

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR'S
Annual Governance Statement 2007/08
FOR YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2007**

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. In discharging this accountability, members and senior officers are responsible for putting in place proper risk management processes and internal controls to ensure the proper stewardship of the resources at its disposal.

As a Managing Director for Kent Adult Social Services I have responsibility for maintaining a system of risk management; and of sound internal controls; within my Directorate to support the achievement of Corporate and Directorate objectives.

The risk management system identifies principal risks and the existing internal controls in place to manage the risks. It puts action in place to test key controls and if appropriate new controls are introduced in order to manage them more efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal controls is designed to manage rather than eliminate the risk of failure to achieve objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

I am also responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal controls in place during 2007/08. My review has taken into account the following

- (i) Outcomes from risk assessment and evaluation
- (ii) Self-assessments of key service areas within the department
- (iii) Internal audit reports and results of follow ups regarding implementation of recommendations
- (iv) Outcomes from reviews of services by other bodies including, Inspectorates, external auditors etc
- (v) Linkage between business planning and the management of risk

Improvements have already been made to controls in certain areas during the year as follows:

- (a) Following the development last year of the new Adult Social Services Risk register, this has been updated and been embedded into our unit business plans. We believe it is important to have the risk register as part of the unit plans as it makes a clear link between risk management and business planning. It also has the added function of being a way of keeping members updated to our register. As with last year the risk register has been developed within a Corporate Framework using a 5x5 scoring system to help evaluate risk.
- (b) The Directorate has used the preparation for the Corporate Assessment as a tool to identify areas in need of development.
- (c) This year the Directorate has made significant changes to the structure of our Business Plans. They now reflect more fully the way in which we structure our business and this has enabled us to strengthen the 'golden thread' between the high level unit plans and personal action plans.
- (d) We continue to involve the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee in the management of risk. Discussion of our top risks is now an agenda along with the regular

updates on the Directorate's Performance. A new addition to the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee is regular budget monitoring reports.

- (e) We continue to offer local briefings for Members. These are on a District basis and are undertaken to a regular pattern. Furthermore, the 'protocol on consultation for closure and variation of use' has now been amended to include early consultation with local members, prior to public consultation
- (f) Continued to involve the public in the development of our priorities and services. This year the public have been involved in the development of an older people strategy – Active Aging.
- (g) Implemented SWIFT. This has been undertaken within a tight framework of controls and monitoring. Given the huge scale and complexity of this project, both in terms of technical complexity and quality control, The Strategic Management Team has closely overseen the implementation. The Corporate ICT Board has monitored the progress regularly.
- (h) Improved our use of service user feedback in the monitoring of contracts with the Private and Voluntary Sectors.
- (i) A review of Direct Payments has been undertaken to understand the implications of the rapid increase in the number of people taking up Direct Payments.
- (j) Full implementation of Specialist Finance Teams, which are now beginning to develop links with Districts and DWP as outlined in T2010 action plan for Target 56.
- (k) The NHS in Kent now has 2 PCTs, which have the same boundaries as our Areas. We have developed close working relationships with the new PCTs – these are necessary to deliver the priorities identified in the White Paper '*Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services*'. A major piece of work has been the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which has enabled the County Council and The Health Service in Kent to identify areas of need and to formulate joint priorities as a result of the assessment.
- (l) During 2007/08 successful negotiations took place with the PCTs in Kent regarding old debts for joint funded services and clients. The outstanding debts have in the main been cleared now
- (m) An example (among many) of the developing partnership with Health is the Whole Systems Demonstrator (WSD). This is a DoH programme, which will examine the effect of TeleHealth and Telecare. The programme is of national significance and will be evaluated by a team of independent academics commissioned by the DoH. This is a partnership programme with both West Kent and Eastern Kent & Coastal PCTs
- (n) Value For Money Review - Day Care opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities. This was a major review, which involved Price Waterhouse. The review was constructively received, shared with Members and is underpinning the change programme in this area of work.
- (o) We continue to use the Investors In People mechanisms to ensure that we have a competent workforce. The standards around induction and supervision policies are rigorously implemented. We are fully engaged in the revised standard on demonstrating the value of training to the organisation.
- (p) The Directorate recognises its important role in developing a strong workforce across the social care sector and has been working closely and effectively with the Independent Sector to achieve this.
- (q) It is to be noted that all the areas of internal control that were identified for enhancement in last years statement have been improved.

I have also identified certain areas where key internal controls still need to be enhanced. It is to be noted that some of these issues are similar to last year. Controls for these areas have been enhanced but given the nature of the issues and the possible significant impact a keen focus needs to be kept on these areas. Areas for further enhancement of controls are as follows: -

- (a) Active Lives for Adults (ALFA). This is a major cultural change programme, which will see a shift in emphasis away from 'managing care packages' and towards supporting people in identifying how best to meet their own needs. It will transform all front line services and deliver significant efficiencies. It will be essential to ensure that this kept on track to deliver the necessary changes to meet future challenges. This was also a focus for last year. It needs to have continued focus given the innovative nature and size of the project
- (b) SWIFT – the implementation of SWIFT has been a major project, which has needed a close focus given its size and complexity. This has been the largest project of this nature in a Social Services Directorate in the Country. During the next year it will be important to ensure that it is bedded down and has good standards of data quality. The Directorate's Strategic Management Team will continue to play a major role in closely overseeing the process of bedding down SWIFT. The Corporate Board will monitor regularly. There is a robust risk plan within the project, which is reviewed and updated regularly and shared with SMT.
- (c) Review of our relationship and contracting arrangements with voluntary and private organisations. This is an ongoing issue, which was part of last year's statement and we continue to make improvements. However the issues outlined below make it essential that we focus on this looking for further improvements. These include:
- Increase in demand for services, which demographic analysis suggests will continue indefinitely.
 - Increase in expectations – improvements in service delivery are often in tandem with an increase in expectations from the public about the quality of services
 - The pressure on prices from the geographical location of Kent in the affluent South East and on the borders of London.
 - In order to continue to deliver services we will become increasingly reliant on Voluntary and Private Organisations to provide more services and must ensure we have the tools in place to control and manage these contractual relationships.
- (d) On going relationship with the Health Economy. The introduction of two PCTs and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment offer new opportunities to develop preventative services in partnership, however it will be important to ensure that adequate resources are directed towards this objective.
- (e) Recent correspondence from Central Government and CSCI have indicated, without consultation, that the Managing Director has a wider responsibility for all adults in residential care including those people in provision run by the Health Service. The placement of people in Kent by other authorities is already identified as an area of major risk with a programme of controls. However, this wider responsibility indicates the need for more enhanced controls in this area, including getting clear guidance from Government about these expectations. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Committee for Kent & Medway has begun to look at this issue in further detail.
- (f) Valuing People Now. As part of this review the Local Authorities nationally are taking the lead on Learning Disabilities, including the transfer of resources and those people placed in NHS units. The Directorate is determined that the principles of person centred planning will be paramount in meeting the needs of those people transferring from the NHS. This will be a significant challenge for which effective planning is underway.
- (g) Business Continuity Planning is an area identified within our risk register, for which there is an action plan which has been developed, but will need on going focus.

Action plans to introduce these improvements have been developed and I am satisfied that these steps will enhance the system of internal controls and will be monitoring to ensure their implementation and operation. I am also satisfied that except for these matters a sound system of internal control has been in place throughout the financial year and is ongoing.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. All' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Managing Director

28 April 2008

