

From: Barbara Cooper Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport

Subject: Revision of KCC Environment Policy

Summary:

This paper proposes a revision to the KCC Environment Policy setting out the Council's commitment to delivering Kent Environment Strategy priorities and to take account of the environmental impact of its activities and services.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Member is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations on the proposed decision to approve the revised KCC Environment Policy a

1. Introduction

1.1 The KCC Environment Policy is our public commitment to deliver environmental outcomes for Kent as defined by the Kent Environment Strategy and sets out what is to be delivered by the organisation. The current Environment Policy was published on the [KCC website](#) in May 2012 and is now out of date, no longer reflecting the Council's or Kent priorities.

1.2 There have been two changes, which further prompt a revision of the policy:

- The Kent Environment Strategy was revised and approved by Kent Leaders in January 2016; this confirms the environmental outcomes to be delivered for Kent and the KCC Environment Policy needs to reflect these priorities.
- The ISO14001 Standard, which the Council has been assessed against since April 2009 was also revised in 2015. This Standard requires KCC to have an environment policy and the revision includes new criteria, including some specific requirements regarding its published policy. We are required to meet the new criteria by summer 2018.

2. Financial Implications

2.1 The policy revision directly supports the implementation of the Kent Environment Strategy and will have no direct impact on the Council's spending plans. The programme which implements the policy is well established and resourced through GET with the support of all KCC services. The main benefit of the programme is delivering cost reductions by focusing on and implementing energy, water, waste and travel efficiencies and opportunities.

3. Policy Framework

3.1 The policy contributes to achieving the following outcomes in KCC's 2015-20 Strategic Statement ['Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes'](#):

- **Strategic Outcome 2:** Kent communities feel the benefits of economic growth by being in-work, healthy and enjoying a good quality of life.
- **Supporting Outcome:** Kent's physical and natural environment is protected, enhanced and enjoyed by residents and visitors.

This policy outlines more specifically, how KCC will implement the priorities set out in the [Kent Environment Strategy – a strategy for environment, health and economy 2016](#).

4. Process for the review of the KCC Environment Policy

4.1 In redrafting the policy the aim was to:

- Simplify to a more succinct document, written to Plain English standards
- Align with the revised Kent Environment Strategy priorities
- Ensure commitments were realistic, achievable and easily evidenced
- Incorporate new requirements due to the revision of the ISO14001 Standard
- Take account of staff feedback, incorporating these views, where possible

4.2 The current policy is very detailed and contains 28 commitments grouped under seven headings, over four pages making it a lengthy and complex document.

4.3 The new draft policy has been structured to reflect what we want to achieve from our environmental programme, as well as providing clarity on how the organisation will take account of the environment in carrying out its day to day business and delivering services.

4.4 Consultation within KCC has been completed and consisted of:

- First draft circulated to staff directly involved in leading on or delivering on Kent Environment Strategy priorities in GET Directorate, for initial comments in September 2016
- Request for feedback on a second draft to the KCC Environment Board on 30th September
- Request for feedback on a third draft to sustainability leads and Green Guardians in October
- Invite to all staff to comment via K-Mail and KNet (2 weeks to 11th Nov)
- Review by GET Directorate Management Team (DMT) on 30th November
- Review by Corporate Management Team (CMT) on 20th December

4.5 Following the open invite to all staff, 13 additional responses were received from staff across all Directorates but not all divisions/services:

4.5.1 GET – 7 responses across all divisions

4.5.2 ST – 3 responses from Infrastructure, Governance & Law and Finance & Procurement

4.5.3 SC – 2 responses from Commissioning and Specialist Children's Services

4.5.4 EY – 1 response from Education Planning & Access

- 4.6 All staff responding were provided with specific feedback on how their comments were being acted upon or given additional information.
- 4.7 The majority of requested changes by staff have been incorporated into the final draft, with some additional editing by the author.
- 4.8 Corporate Management Team reviewed the final draft and made a few suggestions for more appropriate wording, which were reflected in the latest revision.

5. Recommendation

The Cabinet Member is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations on the proposed decision to approve the revised KCC Environment Policy

6. Appendices and Background Documents

- Appendix A: Proposed Record of Decision
- [Kent Environment Strategy – a strategy for environment, health and economy 2016.](#)

7. Contact details

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