

Bold Steps for Kent

The Medium Term Plan to 2014/15

December 2010



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Foreword



In 2006 KCC published its corporate plan for the next four years, *Towards 2010*.

We are proud of what we have achieved over

the last four years. This includes maintaining KCC as a four star authority; delivering one of the lowest council tax rates of any County Council; driving forward the transformation of the schools curriculum through an extensive range of pre-vocational provision; providing new 21st century facilities across much of our school estate; leading the personalisation agenda in social care and developing a single front line access to Kent public services through Gateways.

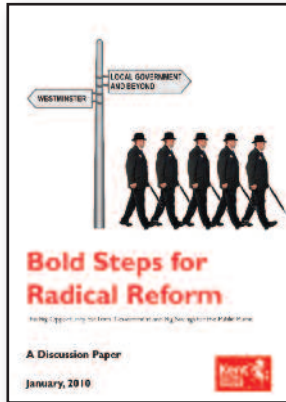
In January 2010, ahead of the General Election, we published *Bold Steps for Radical Reform*, a blueprint for the future of local government and local public service delivery. Recognising the need for the future government in Westminster to deliver unprecedented savings, we concluded that some £15-21 billion of savings could be achieved through radical devolution of public services to the local level, so they can be reshaped around local need, and reduce the national deficit through abolition of unnecessary regional bureaucracy and quangos.

Under the new coalition Government the centralised and bureaucratic Government machine is being rapidly dismantled. We now have the opportunity, and the responsibility, to deliver the new vision for public services as set out in *Bold Steps for Radical Reform*.

Bold Steps for Kent is therefore our new medium term plan to 2014/15, and it sets out how we will deliver this radical reform. It will not be easy. The challenges of today are fundamentally different to those faced when we published *Towards 2010* in 2006. Over the next four years, funding for public services will fall significantly as the Government seeks to tackle the massive hole in the UK's public finances. We expect to have to make budget savings of between 25-40% over the next four years.

At the same time, the relationship between the citizen and the state is changing. Access to information and the ability to mobilise people through the internet is empowering citizens and local communities like never before. The balance of power between citizen and state is shifting absolutely and irreversibly towards the citizen. Those public bodies that do not respond to this shift in power will be seen not just as outdated, but also as increasingly irrelevant.

To meet these huge challenges we cannot stay as we are. We need to take big, bold steps to rethink what we do as a County Council and how we do it. *Bold Steps for Kent* therefore outlines a very different approach from *Towards 2010*. It again sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next four years, but also our determination to transform how Kent County Council works and engages with the communities it serves and our partners in the public, private and voluntary sector.



Called for:

Abolition of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)



Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) abolished

A reduction in inspection & audit burden



Audit Commission axed

Removal of the regional governance framework



Government Offices for the Regions to be abolished - Regional Development Agencies abolished

Roll back of quangos



192 quangos axed

Return of spatial planning powers to government



Regional Housing Targets and Regional Spatial Strategies abolished - Infrastructure Planning Commission abolished

Move to area based budgets



Place based budget to be introduced through the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010

Greater role for Local Government in commissioning public services



Commissioning role for Local Government set out in Health White Paper



Delivered:

Running throughout *Bold Steps for Kent* are three clear aims:

- **To help the Kent economy to grow** - our role must be to support and facilitate new growth in the Kent economy and deliver against the key priorities set out in *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, our regeneration framework for Kent. We will focus on building strong relationships with key business sectors in the Kent economy, improving skills, delivering new housing and new infrastructure whilst ensuring we meet the challenge of a changing climate.
- **To put the citizen in control** - whether that is as individuals, local communities or through their democratic representatives, power and influence must be in the hands of local people so they are empowered to take responsibility for their own community and service needs - reducing the role of the state and encouraging the growth of the Big Society.
- **To tackle disadvantage** - by being a county of opportunity. Aspiration rather than dependency must be supported, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged or who struggle to help themselves and their families.

Hard and difficult choices lie ahead over the next four years. An absolute focus on the real priorities for Kent will be needed if we are to overcome the huge financial challenges we face. Not every issue will be a priority, not every concern can be funded, but this Administration is absolutely committed to making these difficult decisions in the best interests of Kent as a whole.

I am confident that Kent can successfully rise to meet the challenge.



Paul Carter,
Leader, Kent County Council

Executive Summary

Bold Steps for Kent sets out how KCC needs to change the way it works to reflect the changing shape of public services, as the Government has set out plans to fundamentally reform how key public services, such as education and health, will be provided in the future, underpinned by the clear message that residents should have more influence on how services are provided locally.

Bold Steps for Residents

KCC wants to put power in the hands of residents so that they have the opportunity to shape how services are provided to them and their local communities.

- We will develop place-based commissioning of local services through new Locality Boards, together with public service partners such as District Councils, Police and Health. More decisions about local services will be taken at the local level, with more use of joined up local Community Budgets, to deliver local priorities.
- We will establish a 'right to bid' process to allow individuals, community groups and members of staff to develop new, innovative ways to provide services.
- We will move to a single initial assessment framework – reducing duplication in assessment processes that residents go through to access KCC services.
- We will further drive the personalisation agenda and expand the use of the Visa enabled Kent Card so service users can purchase services to suit their individual needs and requirements.
- We will look to introduce more smart card technology that will allow residents to access a range of services, from

libraries to concessionary travel through a single KCC smart card.

- We will expand our successful 'Gateway' programme to make it easier for residents to access a wider range of public services online, by phone and through Gateway offices.
- We will publish senior officer salaries and expenses data, information about our performance and what we spend on providing your services so residents have the information needed to hold us to account.

Bold Steps for Education

Schools are being given more freedom to make decisions independent of the local authority. We want to build a new relationship with schools to reflect this. KCC will still have an important role in ensuring that pupils and parents can access high quality education provision.

- We will establish a new Kent Schools Association to ensure KCC has a strong working relationship with all schools that will help develop the policies and practices to ensure all Kent schools succeed.
- We will work with all schools in Kent so that best practice and expertise in the highest performing schools is shared with schools that are struggling, so that all schools in Kent are helped to improve.
- We will work with schools to improve pupil attainment in Kent, with a particular focus at primary level and on closing the gap in attainment for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- We will agree a new financial deal with schools in Kent, devolving more grants and services where schools wish to use this funding to purchase or oversee

support services directly.

- We will create a vehicle to provide school support services, using our trading experience and expertise to offer a competitive package of services to schools in Kent and other areas of the country.
- We will continue to secure high quality education for all 3 to 4 year olds, and provide targeted provision for 2 year olds, to ensure that children enter at primary school at the appropriate level of development.

Bold Steps for Transport

KCC will focus on the strategic transport challenges facing Kent set out in *Growth Without Gridlock*, KCC's transport strategy, as a means to unlock new economic and housing growth, manage increasing traffic volumes and support a high quality of life for Kent residents. For example:

- We will work to relieve pressure on the Channel Corridor by seeking to upgrade stretches of the A2 in East Kent and develop a lorry park between junctions 10 and 11 of the M20 to relieve the pressure when Operation Stack is in place.
- We will support the development of a third lower Thames crossing to ease traffic congestion and support new economic growth and development in the Thames Gateway.
- We will lobby Government for a greater role for Manston Airport to provide additional passenger runway capacity in the South East and support the wider regeneration of East Kent.
- We will work towards developing a Thanet parkway station linked to High Speed 1, through line speed improvements between Ashford and Ramsgate, bringing journey times to London to around an hour.
- We will move towards an integrated public transport network for Kent,

improving connectivity and interchange across the full range of bus and rail services and maximising the value gained from the annual £60m public support provided to Kent bus operators. KCC will continue to press for improvements in railway services across Kent in both the short term and when future rail franchises are negotiated.

- We will work with Government to develop innovative financial models to fund improvements to the transport infrastructure in Kent, exploring the use of vignette schemes, tolls and other charges that can leverage private sector investment in the delivery of new transport infrastructure.

Bold Steps for Health

The health reforms proposed by the Government will give greater power to GPs to choose the best services for their patients, with local government having strategic responsibility to ensure the County's health needs are met. We must use this opportunity to improve the quality of the health service in Kent.

- We will help ensure that GP commissioning plans meet the health needs of all residents and communities in Kent. Working at County and District level we want Locality Boards to play a key role in this commissioning process, better connecting KCC and wider public services with health provision at the local level.
- We will work with GP consortia to encourage new healthcare providers to enter the market for health services in Kent. This will drive up standards, provide competition, increase choice and drive greater value for money for GPs and patients.
- We will work to join up and integrate health and social care service provision to reduce costs and demand that could be avoided - for example, by joining up

our assessment processes.

- We will focus on a preventative approach to public health, supporting people to make better lifestyle choices and consider their own future health needs – so expensive health services aren't required as frequently as now.

Bold Steps for Business and the Economy

We recognise the importance of working closely with businesses to deliver economic growth and will support them by better matching education and training provision to the skills needs in the Kent economy.

- We will continue our sector-based approach to business engagement, as set out in *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, KCC's Regeneration Framework, so we better understand the unique needs of different business sectors across the Kent economy and jointly identify with the business community the key issues where KCC can act to support local Kent businesses grow and prosper.
- We will develop a new relationship with the business community through the new East Sussex, Greater Essex and Kent Enterprise Partnership, which will become a strong voice both nationally and internationally in attracting substantial inward investment in the Kent economy.
- We will work to unlock development opportunities in the Thames Gateway to ensure the 200,000 jobs the Thames Gateway Programme can provide become a reality.
- We will use Tax Incremental Financing, and develop other innovative financial mechanisms, as a means to pay for new infrastructure that will generate new economic growth.

Bold Steps for Employment and Skills

Growing the Kent economy will be critical to the creation of new jobs for Kent

residents and we recognise that Kent businesses need a skilled and motivated workforce to prosper.

- We will continue to support the growth of apprenticeships, in particular promoting the benefits of apprenticeships to small and medium sized businesses in Kent.
- KCC will employ, through our Kent Success Apprenticeship scheme, at least another 350 apprentices over the next four years.
- Through our economic development role, KCC will work with the business community to ensure the skills needed in the local Kent economy; make sure that school leavers and graduates have the skills that local businesses are seeking.
- We will work with the Higher Education sector to improve graduate retention in Kent through supporting greater use of sandwich year placements and other mechanisms that provide graduates with the real world skills and experience needed by Kent employers as part of their course.
- We will help young people to develop career management skills, so that they can plan and manage their careers throughout life, and are better able to respond to new opportunities as the economy changes.
- We will increasingly focus adult education provision on the skills needed in the Kent economy and improve access to adult education provision.

