Appendix A – Updated Strategy and Policy Control Framework (November 2019)

The Strategy and Policy Control Framework is agreed by Corporate Management Team, referenced within KCC's Constitution and Operating Standards. It is overseen by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

Strategy and Policy Control Framework Overview

The Strategy and Policy Control Framework is referenced in KCC's Constitution. It sets consistent standards and ways of managing strategic documents which set out KCC's strategic direction and political priorities. It includes definitions for strategic documents within scope of a single Strategy and Policy Register. The scope includes documents in the formal Policy Framework in Appendix 3 of the Constitution, which are subject to the procedures and rules set out in the Constitution in Appendix 4. These 'council strategy' documents require approval by the full County Council.

The Strategy and Policy Control Framework is managed by the Director for Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance. The Register is maintained by the Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance Division and is published on KNet.

The Strategy and Policy Control Framework acts as an important part of the authority's internal controls to maintain clear oversight and accountability for strategy and policy development. The Named Accountable Owner of each document listed on the Register is responsible for ensuring that the standards in the Strategy and Policy Control Framework are followed, in accordance with KCC's Operating Standards.

What is in scope of the Strategy and Policy Control Framework?
All documents within scope are held in the *Strategy and Policy Register,* which is an accessible list of documents which supports KCC's strategic direction and political priorities. This includes both KCC and partnership strategies.

Strategy and Policy Register Scope
Included
• **Council Strategies:** documents which are critical to the delivery of KCC's Strategic Statement (5-year plan) outcomes or part of KCC's Formal Policy Framework in the Constitution • **Service Strategies:** documents which set the vision, priorities and policy response for specific services or themes
Excluded
• Internal Control Policy: set out how we do things in KCC • Operational Policy: set out how we do things in services, usually contains guidance on operational practice and procedures • Action/Delivery/Implementation Plans: how strategy will be delivered within services • Discussion Documents: including politically led think-pieces • Operating models or principles: how we work within KCC • Annual Reports and Local Accounts: outline short term progress on strategy delivery • Business Plans: set out management/commercial activities and resources for strategy delivery • Analytical and Performance Products: act as evidence base • Information about service delivery: including prospectus and service 'offers' • Commissioning or legal documents: including Service Specifications, Service Level Agreements, Market Position Statements, Commissioning Strategies/Plans, Contracts, Covenants

Internal Control Policy, Operational Policy and Action Plan documents are excluded from scope, but should remain accessible in the **'Operational Policy'** area of KNet. There are hundreds of such documents which support everyday practice. These are an important part of how we manage services, both within KCC and through our supply chains (e.g. detailed property and health and safety policies guide the work of our contractors). Ownership and accountability for internal control and operational policy remains with the relevant Director, who can delegate to Heads of Service or other accountable officers as appropriate.

It is a management responsibility to ensure the most relevant, up-to-date operational policy documents are made available on KNet and supported by a single front sheet of essential information about the policy. It is the lead officer responsibility to contact Staff Communications to get this uploaded on KNet and to send a copy of the front sheet and policy to the SPRCA division. Any outdated internal control and operational policies should be appropriately closed and archived.

All strategic documents should be managed in accordance with KCC's Operating Standards, which is a management responsibility for all policy/strategy owners (Lead Officers).

Strategy and Policy Control Framework Standards
All strategic documents within scope of the Strategy and Policy Register must comply with the following standards.

1. *All documents within scope should be held on the Strategy and Policy Register.*
   This register is maintained by the Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance (SPRCA) division and is published on KNet. All officers should inform the SPRCA division If they are planning to create, have launched or need to close a strategic document in scope of the Register. If it is unclear whether a document should be included, please contact the SPRCA Division for advice.

2. *The Named Accountable Officer must inform the SPRCA division if creating, modifying or closing a strategy/policy within scope.*
   Officers must contact the SPRCA division at the earliest opportunity if they are planning a change to strategy/policy which falls in scope of the Strategy and Policy Control Framework.

3. *All documents within scope must have a Named Accountable Officer.*
   This is important to ensure clear ownership and accountability, with a named point of contact. If the named accountable officer changes, officers are required to inform the SPRCA division, so an accurate record can be maintained.

4. *All documents within scope must have a one-page standard front-sheet.*
   This helps to develop a consistent record of key information about all KCC's strategic documents. This will be completed by the SRPCA division, in dialogue with the Named Accountable Officer. The frontsheets should follow a standard template.

> The front sheet must include:
> - Name of Strategy/Policy
> - Purpose
> - Statutory Basis (stating if direct or vicarious statutory responsibility)
> - Start Date (approval date)
> - Named Decision Maker - Cabinet portfolio holder and senior officer (including stating if a key decision)
> - Equalities considerations

- Whether a KCC or partnership owned document
- Dependencies with other strategies and policies
- Publication, including whether published on KNet or externally, and whether an Easy Read or executive summary is available
- End Date (sunset clause, including any planned review date)
- Named Accountable Officer

5. *Ownership and accountability for strategic documents in scope sits with the client side/commissioning function within KCC.*
Ownership and accountability for any strategy or policy which guides the work of Alternative Service Delivery Models (e.g. trading companies) sits with the client side/commissioning function within KCC, not the delivery side.

6. *All out of date documents in scope should be formally closed and archived.*
All strategic documents which the Named Accountable Officer identifies as out of date, no longer actively used or not fit for purpose should be formally closed. At this point they should be removed from internal and external web pages to an archive. This will help to ensure only the most relevant and up to date documents are accessible to our staff, partners and providers. The SPRCA division will maintain this archive on behalf of CMT.

7. *All documents within scope should meet the following strategy development standards.*
    a. Include an **executive summary** to provide a clear explanation of the purpose, timeframe and the audience of the document. This also provides a helpful summary 'landing page' for strategic documents online.
    b. Include the **policy context** for the document, including reference to how the document relates to other national, regional, partnership or KCC strategy/policy documents. It should be clear how the document supports KCC's Strategic Statement (5 Year Plan) and if the document is included in the Formal Policy Framework in KCC's Constitution. It should be clear how the document aligns with any internal control or operational policy. It is the lead officer responsibility to check the policy alignment, including use of the Strategy and Policy Register on KNet, seeking advice from the SPRCA division where appropriate.
    c. Include the **statutory basis** for the document, including being clear if the strategy supports any statutory or regulatory duties for KCC or strategic partners (if a partnership strategy).
    d. Be clear on **the role of KCC and any partners** in the delivery of the strategy, including the governance pathway and how the documents align to existing work/activity.
    e. If the document is a review or refresh, summarise **what the previous strategy achieved**.
    f. Summarise the **evidence base** for the document, including customer insight, demographic or performance information, findings from engagement/consultation and equality evidence related to protected groups. Create a clear narrative for what this evidence is telling us and how the strategy intends to respond to this.
    g. Demonstrate **equality considerations** in line with our requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Equality Impact Assessment and any equality action plan should be signposted and published as a background document when the decision is being made to approve the document.
    h. Set out clear **objectives/aims/goals** which the strategy intends to deliver.
    i. Be clear on **how the strategy will be delivered**, including signposting action/delivery plans.
    j. Set out proposals for **review and evaluation** of the strategy.

The Strategy and Policy Control Framework will be reviewed by the Director for Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.