

By: Kevin Lynes, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economic Development

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To: Regeneration and Economic Development Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19th January 2010

Subject: "21st Century Kent"

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This paper introduces the scheduled update on "21st Century Kent", a strategic overview being produced by Sir Terry Farrell to add strategic clarity to KCC's Regeneration Framework and to help shape long term growth and regeneration ambitions for the county.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 *21st Century Kent* aims to bring clarity, purpose and vision to an increasingly crowded strategic landscape.
- 1.2 Building directly on KCC's framework for regeneration and produced by Sir Terry Farrell, *21st Century Kent* will provide an exciting vision of the county's future in 20-30 years time.
- 1.3 *21st Century Kent* is being developed by KCC in its strategic capacity to complement and add value to local planning and regeneration strategies across Medway and Kent. It will provide an important strategic overview, underpinned by the Regeneration Framework and work in Kent's Districts.

2. Background

- 2.1 Kent County Council and Medway Council both have strong and effective Local Strategic Partnerships and both have a responsibility – independently and within their LSPs - to address the major spatial and strategic challenges for their respective areas. Local development is addressed by Medway and Kent Districts through their LDFs and Sustainable Community Strategies.
- 2.2 Recognising the challenging economic climate, in January 2009, Kent County Council launched "Unlocking Kent's Potential", KCC's framework for regeneration across the county. It identified the need to look at regeneration and development more widely than economic growth alone and set out a

series of challenges and opportunities for Kent to unlock the county's economic and community potential.

- 2.3 To achieve this, the Regeneration Framework identified the need for a series of county-based strategies including work on transport, housing and environment, together with an overarching 20 year spatial vision for Kent from Sir Terry Farrell - *21st Century Kent*.

3. Strategic Focus and Context

- 3.1 Importantly, as seen above, the development of *21st Century Kent* has not been a sequential process, but a dynamic one, with strategies commissioned simultaneously. This has enabled *21st Century Kent* to inform the work underway and, in turn, to be informed by it.
- 3.2 In mapping an ambitious vision for the county, *21st Century Kent* will draw upon a range of strategic and regeneration documents. It will also complement Medway's highly regarded "Five towns – one city" strategy, the Thames Gateway "Parklands" strategy and latest Thames Gateway vision, also produced by Sir Terry, while being compatible with ongoing policy work around regions and localism.
- 3.3 Wide-ranging consultation has also taken place over the last 12 months, with workshops facilitated by Farrells and detailed feedback and discussion with District Councils on the Kent Regeneration Framework.

4. Launch

- 4.1 *21st Century Kent* will be launched at a series of events across the county on 28th January, each of which will focus on a particular aspect of the report with audiences targeted appropriately.
- 4.2 Reflecting the civic leadership which transformed cities such as Birmingham in the Victorian era through to Docklands in more recent times, *21st Century Kent* will indicate what could be possible for Kent in decades to come by creating a visionary environment for growth and by unlocking the massive potential of Kent's economy, environment and people.
- 4.3 Full details of the launch will be provided in the verbal update to the Committee.

5. What will change as a result?

- 5.1 *21st Century Kent* aims to provide clear strategic ambition and spatial context for economic development and regeneration within the county.
- 5.2 It will be an aspirational document, not a statutory one, recognising the status of the Local Development Frameworks (LDFs) in Medway and in the Kent Districts as the primary local planning documents for their areas.

5.3 To unlock Kent's potential, clear strategic direction and drive will be vital. In providing a blueprint for the future, *21st Century Kent* will reinforce our priorities for action and inform the way KCC operates and works with partners to deliver our shared and exciting ambitions for the county.

6. Recommendation

The Regeneration & Economic Development Policy Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

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Background Documents: None