Bold Steps to Tackle Disadvantage

The best way to tackle disadvantage is to provide strong economic growth and job opportunities so people can earn a salary to support themselves and their families. Our focus on tackling disadvantage will be on providing opportunity – not supporting dependency.

- We will focus on reducing the number

of welfare claimants in Kent, through aligning our Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) with the Government's new Single Work Programme. Working with new welfare to work providers in Kent to help the unemployed access the employment opportunities that exist in Kent.

- We will help develop the role of social enterprises in reducing the number of benefit claimants, by exploring new ventures that can provide real work experience and placements for those on benefits.
- We will support the expansion of apprenticeships as means to help keep young people engaged in training and learning post-16 by offering a wage, on the job training and work relevant qualifications, especially for those not suited to classroom based learning.
- We will reduce the number of disruptive moves for young people in foster care.
- We will move towards greater integration between the Youth Service and Youth Offending Service to better target services at young people most at risk of offending.

Bold Steps to Support the Vulnerable

Following the tragic Peter Connelly (Baby P) case, there has been an enormous increase in referrals to social services in Kent, and across the country. We are absolutely determined to ensure our services dedicated to the protection of vulnerable children and adults are robust.

- We will implement, in full, all recommendations emanating from the November 2010 Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Services in Kent, and ensure that the issues flagged in the report are dealt with and the service improved.
- We will support our front line social workers with child protection responsibilities, who operate in what

are challenging, stressful and demanding circumstances.

- We will work to retain experienced social workers by ensuring they are incentivised to stay in the profession, attract new talent to consider social work, and ensure a culture of supportive supervision and continuing professional development.
- We will continue to ensure that our public protection arrangements for adults, whether vulnerable elderly, those with learning disability, physical disability or mental health issues are robust and effective.
- We will continue to help vulnerable families by supporting them before problems occur, and co-ordinating the support we provide between different public agencies for example by supporting parents with access to services such as community midwives and health visitors, and by providing basic skills training that will help them gain employment.
- We will tackle high-cost disruptive families by taking a firm approach across public agencies, including sanctions where necessary, to require change in their behaviour.

Bold Steps for Housing

KCC recognises that choice and affordability of housing is a key issue for Kent residents and has a strong link with quality of life.

- We will ensure new housing is developed intelligently - building homes with a sense of place, that are connected to existing local communities, and are planned with the infrastructure and services new residents will need such as roads, health and education facilities.
- With our partners across Kent, we will deliver the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy which focuses on regeneration,

providing high quality affordable housing, increasing tenure choice in housing supply and improving existing homes to make them fit for the future.

- We will work with partners and developers to help ensure new affordable housing is provided in Kent at a time when grant funding to the Homes & Communities Agency and resources for other housing providers are falling in real terms.
- We will support access to high speed broadband by working with the telecoms sector. Access to high-speed broadband is an essential for residents and businesses (particularly in rural locations), offering opportunities for marketing, learning, socialising and communication.

Bold Steps for Social Enterprise, Community and Voluntary Groups

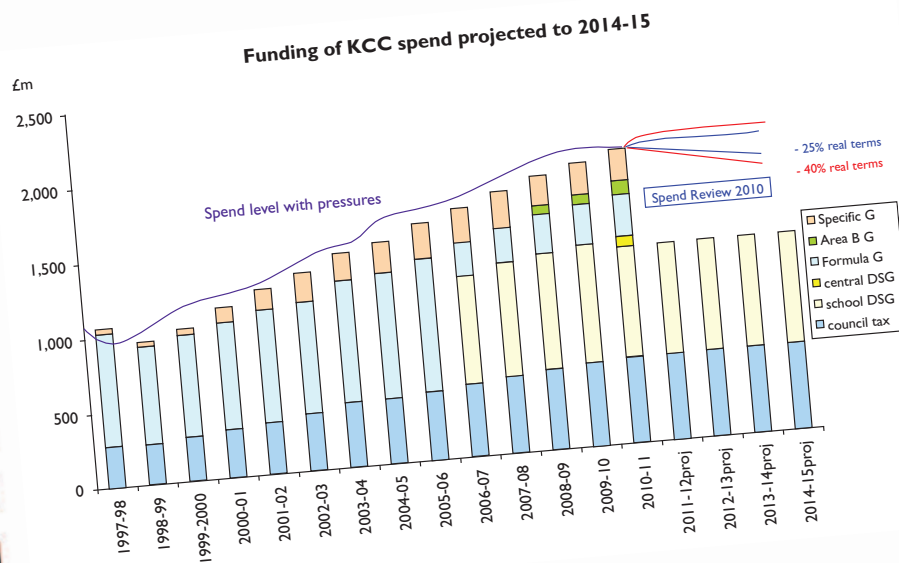
The voluntary and community sector has a significant and influential role to play in the future delivery of public services. We value their skills, expertise and commitment and want to make it easier for voluntary organisations and community groups to deliver our services.

- We will create a Big Society Fund for Kent to help establish, and provide project funding for, new social enterprises in Kent.
- We will support the voluntary and community sectors and social enterprises in becoming more efficient so they can provide better value for money and compete for contracts to run services.
- We will support local community groups to gain skills and knowledge that will allow them to develop sustainable solutions to local problems without the need for ongoing state support.
- We will develop a new approach to Community Asset Transfer so that community groups, the voluntary sector

and social enterprises can take on the management of KCC buildings/facilities as part of new service delivery models.

- We will continue to support the use of the Sustainable Communities Act, which allows local residents, and communities to suggest changes in the law and government policy to deliver more sustainable communities.

The challenge we face



The graph above shows a breakdown of funding received since 1997-98 and projections for the next four years to 2014-15. As can be seen, we have struggled to keep up with demand for services highlighted by the pressures line on the graph. These pressures tend to be unavoidable, such as meeting the demands of an ageing population and supporting the costs of new school buildings. These will continue to rise throughout the next four years. The reduction in revenue funding will predominately be borne from the loss of central government grants (specific grant, Area Based Grant and formula grant).

Chapter 1:

The need for a new approach

The challenge we face:

The need for a radical new approach to public services has never been more urgent given the pressure currently on public finances.

As national government attempts to reduce the financial deficit, we are expecting to make savings on the KCC budget in the region of 25-40% over the next four financial years (2011/12 – 2014/15). Our expectation is that the savings requirement will be at the upper end of this scale.

The challenge we face as an Authority is how to bridge the significant gap between reduced revenue and the funding pressures that will grow over the next four years and beyond. To bridge this gap KCC must radically rethink its approach to the design and delivery of services. In short, the Council must choose to either 'make', 'buy' or 'sell' services. In other words, should we continue to provide the service in-house or is it more cost effective to buy in services from other bodies, and should we sell services to other organisations both within Kent and beyond?

So the financial challenge also provides a real opportunity to develop a new approach to public service delivery. The new government has already started to devolve powers by removing regional bureaucracy and some quangos and freeing up local government from the shackles of top-heavy performance inspection and monitoring. Their message to local government is clear: "*just get on with it*".

Bold Steps for Kent is our plan to do just that.

We will meet the financial challenge head on and be organised to be more effective and productive:

One of our top priorities will be to ensure our finances are sound and that we live within our means. We must drive ever-greater value for money from our services, seeking more efficient provision where services are too expensive, changing providers if they aren't cost effective and ceasing provision altogether if there is little public need or value derived from the service.

We will restructure KCC so that it is fit to meet the challenges ahead over the next four years:

KCC must adapt to ensure it is fit for purpose to respond to the significant financial, policy and service challenges it faces over the next four years. In accordance with the design principles set out in the Appendix, we will restructure the organisation so that it is leaner more focussed on key priorities, but also delivers a structure that supports an organisational culture centred on being a single organisation, delivering shared priorities for the people of Kent.

We must ensure Kent has equivalent powers and responsibilities of City Regions:

The importance of City Regions - such as Greater Manchester and Leeds City Region - as drivers of new economic growth is increasingly reflected in government policy, with City Regions having been granted additional responsibilities over issues such as housing, skills and transport. Kent has the opportunity to deliver greater economic growth than many UK cities

given our position as the Gateway to Europe as well as the opportunities that exist within the Thames Gateway and the regeneration of our coastal towns. We will call for any new additional powers and responsibilities for City Regions to be made available to Kent – either directly to the County Council or through our proposed Local Enterprise Partnership with Essex.

We must develop a new model for the delivery of public services in Kent:

The financial landscape and the push for greater localism and citizen empowerment will require public authorities across Kent to rethink how services are designed and delivered. We must remove duplication and inefficiency that exists not just within authorities, but also between different authorities, whilst at the same time finding ways to involve residents more in the decisions that affect local communities. The move to Locality Boards and local place-based commissioning of a range of services delivered by different public authorities - and developing a greater role for Parish and Town Councils - will be central to this new model.

Changes to the financial arrangements for local government will also require new thinking across the public sector. The development of Community Budgets (for which Kent is a first phase pilot) and the possibility of Government allowing local areas to keep the business rates generated by businesses in their local area will require local authorities to think radically about how such financial innovations can best be delivered. We will ensure that the position of public authorities across Kent is fed into national Government thinking on this important issue, so that any national model works in the best interests of Kent, and Kent can be an early adopter of any new financial offer from central government.

We will gain maximum commercial value from our services:

KCC has some of the best services in local government. As provision across the public sector is increasingly opened up to competition, we will be in a position to offer our services to the wider public, private, voluntary and community sectors, both within Kent and beyond, to generate new revenue and reduce pressure on the council tax base. However, we will withdraw from markets where these commercial enterprises fail to compete, whether in Kent or beyond, and irrespective of the market they operate in.

We will drive efficiency through a new focus on competition and market testing:

The difference between in-house, voluntary and private sector provision will become irrelevant as we continually market test and challenge all of our services to drive greater value for money from them. We will focus on identifying services outcomes and then commission those providers best placed to deliver these outcomes at the lowest cost and highest quality. Our aim is to create a new mixed market of service provision and ensure that the right commissioning decision is taken for service users and taxpayers alike.

We will utilise the opportunities from the expected general power of competence:

Local government has traditionally been constrained by what it was allowed to do rather than what it needed or wanted to do. Through the expected general power of competence, the power of local authorities will be permissive, allowing local government to do whatever it believes is in the best interests of its local community. We will explore all opportunities to use this new power, whether that is in relation to the services we provide, how we might

provide them or how we might structure them in the near future.

