plans. Staff in most Divisions, Services and major premises are setting up 'green teams' (with various levels of scope, formality and inter-service coordination). Such teams of green champions and guardians stimulate and will sustain local actions that are relevant to their abilities, premises and clientele. The directorate has over 60 Green Guardians who actively participate in local sustainability and climate change improvements. Several representatives from Communities contributed enthusiastically in the cross KCC event 'Good Deeds Grow' in February. Almost 300 members of Communities have taken online training. The directorate's nineteen EMS contacts were recognised as 'Environmental Champions' at the Quality Service Awards ceremony in March, and they applied the prize to add solar panels to Whitstable Youth Eco-Centre. These contacts continue to meet quarterly to both drive local improvement, share good practice and report on local targets.

**5.6. Community Leadership** – Through its many links with Kent residents, Communities Directorate helps to drive the KCC sustainability and climate change agenda across the county. Communities are working with the KCC Energy Team in a trial of an 'Energy Meter Loan Scheme' for residents to monitor electricity usage. The Library and Youth services work with the Sustainability and Climate Change Team to promote and support the development of low carbon communities. Local initiatives such as litter cleanup, waste recycling and gardening continue across Youth and Youth Offending services. The Environment Clubs of Hythe and Ashford North Youth Centres recently helped create an outdoor classroom for environmental

education at Swattenden Residential Centre. In their advice to many event organisers and venue developers, the Arts Development and Sports, Leisure and Olympics Services urge consideration of sustainability and adaptability to climate change. Trading Standards Officers and Community Wardens are alert to such issues in their close contact with the public, and are responding with inspections and advice, supported by Scientific Services.

**5.7. Climate Change Adaptation** – Consideration of the risks, vulnerabilities and opportunities from climate change is being stimulated by an ongoing series of workshops across KCC. Following preliminary presentations in 2008, Communities have held four workshops to date in 2009, and covered all services. The resulting analyses by Services will be reflected in their next annual operating plans and risk registers, aided by a cross-Community workshop scheduled for early autumn. These adaptive responses will be reviewed as new national climate change scenario predictions emerge.

## **6. Future Challenges and Opportunities for Communities**

6.1. The main challenge and opportunity for Communities will be continuing to tackle carbon reduction, especially through energy efficiency within the buildings estate. To date Communities have not been able to take much advantage of 'invest to save' opportunities. Through using the results of the Display Energy Certificates Surveys the Sustainability and Climate Change Team will work with Communities to help realise savings.

6.2. Communities will continue to promote and look for opportunities to increase the amount of waste being reused and recycled. Work is ongoing to ensure all divisions adopt the KCC facilities managed waste contract or where possible locally equivalent waste provisions. This will result in increased recycling streams and better reporting against waste reduction targets.

## **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 a significant proportion of activity for KCC and the Communities Directorate over the next 3 years it is recommended 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:

1. Note progress to date and the general shape of the Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan going forward, in particular the progress of Communities Directorate at **Section 5**
2. Agree the proposed next steps for the Communities, in particular as outlined at **Section 6**.

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*Background Papers:*

- *Communities 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	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>	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>
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**Annex 3: Sustainability and Climate Change – Five Key Themes**

# FIVE KEY THEMES - OVERVIEW

## KEY INPUTS

## KEY OUTCOMES

## KEY OBJECTIVES