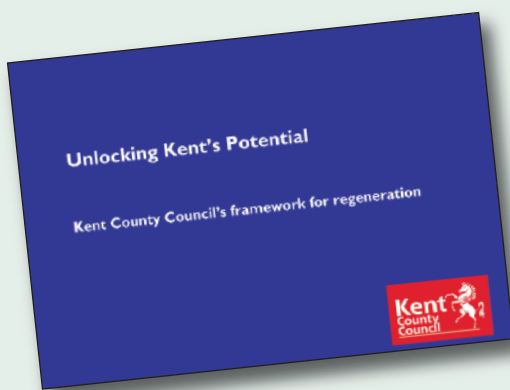
We will continue to be international in focus:

KCC has a unique strength in its strong international ties with regional and local government in the USA and Europe that have been important to learning and innovation in service delivery. KCC is also one of the leading local authorities in the UK at using its influence to maximise funding from EU programmes into Kent. We will remain international in focus, and will work towards increasing the amount of EU funding that the county has access to, and on maximising the added value EU funding can bring to public services in Kent.

We will continue to focus on supporting a high quality of life for Kent residents:

It is important to recognise that despite economic uncertainties day to day life goes on, and a high quality of life is not just derived from economic security but having access to a range of pastimes and activities that allow residents to enjoy life. This is one of the fundamental attractions to living in Kent. We will continue to support a range of projects which allow residents to enjoy all that Kent has to offer, from the Kent School Games to the support for the 2012 London Olympics, so that the quality of life in the County remains one of the most attractive places to live, as well as to work.

Delivering *Unlocking Kent's Potential*:



Sectors Strategy

Skills Strategy

Growth without Gridlock

Environment Strategy

Framework for Later Life

What Price Growth?

Kent & Medway Housing Strategy

Cultural Strategy

Connected Kent

In Kent, we recognise that regeneration is not simply about economic growth - vital though this is - it is also about transformation in education and skills, a cultural renaissance in the county and an efficient transport system that supports the economy, residents and the growth agenda. It is about improved housing conditions, particularly for the most vulnerable, young and old.

This is why our Regeneration Framework "*Unlocking Kent's Potential*" launched in January 2009 commissioned a suite of strategies that set out the policies and actions required to deliver the regeneration priorities it set out.

These strategies, listed above, ranging from how we engage with different business sectors to how we respond to and maximise opportunities from aging population, provide the backbone of how KCC will deliver services so that what we do, and how we provide, contributes to the economic development and regeneration of Kent.

Ensuring the delivery of the actions and approach set out within this suite of strategies will be absolutely central to the supporting our aim of helping the Kent economy to grow, and will be built into the delivery and monitoring arrangements for *Bold Steps for Kent*.

Chapter 2:

Driving economic prosperity

Kent has the greatest potential in South East England to deliver new economic growth and provide new jobs, new homes and a higher standard of living for Kent residents. Our role is to ensure the business community in Kent is able to lead the recovery from recession by helping to create the conditions in which new businesses and entrepreneurship flourishes. This is vital if we are to move to an economy that is balanced, sustainable and begins to close the gap in output between the Kent economy and that of the wider South East region.

In 2009 Kent County Council published *Unlocking Kent's Potential*, a framework for regeneration in the county. This looks ahead to the next 20-25 years, setting out the key cross-cutting challenges and the opportunities that Kent faces in delivering economic prosperity. It identified five key priorities:

- *Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy*
- *Building homes and communities, not estates*
- *Embracing a growing and changing population*
- *Building a new relationship with business*
- *Delivering growth without transport gridlock*

As well as two cross-cutting themes:

- *Recognising Kent's Diversity*
- *Meeting the climate challenge*

Delivery of these priorities and cross-cutting themes remains central to supporting economic growth and regeneration over the next four years.

Building a new relationship with business

Delivering a sector-based approach:

We recognise that it is the business community that delivers economic growth

and prosperity, but that the Kent economy is diverse and changing rapidly to reflect new market realities. Our sector-led approach to engagement with the Kent business community aims to tailor the assistance we can provide to key business sectors in Kent so that it meets their needs.

One example of this sector-based approach is the Kent Cultural Strategy, commissioned by the regeneration framework and developed with partners within the cultural economy in Kent. The strategy sets out the support needed to facilitate growth across the cultural sector over the next five years by building critical mass to make Kent a cultural destination of national significance. Central to this is supporting the creative industries - the vast majority of which operate as small businesses or sole traders - to operate effectively through the development of flexible workspaces and supporting access to high speed broadband so they can interact with cultural networks both nationally and internationally.

A new relationship with business through the Local Enterprise Partnership:

With the abolition of Regional Development Agencies and the transfer of most economic development functions to new Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) the Government has indicated that they want the business community to play an increasingly important leadership role in helping to set the strategic priorities and approaches needed to deliver new economic growth.

We are delighted that Government accepted proposals from Kent, Essex and East Sussex to form a joint Enterprise

Partnership. Combined this will be England's largest LEP. We will use this scale to secure maximum private sector leverage, provide capacity for devolution of powers and public funding and generate real impetus for economic growth. In particular, we will focus on the Thames Gateway and Growth Areas, coastal regeneration and rural Essex, Kent and East Sussex to:

- Support job creation by developing new innovative solutions for infrastructure financing and physical development
- Support the critical transport links we need to support growth
- Promote investment in our cities, towns, Growth Areas and rural communities (including rural broadband), to deliver inward investment and job creation
- Ensure that businesses have the skilled workforces that they need to compete, building a new relationship between our seven universities, Further Education colleges, businesses and local authorities
- Set a new, streamlined framework for business support, together with a positive approach to business development

The Kent, Greater Essex and East Sussex Enterprise Partnership will be larger than all City Regions except London, and will be a strong voice both nationally and internationally in attracting substantial inward investment and resources at a time when attracting such funding will become increasingly competitive.

Unblocking the Thames Gateway:

The Thames Gateway is the largest regeneration project in Europe with the potential to create 225,000 jobs over the next twenty years. The coalition Government remains committed to the successful delivery of the Thames Gateway programme and we will work with Ministers to design solutions that ensure the Thames Gateway ambition is delivered. Our aim is to move towards a single

delivery vehicle for the Thames Gateway in Kent – owned by all local partners – to streamline decision making and the interface between developers, local authorities and central government.

Ultimately, delivery of the Thames Gateway vision is dependent on private sector developers committing resources to build there. The construction industry is recovering slowly from the recession, and we will work with developers to identify blockages preventing development. We will engage with other local authorities and central government to deliver the solutions necessary to get significant regeneration underway. Central to this will be ensuring that the importance of the Thames Gateway is reflected in the forthcoming National Planning Framework.

Unlocking talent to support the Kent economy

Linking skills to economic need:

Business needs a skilled and motivated workforce if it is to succeed, expand and generate growth, whilst individuals should have the means to skill and re-skill themselves to adapt to changing economic circumstances. Through our economic assessment duty we will help shape education and skills provision to ensure it meets the need of the Kent and Medway economy, whether that is provided by KCC or by partners in the Further and Higher Education sectors. Adult education remains one of the key means to allow residents to re-skill themselves to succeed in a fast changing economy. We will increasingly focus this provision on the skills needed in the local Kent economy, and seek to co-locate provision in schools and other community buildings to both reduce cost and improve access.

Delivering a higher level skills base:

In order to remain competitive in a globalised

economy, ensuring the workforce has high level technical skills is paramount. This is a gap that needs to be addressed with Kent lagging behind the wider south east in relation to the percentage of the population educated to degree level and a lower proportion of residents educated beyond GCSE standard. We must ensure that more Kent residents have high level technical and vocational skills. Not only do they increase lifetime earning capacity for individuals and their families, but they also generate a higher level of spending power in the Kent economy.

The retention of graduates in Kent is vital to improving the skills base of the Kent workforce and the County's competitiveness. We will work with the Higher Education sector in Kent to improve graduate retention, supporting the development of more flexible courses, e.g. sandwich year placements, that provides the work-based skills needed in the economy and the real world experience that make graduates more attractive to employers. Through the Kent, Essex and East Sussex Enterprise Partnership we will also foster a greater working relationship between the Higher Education and the business community in Kent, so the wider Kent economy can benefit from the research and innovation spin offs that emerge from a strong relationship between Higher Education and the private sector.

Apprenticeships remain central to providing a skilled workforce:

We will continue to support apprenticeship take up across Kent. Through the Kent Success Apprenticeship Scheme, KCC has directly employed over 340 apprentices over the last four years (against an original target of 200) and will provide at least another 350 apprenticeships over the next four years. Through our relationship with the Kent Association of Training Providers and through a KCC owned commercial training provider, we will continue to

provide and promote apprenticeships across the private and public sectors. We will continue to press the case for the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) role to be fully devolved to KCC, as we are in a better position to use our relationships with the business community of Kent to promote and support a significant increase in the take up of apprenticeships.

Shifting from careers advice to career management skills:

With economic markets more prone to rapid change and longer working lives, future generations will increasingly have multiple and varied careers. Our approach should be to develop young people's career management skills so they have the ability to understand employment markets and tailor their own training and development to emerging opportunities. This has real economic value; international research suggests that making the right career choices throughout life, with employees fully able to utilise their skills and being contented in the work they do, can add 1% to GDP. In Kent getting career choices right could add more than £230 million to our GDP.

Building homes and communities, not estates

Delivering the Kent & Medway Housing Strategy:

Local authorities and other public sector organisations in Kent and Medway have already recognised the need to work together on housing to find solutions for local housing need and to meet local growth and regeneration ambitions. The abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategy represents a real opportunity for local control of local development and the delivery of managed growth. Our ambition is to ensure that new housing is developed intelligently, building homes with a sense of place, rather than soulless estates

disconnected from the wider community of which they must be a part. We must also ensure that new affordable housing is provided in Kent at a time when grant funding for new affordable housing provision is falling in real terms.

The Kent and Medway Housing Strategy is the first of its kind in a two tier local government area in the country. It provides the over-arching strategic investment requirements for housing, infrastructure and managed growth in Kent and Medway, and a framework for the Local Investment Plans which Councils have developed with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It recognises the diversity of housing need, quality and condition across the County and that what is appropriate for one neighbourhood may not be right in another. It does not propose a 'one size fits all' approach but provides a menu of solutions to assist authorities in achieving their local aims.

The Strategy is unique as it looks across a whole county area and brings District, Borough, Unitary and County Council ambitions together through a bottom-up approach. This is not about the County imposing targets or housing numbers on Districts and Borough Councils. This is about lower tier and unitary authorities identifying their own local housing needs and requirements, whilst recognising the added value that can be gained by adopting a common approach to meeting these where appropriate. The Housing Strategy sets out five key themes around which collective action will be focussed:

- **the continued delivery of key infrastructure to support managed growth and housing delivery across the County.**
- **the continued regeneration of our disadvantaged neighbourhoods to bring them in line with more**

affluent parts of the county.

- **the provision of choice and affordability in housing for the citizens of Kent and Medway, including rural communities, which meets their needs and aspirations.**
- **the managed improvement and retrofit of existing homes to make them fit for now and in the future.**
- **to support vulnerable people to lead high quality lives through the provision of excellent housing and support services.**

We will make full use of tax increment financing (TIF) and other new innovative finance mechanisms to unlock development opportunities.

A core ask of government in the Housing Strategy is the move to tax increment financing. Widely used in the United States, TIF essentially allows local authorities to borrow against future new tax revenue to fund infrastructure that would help unlock delivery of new businesses and homes that yields that additional tax income. We will press government to bring forward legislation quickly to allow this model to be used by local authorities at their discretion to unlock development opportunities. We will increasingly use a wider range of financial models that leverages greater funding from private sector to form attractive investment packages to help unlock infrastructure and development opportunities and maximise the value gained from every pound invested by KCC.

Ensure new housing comes with the appropriate infrastructure:

As a major service provider and the local transport authority in Kent, KCC will work closely with our District Council partners to ensure that new housing identified in Local Development Frameworks is supported with the right infrastructure such as roads, education and health facilities

rather than placing further strain on services often already operating at capacity. We will continue to press the case for infrastructure costs to be met by appropriate central government grant, so that prescriptive developer contributions do not impede growth. As part of this, we will also explore new financial models that will encourage investors to support new housing development, offering a broader range of tenure types that would better meet people's housing aspirations.

Facilitate access to a high-speed broadband infrastructure:

Access to high-speed broadband is a business prerequisite, especially for small to medium sized enterprises for which it is vital to provide access to customers. It is also vital to delivering a high quality of life for Kent residents, as it opens up new opportunities for learning, communication and socialising across the world. KCC has committed to working with the telecoms sector to improve access to broadband - and this will be set out in our emerging ICT strategy, Connected Kent. We will work to ensure that isolated and rural communities have access to broadband provision, and ensure that there is well developed approach to allowing companies to develop the infrastructure necessary to support high speed broadband in Kent.

Delivering growth without transport gridlock

Delivering the priorities set out in our integrated transport strategy *Growth without Gridlock*:

Growth without Gridlock will set out the key strategic transport priorities to ensure that Kent's infrastructure can support economic growth. These will include:

- **Developing new innovative financial models to pay for strategic**

transport infrastructure: As a County that can provide a high rate of new economic growth, Kent has a strong case to make to Government for continued investment in our transport infrastructure. However, at a time when resources are falling in real terms, the reality is that we must think radically about how new transport infrastructure can be funded. We will work with Government to develop innovative financial models to fund improvements to the transport infrastructure in Kent, exploring the use of vignette schemes on foreign goods vehicles, the use of tolls and other charges that can leverage in private sector investment into the delivery of new transport infrastructure which limits the up-front cost to the public purse but delivers the new infrastructure vital to economic growth in Kent.

- **Delivering a lower Third Thames Crossing:** We will continue to press Government to support a third Thames Crossing to alleviate pressure on the Dartford Tunnel and Queen Elizabeth II Bridge, as well as the M25. This scheme is also central to support the bifurcation of traffic heading to the Port of Dover (see below). A new crossing is not only vital to delivery of new economic growth in the Thames Gateway and to keep Kent moving, but also to ensuring the continued prosperity of London and the greater South East.
- **Relieving pressure on the Channel Corridor:** As the Gateway to Europe, the Channel Corridor is under constant pressure from high volumes of traffic, which are expected to grow over the next 20 years. Kent taxpayers bear the brunt of maintenance and capital costs of being the Gateway to Europe. Relieving this pressure is vital if Kent's lifeline to Europe and London is not to become choked by congestion. KCC has a long called for a 'vignette' or 'permit' scheme on foreign

registered HGVs that use UK roads but who pay no tax and which places the UK haulage industry at a competitive disadvantage. Income raised from the scheme could be used to support the development of a solution to Operation Stack by funding a permanent lorry park between Junctions 10 and 11 of the M20, and support the upgrading of stretches of the A2 in East Kent to deliver the bifurcation of access into the Port of Dover.

- **Delivering radical transport solutions for East Kent:** Transport is vital to East Kent's regeneration and radical transport options are required to support this. We will explore the options for developing a Thanet Parkway station linked to the expansion of Kent International Airport at Manston in Thanet. Manston Airport remains one of the most underused strategic assets in the South East of England, at the very time when runway capacity is operating a maximum in the region's major passenger airports. Manston has the potential to create 7,500 jobs by 2033. We will lobby government to consider the use of Manston as additional runway capacity for the South East. We will also explore options to link Thanet Parkway to High Speed 1 through line speed enhancement between Ashford and Ramsgate. Initial studies suggest this could be done with relatively modest investment and provide a cost-benefit ratio of £4 for every £1 of investment. This would bring the journey times to Thanet within touching distance of an hour from London – opening up a significant passenger market to the airport whilst offering huge regeneration opportunities to East Kent.
- **Towards an integrated public transport network:** To achieve growth without gridlock public transport must be an attractive option for Kent residents. It has the ability to improve

the quality of life for the elderly and disabled, but also to provide access to jobs and services, stimulating new economic growth. We will work towards delivering an integrated bus network, improving connectivity and interchange across the full range of rapid transit, inter-urban coaches, local busses and rural bus services with the wider transport network including railway stations and park and ride sites. We will maximise the value gained from the annual £60m public support provided to Kent bus operators, ensuring that the money is spent intelligently on providing an integrated network. We will also use our bi-annual Rail Summits to bring together key partners, residents and commuter groups to discuss issues affecting the rail services in Kent and press for improvements in railway services across Kent in both the short term and when future rail franchises are negotiated.

Embracing a growing and changing population

Embed the Framework for Later Life in service planning:

By 2026 the older population of Kent is expected to have increased by 30.7% on 2006 levels, whilst the ratio of traditional working age population compared to those of current state pension age will have fallen from 3.1: to 2:1. This demographic shift represents a significant challenge to public services, and the Framework for Later Life sets out our broad approach to:

- **ensuring that individuals increasingly plan for and take responsibility for preparing for later life themselves, so that they can continue to live comfortably, independently and securely.**
- **help develop the preventative agenda that will reduce future**

dependency and pressure on public services from an ageing population.

- **harness the huge economic and social capital of this age group to benefit themselves and the wider economy of Kent.**

The later life agenda cuts across many service issues and the framework sets out how meeting this challenge will be embedded into planning service provision going forward. Of particular focus will be how, through supporting the Big Society agenda, the experience and expertise of older people can be used - for example through volunteering and other community projects - to help reduce the financial burden on an decreasing working age population.

Meeting the climate challenge

Delivering the themes and priorities set out in the Kent Environment Strategy:

The Kent Environment Strategy focuses on making the most of the environmental opportunities we have in Kent such as offshore wind power, moving to low carbon buildings and construction – especially through our regeneration programmes - and clean technologies, tapping into a global market for low carbon goods and services that is now worth £3 trillion globally. Underpinning our approach is a commitment to delivering this agenda without placing ever-increasing burdens on Kent businesses.

The Environment Strategy sets out 10 priorities based around three key themes:

- **Living within our environmental limits, leading to Kent consuming resources more efficiently, eliminating waste and maximising opportunities from the green economy.** The priorities include focussing on making Kent more water

efficient, ensuring new development is low carbon and resource efficient, turning waste into new resources, and reducing the ecological footprint of what we consume.

- **Meeting the climate change challenge and working towards a low carbon economy that is prepared for, and resilient to, climate change.** Priorities are focussed on reducing future carbon emissions, managing the impacts of climate change and in particular, extreme weather events, and to support the development of green jobs and businesses in Kent.
- **Valuing our natural, historic and living environment.** The priorities within this theme are to ensure we utilise the full social and economic potential of the natural historic and living environment in Kent, conserving and enhancing the quality of Kent's natural heritage and ensuring residents have access to the benefits of Kent's coast, green spaces and cultural heritage.

Resisting unsuitable and unsustainable forms of development:

KCC will continue to actively oppose inappropriate development that harms the Kent environment and countryside and which is clearly against the wishes of local residents.

Recognising diversity

The demographic and geographic diversity of Kent is one of its most important strengths. Recognising that diversity and ensuring our priorities and services meet the needs of all Kent residents remains a key priority, and this can best be achieved through the localist focus we have set out in this paper and in particular the shift to local place-based commissioning of services - where local issues and the needs of the local population can best be addressed.

Moving to place-based commissioning

We will consult on which KCC services are suitable for place-based commissioning and indicative district based budgets will be calculated for those services and pooled into a single commissioning pot. KCC elected members for each district will then meet to decide which priorities should be funded for those services within their own district (without falling below a minimal service level) and how those priorities should be met by setting a local commissioning plan. Local Members will be responsible for public and partner consultation, priority setting, oversight and delivery of their local commissioning plan, holding local service managers directly to account for delivery. Over time, we expect more KCC services to be able to move into this model.

However, we think there is considerable opportunity for a more joined-up approach and greater efficiencies if there is a single district based commissioning plan that is shared by local KCC Members and District Councillors – for both local KCC services and District Council services. This integration would lead to more effective targeting of priorities, allowing for transfer of resources across organisational boundaries if priorities dictated, but also driving rationalisation of expensive and siloed partnership arrangements. For example it would be possible to merge Local Strategic Partnerships into these new arrangements, bringing in wider public service partners and merge the responsibilities of local Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Local Children's Trust Boards and GP commissioning into the model, thus moving towards a 'Locality Board' covering all public services in a district area.

The Locality Board would then be responsible for further engagement with other key local bodies – such as Parish and Town Councils - about local service needs and also the best way services might be delivered in their communities, with Parish and Town Councils potentially playing a more prominent role in the delivery of some services where there is an appetite from them to do so.

Chapter 3:

Building new partnerships

The new Government is introducing fundamental reform to local public services - in particular in health and education - focussed on empowering front line leaders such as head teachers and GPs. It also involves freeing up the market to encourage the formation of new service providers to support GPs and head teachers to innovate in service delivery. We will seize the opportunity this agenda provides to redesign the partnership landscape in Kent and reshape our relationship with our partners in Kent.

Partnership working should not exist for its own sake but must provide value and improved outcomes for the residents of Kent. That is why our partnership working will be based on three clear principles. Firstly, all our partnership arrangements must be focussed and not merely become 'talking shops'. Secondly, our partnerships will be primarily local in focus, wherever possible built around district and borough boundaries as the building blocks of public services in Kent. Finally, these partnerships will be time limited, with sunset clauses specifying the date on which partnerships will cease unless a clear evidence based decision is taken to renew the partnership.

Building new partnerships at the district level

Kent is a big and diverse county. The challenges faced in one area are often not the same as those faced in another. The economic and demographic make up of Kent varies on a district by district basis, and this often presents unique local challenges which require bespoke local solutions - a "one size fits all" approach

isn't always appropriate.

We need to find a way to tailor countywide services to local need whilst still maintaining economies of scale. However, localism isn't just about pushing decisions down to the lowest appropriate level. It also requires a local infrastructure to ensure priorities are identified, concerns listened to and decisions are acted upon so that services improve and problems are resolved. We believe that a shift to place-based commissioning can provide this infrastructure.

We realise that this is a huge change from how we work today, and it will require energy and drive to deliver. Therefore the scheme will be **piloted** in the first instance, and the model then rolled out so that there is a local KCC commissioning plan for every district area by 2014. The level of engagement of District and Borough Councils and wider partners is a matter for themselves, and we recognise that some may wish to engage more speedily and deeply than others in this agenda. We therefore expect the model to develop at variable speeds across the county.

Building a new partnership with the voluntary sector

The voluntary sector plays a hugely significant and successful role in the life of Kent, and the voluntary and community sector together will be fundamental to the Big Society agenda and what we can do to support it, as outlined in the Putting Citizens in Control section of this plan. What is undoubtedly clear is that the voluntary sector will be asked to play an

ever greater role in the delivery of public services in the future and this will require a new partnership to facilitate this new working relationship. It must be a mature relationship based on mutual understanding of the value each can offer the other.

A competitive sector:

We recognise that the voluntary sector is a significant and diverse part of the Kent economy, encompassing very different organisations, with differing aims, ambitions and levels of development ranging from the very local to countywide organisations with professional expertise. All add significantly to the quality of life in Kent. However, in an era of falling resources and a drive for ever greater value for money, the voluntary sector must accept that competition for services will increase and they must provide and evidence excellent value for money and quality if they are to win and retain contracts.

Understand voluntary sector capacity and capability in Kent:

The voluntary sector is not the private sector. Very rarely do voluntary organisations have the finances needed to sell themselves or to develop highly detailed bids for service contracts, and we do not want to unnecessarily add to their costs when every pound possible should be going on front line services. We will work with the voluntary sector to better understand its capabilities, and shape our commissioning approach so that is accessible and transparent. Where the voluntary sector does provide services for KCC, we will ensure that the performance management of those contracts is fair and proportionate, based on outcomes and value for money.

We will explore a range of contract models for the voluntary sector:

These might take the form of developing framework contracts for voluntary sector

organisations allowing KCC to use “call off” type arrangements, to potentially allowing larger voluntary organisations or voluntary sector consortia to take on contracts in the role of ‘prime providers’ which then subcontract out packages of work to smaller local voluntary bodies. Nothing will be off the agenda and we will work with the voluntary sector to develop and design contract models which work both for KCC and the voluntary sector.

Building a new partnership with schools

The aim of the new Government’s policy on schools is to transform the education sector by introducing new provision, in the form of more new academies and free schools, to increase competition and parental choice and improve standards. Central to this transformation is the empowerment of head teachers and school governors so that they have greater financial control and decision making over how their school is run.

KCC recognised long ago that it is not local authorities that run schools but head teachers and school governors. The best role KCC can play is to provide and facilitate the support necessary so that schools can get on with the job of providing excellent teaching and learning for the children and young people of Kent.

We will respond positively to the changing role for local authorities in education:

Schools will always be at the very heart of the local communities irrespective of their legal status, who runs them or who funds them. KCC will continue to work with all school providers in Kent to help them meet the aspirations of parents and pupils. We will work with head teachers to create a new Kent Schools Association consisting

of all schools in Kent - both maintained and non-maintained (academies). We want the Association working in partnership with KCC, and as a community of schools working closely together, to develop the policies and practices necessary to ensure that Kent schools continue to succeed and have a collective strategic voice at County and national level.

Further improve primary attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to close the gap in attainment for disadvantaged children:

Success at primary school is the foundation upon which learning at secondary school and throughout life is built. Yet attainment at primary level in Kent remains below the national average. We will work with primary schools to support improvements in attainment, particularly in regard to literacy and numeracy, and will monitor progress across all Kent primary schools. Children should be up to the appropriate standard in reading, writing and maths before they enter secondary school. This is vital if we are to begin to close the gap in attainment between children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who are more advantaged. Our role in securing and quality assuring early years' education for all 3 and 4 year olds, and providing some targeted provision for 2 year olds, also supports this agenda, ensuring that children are at an appropriate level of development as they enter primary school.

Discuss with the primary and secondary sector options for further devolution of funding:

KCC already devolves the majority of Dedicated Schools Grant to schools, retaining just 8.7% for those services undertaken centrally or which schools have asked us to provide on their behalf. This 'top slice' is low compared to most local authorities, where in some areas it is as much

as 16-17%. We are ready to devolve more of this grant to schools if they wish, where it is possible and makes sense to do so, but there must be an open and honest dialogue between schools and KCC about which services KCC should continue to offer centrally and which services might be better procured by schools through commercial arrangements, either from KCC or other market providers.

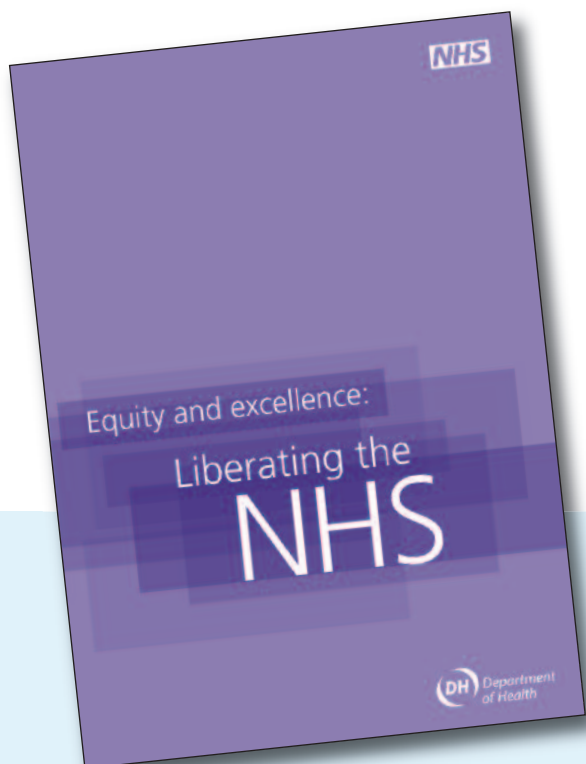
We understand that schools in Kent are hugely diverse, not just between the primary, secondary and special school sectors, but also within each sector. Whilst secondary schools might be of a scale that can procure services at reasonable cost from the market, many primary schools are too small to be able to procure efficiently from the market. In those circumstances devolution of grant will simply increase their costs. We will work across and within each sector to arrive at a financial deal that is in the interests of all schools and pupils in Kent.

KCC will shape its school support provision so that it is competitive and attractive:

As the education landscape changes with more schools likely to take increasing responsibility for more of their own budget, the market for school support services (from back office management such as HR and payroll to front line activities such as specialist teaching support) will grow, with an increasing number of commercial providers offering these services.

Our support services to schools will be cost efficient and of high quality. We believe we can make a strong, broad and competitive offer to schools in covering the full range of support functions that most other providers would struggle to match, both within Kent and in other local authority areas.

Transformation of the health economy



“...probably the most significant new statement in the White Paper— is not that we are going to have general practice-led commissioning, which we were always clear about, but that we are going to ally

it to a strategic role for local authorities,

which is not just about meshing together public health and social care, although that is important, it is not just about integrating health and social care services, although it will allow that to happen to a greater extent, it is also about the local authority explicitly having a responsibility, together with the consortia, to agree on what the Health Service commissioning strategy looks like..... Proactively, local authorities will be participants in creating a strategic assessment of need in their area and how the commissioning plan should meet it.....”

Rt. Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP, Secretary of State for Health, oral evidence to the House of Commons Health Select Committee. July 2010

KCC will establish a vehicle offering education support services within this emerging market. We are open to the form that such a vehicle will take - whether as a KCC company or some other form of partnership or co-operative body jointly owned by schools, or as one vehicle or several to reflect the differing needs across the primary, secondary and specialist school sectors. The shape of the vehicle and the services it provides will be determined by the need of schools themselves. We will work with head teachers to help identify and design an offer that would best meet their needs.

Support quality and choice from a diverse range of providers:

KCC believes in choice and diversity in education provision and has a track record of providing some of the most diverse provision in the country, from grammar schools to specialist vocational skills centres. We welcome further diversity in the education sector in Kent, but diversity must not become an excuse for poor quality provision or competition which harms other local schools. We will ensure high quality provision is available to all pupils and parents, and will challenge any school where attainment falls or where their policies materially harm the wider family of schools in the local area.

Establish a support framework based on a sector-led approach and sharing best practice:

Kent needs successful schools and we have some of the most successful schools in the country. We want to harness that expertise and understanding and transform our support model for schools so that schools themselves lead it. This sector-led approach will focus on sharing best practice and new innovation in the classroom, and on the continuing professional development of teachers, the very people who make

schools a success. Our role will be on facilitating this sector-led approach, rather than managing it directly.

Building a new partnership with GPs

Like schools, the aim of government policy on the NHS is to empower the front line. The new white paper *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*, signals the new Government's commitment to empower General Practitioners to take responsibility for commissioning primary care for their patients. Local authorities, at both District and County level, will play a key role in this process, working with GP consortia to ensure their commissioning plans meet the needs of patients and the local community. We want Locality Boards to play a key role in this commissioning process, better connecting KCC and wider public services with health provision at the local level.

We must support GP consortia, through their commissioning plans, to open up the primary care market in Kent to new and innovative providers. For example, through the development of mutual trusts or co-operates across a range of services - such as district nurse and mental health provision - we can increase choice and drive up standards. Without this increased choice, GPs will be forced to simply re-commission existing provision, and we will miss the opportunity to improve the quality of health services to the people of Kent.

Develop an attractive offer to support GPs in their new commissioning role:

The focus of the new Government's health reforms is to empower GPs and add value to the service they provide to patients, not burden them with additional bureaucracy and paperwork. KCC has a strong track record in commissioning a broad range of services for local residents and that

expertise - combined with our understanding of community need and the economies of scale we can provide - means we are in a strong position to help GPs undertake their new commissioning responsibilities.

KCC will establish vehicle that can provide an attractive support offer to GP consortia. We will work with GP consortia across Kent to develop a broad based offer to support their new role, whether that is in effective back office support or professional advice in commissioning processes, undertaking joint commissioning or GP consortia fully delegating their commissioning responsibilities to KCC on individual care pathways. Our support offer to GPs in Kent will be designed to meet needs of individual GP consortia.

The form that these vehicles will take is a matter for discussion and agreement, whether as a company, some form of mutual trust between KCC and GP consortia (and possibly other local bodies), or more than one enterprise to reflect the differing needs of GP consortia in Kent or a single countywide body. The landscape of the new health economy will develop and mature over time, but we are very clear that the best approach is to design our offer with GP consortia so that the relationship between KCC and the new health economy in Kent is dynamic and built on strong foundations.

Better integrate health and social care services:

Through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment we will identify where health and social services can better integrate to deliver a more responsive service, reduce duplication and deliver greater value for money for both KCC and the NHS, e.g. through a single assessment model or through joint commissioning of services.

We will jointly work with GP consortia to develop the most appropriate model that best fits the needs of Kent. We will also work with the emerging Community Health Service Trusts to identify opportunities where delivery of health service and social services can be better integrated or rationalised to improve services and be delivered more cost effectively, including opening up opportunities for new service providers to enter the market.

Reduce avoidable demand on health and social care services:

Through KCC's new role in public health and our new partnership with the health economy we want to focus on a preventative approach. The pressure on acute health and social care services from poor lifestyle choices is as significant as the demographic pressure from an increasingly ageing population. Better public health can help reduce this future pressure, and as part of our broader preventative approach, we will use our new responsibilities as part of the national Public Health Service to identify and tackle the major public health issues in the county, supporting people to make better lifestyle choices and consider their own future health – so expensive health provision becomes less frequently required.

Build a leaner more effective countywide partnership

Whilst we remain absolutely committed to local partnership architecture, there will remain a need for countywide groups that can take a strategic overview, providing a Kent wide perspective of the key issues and policy questions affecting the county. Unlike the form of partnership arrangements that have encouraged by the previous government, these will be slimmed down and focused on delivering the principles set out in the Kent Re-Commitment. This new agreement between KCC and District and

Borough Councils to work more closely together in the best interests of our residents is the foundation stone upon which County-District Council relationship will be based going forward. The new countywide bodies will be focussed on joining up priorities and coordinating the delivery of front line services across the county.

We will establish the Kent Forum:

Comprised principally of democratically elected public service leaders in Kent, the Forum will be the countywide body that agrees shared priorities and targets across authorities, endorses countywide strategies and considers the County's strategic response to emerging challenges. It will also oversee the move towards local place-based commissioning. The Forum will maintain strong relationships with other public service agencies in Kent, bringing them into the decision making process when necessary and will develop a strong strategic relationship with the voluntary and community sectors. We will also invite Kent MPs to join meetings of the Kent Forum to build better understanding of decision-making and improve accountability across the full range of public services in Kent.

Through the Kent Forum we will review the Kent Public Service Board(PSB):

Our aim is to transform the Public Service Board (PSB) into the body responsible for the delivery of the joint priorities agreed by the Kent Forum, and as such the Kent Forum and the PSB will have the tight working relationship, with the Forum setting out the PSB work programme and the PSB providing professional advice and guidance to the Kent Forum. We will review the membership and terms of reference of the PSB ensure it is fit for purpose to deliver this role, with the expectation that

Chief Executives and equivalent officers in other public agencies will form the basis of its membership.

A task-force approach to shared front line services:

The Kent PSB will focus on delivering more shared front line services, through co-location and single tasking arrangements for multi-disciplinary teams. Not only will this deliver efficiencies, but also provide a more responsive service for local residents. The Margate Task Force is already a model for this type of targeted approach. We want to see similar opportunities rolled out across other areas of the county – commissioned and managed by the PSB.

The Big Society in Kent

The Big Society is the new government's focus on reshaping the relationship between the state, the individual citizen and local communities. The core analysis running through the Big Society agenda is that the growth in what is termed Big Government over recent years has transferred too much power from individuals to the State, to the extent that it has encouraged a dependency culture in which individuals now turn to the State for help and support in the first instance rather than as a last resort, no matter how minor or trivial the problem. Yet State support is expensive and often far less effective than individual initiative and community activism. This dependency culture is no longer affordable, in both financial terms and in the impact it has on individuals and communities.

At the heart of the Big Society is a twofold approach to tackling this dependency culture and empowering citizens and local communities. The first is to increase volunteering and civic activism, getting individuals and local communities to help themselves to tackle local problems. The second is a desire to see the voluntary and community sectors to take on more responsibility for running some local public services, rather than have them delivered by the State.

By definition, KCC should not lead on the Big Society agenda, as to truly take hold it must organically develop in local communities themselves, becoming embedded as more individuals and communities begin to see the opportunities provided by this agenda. We do, however, believe we have a role in facilitating and encouraging the growth of the Big Society in Kent. We think there are three distinct areas where we can do more to support the Big Society.

Firstly, we can seek to further liberalise the market for our own goods and services, doing more to open up our procurement and commissioning frameworks so that the voluntary and community sectors, especially social enterprises, are encouraged and in a position to deliver more KCC services.

Secondly, we can support the development and growth of the voluntary and community sectors in Kent. In particular, providing the relatively small cash injections needed to facilitate new social enterprises and working capital for existing social enterprises to compete for contracts from local public services. We can also support these voluntary and community enterprises by helping them to become more efficient, providing back office support so that they can effectively compete with private companies.

Thirdly, we can support community development. Not all local communities and groups will have the knowledge and understanding to simply take the reins from government, and we understand that they will need some support to help them build confidence and the skills required.

These three broad themes will be the basis on which KCC embraces and contributes to the Big Society in Kent.

Chapter 4:

Putting the citizen in control

Individuals, families and local communities, not the state, are best placed to decide their own choices - local authorities and other public services exist to serve the people, not to dictate how they should live their lives or restrict their choices. The role of public authorities going forward should be facilitative - supporting and empowering individuals and communities to make their own choices - with power and influence in the hands of local people, thus encouraging the growth of the Big Society.

Transparency and access

We will be an open and transparent organisation, giving residents the information they need to hold us to account:

We will publish salary and expenses data online of our senior officers bringing them into line with the existing arrangements for publishing Member allowances and expenses online. Organisational performance and the financial cost of services will also be published online. This will be updated regularly, with our ambition to move to real time reporting wherever possible. Raw data will be available but we will also provide an interactive website so that residents and businesses can understand and interpret this data and better hold us to account for delivery of services and value for money.

Expand the 'Gateway' programme to cover multi-channel access to services through the internet and telephone:

The Kent public service Gateway(s) have been hugely popular with residents, creating a single point of access to a wide

range of public services in convenient town centre locations. This model will be rolled out further to extend coverage, but will also include the development of a single Gateway website and single Gateway telephone number, so residents can access services they wish. Our aim will be to make all KCC services accessible online, so residents can use them at a time and place to suit them. Such services include applying for school places, social care support, transport to schools and college and other payments of fees and charges. This will include moving towards online self-assessment for KCC services.

Always through the right door:

The Gateway concept has been hugely successful. However, KCC has a significant number of public facing facilities in local communities, in particular libraries, used by many residents on frequent basis which can also be in a position to offer similar 'gateway' approach solutions, providing the full range of access, information and guidance around services provided by the dedicated Gateway offices. We want the gateway approach to be embedded across the range of KCC front facing facilities so whichever door the customer walks through, it is always a gateway to KCC being able to help them meet their needs.

Driving personalisation of services

Further drive personalisation across our services:

Entitlement to services shouldn't mean the state monopolising the design and delivery of services, especially when individuals and families are better placed to understand

What does the Big Society mean for KCC?

The 'Big Society' is not new to KCC. We have always valued the expertise and commitment that the voluntary and community sector can offer, and already work with them to deliver a range of services to Kent residents. The principles of citizen and community led service development have driven our approach to public service delivery:

Member Grants, such as community grants of up to £10,000 each year, enable each of our 84 county councillors to provide financial support for small scale projects that benefit the local communities they represent. This funding has supported youth groups, environmental projects and facilities for older people. For example the Member Highway Fund was used by three members to fund a minibus service that runs 4 days a week to replace the Wormshill-Sittingbourne Postbus service that was withdrawn by Royal Mail in November 2009. This eight seater vehicle is well utilised by residents of Wormshill and Frinsted; without this service, many elderly people in particular would be effectively stranded in their villages.

Bulk Buying project: In 2009, the Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK) facilitated a community-led project in Parkwood, Maidstone aimed at reducing child poverty. Local residents decided to focus the project on bulk-buying commodities (such as nappies and washing powder) for the neighbourhood and setting up a shop to trade these at an affordable rate. With support from the SILK team, 'R' shop was opened in May 2010 from a community room in a local school and the space is being used for a range of community functions. After supporting local residents to initiate this project, SILK will withdraw so that the project can continue independently.

Kent Savers Credit Union was established following recognition of the need for access to affordable credit and savings facilities for those on low incomes. KCC assisted the establishment of a Kent-wide Credit Union; however Kent Savers is now set up as a mutual co-operative with its own board of directors. The development of the Union should increase the financial resilience of vulnerable individuals in Kent, and foster a sense of community through its members' shared ownership of the co-operative. As the ability of the Union to lend to its members relies on savings invested by other members, its success will lie in the commitment of Kent communities to support each other.

Clean Kent Watch is a volunteering project which has established a network of neighbourhood volunteers to provide grass roots information on fly-tipping, abandoned vehicles and rubbish fires. Volunteers make reports to KCC's Contact Centre which operates 24 hours a day.

We are now looking at innovative ways of using social enterprise to deliver areas such as community health, social care and helping people back into work.

their own needs and who can best provide for them. Not only does this empower service users to design services around their own needs - leading to better quality provision - but because services are focussed on actual need rather than on standardised provision they can often be more cost-effective.

KCC has been at the forefront of the personalisation agenda - particularly in adult social care - over the last ten years and we will continue to drive personalisation across our entire service offer. Our aim is for residents to be able to choose how they receive their entitlement to services. For example, this could mean offering parents of children entitled to SEN transport a cash alternative rather than KCC choosing how that transport entitlement will be provided.

We will expand the use of the Kent Card and introduce more smart card technology to improve access to services:

The visa enabled Kent Card - pre-loaded with an individual's personal budget or cash alternative to KCC service delivery - is a unique way of allowing service users the freedom and choice to pay for their service in the same way as millions of consumer transactions occur on the high street everyday. The possibilities for the Kent Card far exceed social service users, and through the drive for greater personalisation and choice, we will expand the number of KCC services that offer the Kent Card, and want to see take up of the Kent Card significantly expanded. We will also look to introduce more smart card technology that will allow residents to access a range of services, from libraries to concessionary travel through a single KCC smart card.

Support the voluntary & community sector

Establish a Big Society Fund for Kent:

This will invite applications for capital start-up and project based funding for social enterprises, social entrepreneurs and other not-for-profit groups that provide employment opportunities which support social inclusion in Kent. The Funds principal aim will be to facilitate new social enterprise in Kent, and we will explore a range of options to provide income to the fund, using both existing resources but also potentially recycling monies from the disposal of assets into the Fund so that resource continues to be used for community benefit. One of the central aims of the Fund will be to leverage in further resources from Government and philanthropic bodies and individuals to maximise the resources available to social enterprises.

Support the voluntary and community sector in accessing contracts to run services - especially those operating payment by results - which limits voluntary and community sectors opportunities:

The liberalisation of the market for public services presents a huge opportunity for the voluntary and community sectors, as well as social enterprises, to be able to take responsibility for running a range of public services. However, where public authorities are operating contracting systems where payment by results is a condition of the contract, then this presents a real problem for social enterprises that don't have access to working capital to fund the delivery of services, or don't feel that they can take on the risk associated with payment by results contracts.

We want to explore a variety of options that would support the voluntary and

community sectors in such circumstances. For example, the Big Society Fund could loan the working capital to organisations that have the skills and expertise to deliver such contracts but can't access the capital, or we could facilitate a commercial loan through, for example, Kent Savers - the Kent Credit Union.

Where appropriate and where it is felt that it might be mutually beneficial, we would consider taking equity in some social enterprises so that they can take on greater risk on contracts based on payment by results, but where reward payments are more significant, and the social enterprise could benefit from our engagement and expertise. Any returns from holding equity stakes would be recycled back into the Big Society Fund.

Support the voluntary and community sectors and social enterprises in becoming more efficient so they can better provide value for money:

Social enterprises and the VCS have a real opportunity to help transform the way public services are provided. However, at a time of very tight public finances, the reality is that they must be able to compete with other providers from the public and private sector on costs. We will work with the voluntary sector to identify areas where KCC could provide help and assistance in making the social enterprises and the voluntary and community bodies more efficient by, for example, taking on responsibilities for their payroll function, providing flexible workspaces or other back office support. In short, all areas where the scale of economies a countywide organisation such as KCC can provide at lower cost than individual bodies could procure themselves.

Supporting community development

We will help local communities build capacity and capability:

Through our Social Innovation Lab for Kent (SILK) we will help local community groups build capacity and capability to design models of service provision which are self-sustaining and do not require ongoing state support. As part of this agenda, we will further promote volunteering in the local community by our own staff, and actively encourage them to work in community based projects that can transfer their skills and knowledge to build community capacity. We will change employee terms and conditions to allow more dedicated annual personal and development days' for staff to be used for volunteering instead of staff training.

Continue to fully support and use the Sustainable Communities Act (SCA):

The SCA allows local communities and councils to seek changes in law and government policy that would facilitate the development of more sustainable communities. KCC will continue to fully support the use of the Act, and will work closely with our partners at District and our Parish level to ensure use of the SCA is effective and joined up.

Develop a new approach to Community Asset Transfer to support new service delivery:

We will develop a new approach to Community Asset Transfer so that community groups, the voluntary sector and social enterprises can take on the management and ownership of KCC assets. This will be linked to those assets where they take responsibility for delivering public services from those assets, and where the case for asset transfer provides value for money.

Further liberalise the market

Encourage the voluntary sector and social enterprises to bid for contracts to supply KCC goods and services:

It is in KCC's interests to ensure that there is as much competition for KCC goods and services as possible to drive greater choice and value for money. Through our 'Backing Kent Business' scheme KCC has already done much to ensure that the small and medium sized businesses in Kent understand how KCC procures goods and services so that they can better compete for KCC contracts. We will extend this approach to the voluntary and community sector, helping them understand the public procurement process so that they can better compete with the private and public sector for KCC contracts.

Maximise the social and community benefits from our procurement of goods and services:

Even after delivering significant financial savings, KCC will still be one of the largest procurers of goods and services in the Kent economy. We will become better at using our significant spending power to leverage wider social and community benefits from contracts where it makes sense to do so. For example, under the first Building School for the Future agreement KCC required some 400 new apprenticeships to be provided by the contractor. We will ensure our procurement system maximises the opportunities for social and community benefits within the legal rules governing procurement, so maximum public value is derived from each and every pound KCC spends.

Introduce a standing 'Right to Bid' process:

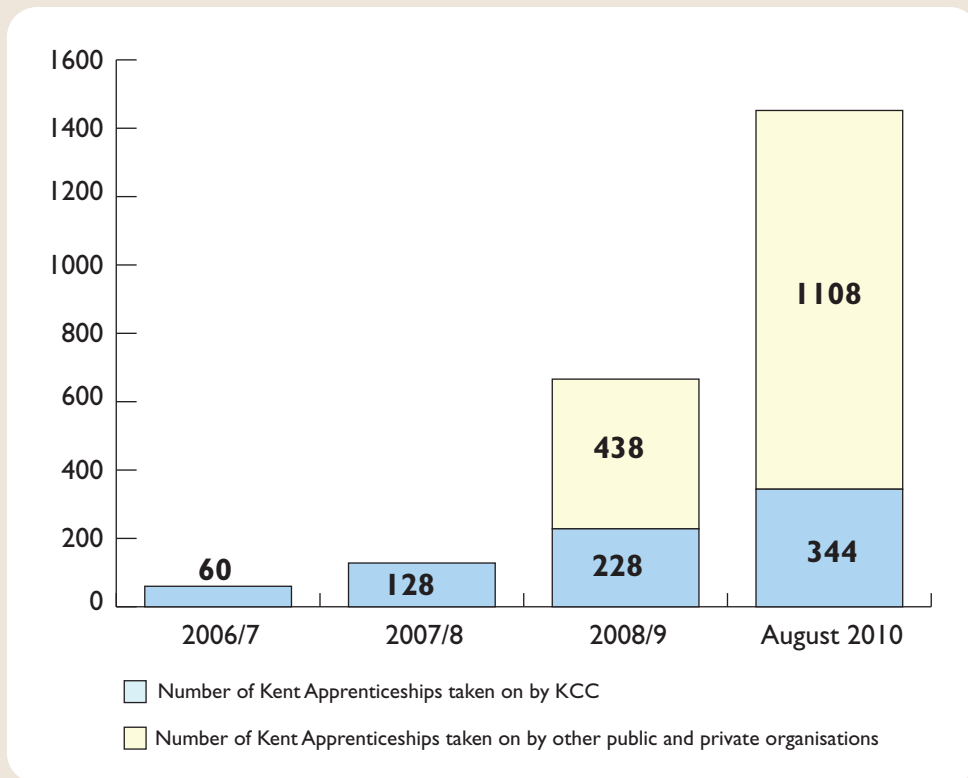
KCC is not the sole purveyor of ideas and solutions. We want to harness the

potential for innovation and new ways of thinking about future service provision in Kent. If individuals or groups from the private, public or voluntary sector think they have ideas about how services can be provided in a better way than we want to hear from them. Where a right to bid process is successful limited pump-prime funding to research and develop proposals will be made available.

Allow KCC employees to utilise the 'right to bid' process to encourage further diversity of supply:

KCC managers and employees who have a business case that their area of service could be delivered as efficiently or effectively through arms length arrangements from the County Council – i.e. management buyout or public service cooperatives or mutual trust can use the 'right to bid' process to have their business case considered, and then bid for services through the procurement process competing alongside other providers from the private and voluntary sector.

Kent Success – Tackling Disengagement



In Towards 2010 KCC committed to developing a Kent apprenticeship scheme with the aim of offering at least 1,000 apprenticeship opportunities across the private and public sector. Well over 1,400 apprentices have been taken on since the start of autumn 2006 through Kent Success, KCC's innovative apprenticeship programme. 344 young people have started a Kent Success Apprenticeship within KCC itself, and of the 187 young people who have completed their apprenticeship within KCC, 73% have gone on to gain full time, permanent employment within KCC or the wider public sector. A further 25% of those who have completed their apprenticeship have moved into employment within the private sector.

KCC is now undertaking a pilot scheme to increase the employment potential of vulnerable young people by supporting them into apprenticeships. Four groups (teenage parents, young offenders, care leavers and young people with learning, physical or mental disabilities) have been chosen due to the high possibility that they will become, or already are, NEET (not in education, employment or training). They are potentially disengaged from learning and skills and are currently finding it difficult to access apprenticeship opportunities. The development of this scheme will link to KCC's Employment Strategy for Socially Excluded Adults.

Chapter 5:

Tackling disadvantage

The best way to tackle disadvantage is to provide strong economic growth and job opportunities so people can earn a salary to support themselves and their families. As a country we can no longer afford to support a dependency culture which places an ever greater burden on those willing to work, drains resources from those who need them most and which erodes community confidence and cohesion.

Our focus in tackling disadvantage will be on providing opportunity - not supporting dependency. However, for those who struggle to help themselves and the most vulnerable in our society, KCC will continue to ensure it provides protection, support and opportunity to enjoy a high quality of life.

Opportunity not dependency

We must reduce the welfare bill in Kent:

We will focus our Supporting Independence Programme (SIP) on reducing the welfare bill in Kent by aligning it to the new single work programme being developed by the Department for Work and Pensions. Building on the work of the Margate Task Force, we will forge strong relationships with primary welfare-to-work providers in Kent to deliver tailored support for local communities that have high levels of worklessness and welfare dependency.

In particular, although not exclusively, we want to ensure that those 16-24 year olds on benefits receive the support need, whether through mentoring, training or work experience, so they have the skills and confidence needed to enter the job

market. By targeting this age group we can begin to break down inter-generational dependency on benefits found in some of our most deprived areas.

Develop social enterprise role in reducing the number of welfare claimants:

Providing real work opportunities for those on benefits will be crucial if we are to reduce the welfare bill but also ensure that as a country we receive something back from individuals for the benefit payments they receive. The private sector isn't geared up to do this, but as the voluntary and community sector takes on responsibility for public services, we want to explore the opportunity of working with them to develop new ventures which can provide real work experience and placements for those currently on welfare. We have already identified our wish to support social enterprises through the Big Society Fund and we will support those enterprises who help us achieve our goal of reducing the number of benefit claimants in Kent.

We must prevent disengagement:

One of the reasons why young people fall into the benefits trap is because they become disengaged from education and learning. Through our pioneering vocational and applied learning approach, KCC has done much to keep students engaged through pre-vocational and applied learning. We will continue to support schools with this approach in the future. However, whilst engagement is strong up to age 16, to many young people either don't enter further education or drop out before they complete their course. This often

leads them into a cycle of benefits and low value, low paid work due to poor skills. We need to keep all young people in Kent engaged in education and training, especially as the mandatory age for education and training increases to 18.

Focus on apprenticeships:

We have already noted that apprenticeships offer a key route to providing a work ready workforce to the Kent economy, but we believe they also offer the best way to help keep young people engaged in training and learning post 16 - especially for those young people not attracted to continued classroom based learning - by offering a wage, on the job training and work relevant qualifications. We need a significant increase in the take up of apprenticeships, from both young people and business alike. Critical to this is engaging with small to medium sized enterprises that make up the bulk of Kent economy to sell the benefits of apprentices, and working towards creating a demand led system whereby businesses can choose the qualifications and training their apprentices follow.

Supporting the most vulnerable

Ensure the provision of the most robust public protection arrangements:

Following the tragic Peter Connelly (Baby P) case, there has been an enormous increase in referrals to social services in both Kent and across the country. We are absolutely determined to ensure our public protection arrangements are robust, particularly arrangements for child protection.

In November 2010 an Ofsted inspection of Children's Social Services in Kent found our safeguarding services to be inadequate. No service is more important to this administration. KCC will implement, in full, all the recommendations emanating from

the inspection and ensure that all issues flagged in the report are dealt with and the service improved.

Front line social workers with child protection responsibilities operate in what can be challenging, stressful and demanding circumstances. We are grateful for their professionalism and personal commitment that they show. That is why our role will be to support them as best we can, so they can continue to do the difficult job we ask of them.

Like other local authorities, Kent has a high social worker vacancy rate. We have undertaken a major recruitment drive both in the UK and overseas, but recruitment isn't the real problem, it is retention. The best safeguard for keeping vulnerable children safe in Kent is to ensure experienced social workers are incentivised to stay in the profession, attract new talent to consider a career in social work and ensure a culture of supportive supervision and continuing professional development. This is at the core of how we want children's social services in Kent to operate.

We will also challenge perversities in the system. Social workers complain of spending too much time inputting data onto computer systems and dealing with administration because government rules state that only qualified social workers can input this data. Our aim will be to move to a system whereby support staff can remove this administrative burden, thus freeing social workers to concentrate on front line social work.

KCC's public protection responsibilities also extend to vulnerable adults, whether they are vulnerable because they are elderly and isolated, in care facilities, have learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues. We will continue to ensure

that the services for the protection of vulnerable adults are robust and effective. We will restructure our social services so that the service they provide is more integrated and resilient, and in a better position to serve the interests of both vulnerable adults and children in Kent, but also provide the wider support to families which is critical to supporting the broader needs of Kent children.

We will continue to support some of the most vulnerable groups through:

- Improving transitions for young people leaving care or moving into Adult Social Services provision.
- Continuing to challenge the placement of looked after children and vulnerable adults in east Kent by non-Kent local authorities.
- Reducing the number of disruptive moves for young people in foster care arrangements.
- Exploring different models of support for young people in care and vulnerable adults that promotes greater choice and independence in their care arrangements.
- Improving outcomes for young people in care, in particular better educational outcomes at all levels, and a reduction in looked after children entering the criminal justice system.
- Improving our support for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC), by focussing on preparing them for return to their country of origin. This is the outcome in most asylum applications.

We will move to a single initial assessment framework:

Too much time and money is spent on different services duplicating basic assessment processes. This duplication increases costs, adds delay to decision making and frustrates those seeking our

help. We will move to a single initial assessment model that will enable customers to understand quickly their entitlement, can signpost them to further advice and guidance, and speed up access to specialist assessment if required. We will also simplify and rationalise assessment processes shared and linked to other public bodies to reduce delay and provide a more integrated and seamless service.

Targeted intervention

Continued early intervention to help vulnerable families and save money over the long term:

We want to support vulnerable families across Kent, enabling parents to better access joined up services including community midwives, health visitors and provision of basic skills training that will help them gain employment. That is why we have invested in nearly 100 Children's Centres across the county that provide such services under one roof. Children's Centres also provide "outreach" services to the most vulnerable families with the early identification, and provision of, special needs services such as speech and language therapy, so that these needs can be tackled at an early stage.

Our focus will be on better coordinating the support of the public agencies including the Police, social workers, housing and health services to support vulnerable families in Kent. This ensures that the agencies speak with "one voice" and will remove the need for families to undergo different assessments from different agencies. Targeted early intervention for vulnerable parents also helps to provide them with the skills to look after their children and will save significant public expenditure by reducing or removing the need to intervene later on.

We will tackle high-cost disruptive families:

Whilst our strategy over the longer term is to deliver early intervention to support families falling into chaotic and disruptive lifestyles, there are families - often fuelled by drug and alcohol dependency - who do become disruptive and cause nuisance blighting local neighbourhoods. With our partners we will take a robust approach to tackling these disruptive families through in depth intervention – including sanctions where necessary – to require change in their behaviour.

Greater integration between Youth Service and Youth Offending Services:

There is a broad range of provision for young people delivered by the public and voluntary sector which engages them in a range of positive activities. For this reason we will move towards greater integration between the Kent Youth Service and Youth Offending Service so as to better target youth service provision at those young people at risk of falling into offending behaviour, which invariably leads into a cycle which increases offending and chaotic lifestyle, and costs Kent public services more money over the longer term. Our focus will be to work with partners across voluntary youth services and the criminal justice system to prevent young people entering into offending behaviour in the first place.

Improve trading standards and community safety's role in prevention:

By shifting resources to more targeted and effective information, advice and guidance campaigns for those residents most at risk, so they are better informed and able to avoid harm. Enforcement activity will be focussed against those who pose the very highest risk of harm to individuals and communities.

Appendix -

Organisational design principles

KCC recognises that it must continue to change to succeed, and that to deliver the agenda set out in *Bold Steps for Kent* there must be a new organisational structure and culture. The organisation must be leaner, with less duplication and more responsive decision making.

These organisational design principles are the basis on which the new KCC structure and approach to service delivery will be established.

Our organisational design principles are:

1. We will enhance our role as the strategic authority for the county and support the development of a new radical public service offer jointly owned by all tiers of local government and public services in Kent. This new model will cost the taxpayer less, by drawing down and integrating functions from quangos, regional and national government into an agreed delivery model.
2. Elected Members will have confidence that the organisation will deliver for them - allowing the political leadership to focus effort on strategic rather than operational issues. The chief officer team will be one team - collectively responsible for advising, responding and delivering Cabinet's agreed priorities effectively and efficiently to build member confidence across all service areas.
3. Overall resident satisfaction with KCC and all public services in Kent is as important to us as user/client satisfaction for key services. It is the critical measurement of our success both as an organisation and as a county.
4. KCC is a single organisation delivering a cohesive service offer. Organisational silos which increase replication, duplication and undermine our 'one council' approach will be changed to deliver as one organisation. We will put the customer first at all times by understanding the customer journey and design services around individual, family and community need rather than organisational or professional interests.
5. KCC is an organisation that is hungry for continuous improvement and welcomes challenge - both internally or externally. Our organisational culture will promote this from all quarters of the business and won't be held to artificial service standards and processes from inspectors and regulators that add cost but little value. We will develop a new relationship between Kent and Whitehall that is of true benefit to both KCC and Kent residents.
6. We will deliver on subsidiarity through a new area based governance model which will commission appropriate locality based services according to local need and demand. Decisions will increasingly be taken locally and jointly with district councils and public service

- partners. Devolution of services to the local level will become the norm.
7. We will move to integrated initial assessment framework across all services for individuals and families sat behind a single front line (the multi channel Gateway programme - physical, web, telephone access) which solves the majority of customer issues at the first point of contact. Our services will be re-engineered to deliver these savings as quickly as possible.
 8. We will seek to build relations with partners based on trust and being the 'partner of choice' in Kent. Partnerships will add value and those that don't won't be maintained. Partners will actively seek to use our strategic capacity to build partnerships and transform services locally - seeing it as adding value to their own business model rather than a risk to their own existence.
 9. Our service offer will reflect the changing relationship between citizen and state - one where we don't just support entitlement and dependency but help people meet their responsibilities. Services will be designed around self-service provision, co-production or self directed design. Embedding personalisation wherever possible will be important - but must be identified by customers as a distinct part of KCC's broader service offer.
 10. Ensures all our activity as an organisation supports the economic development and regeneration of Kent as set out in Unlocking Kent's Potential - aiding recovery from recession with Kent's GVA and GDP improving and converging towards South East averages.
 11. KCC will be transparent. We will publish salary and expense details of senior staff, as well as organisational financial and performance data and provide the web resource so residents and businesses can better hold us to account for what we are spending their money on. Our one council procurement processes will be open with contract requirements clear so it is understood who we are spending public money with and what is expected of them.
 12. Has an information management system fit for all levels of the organisation that produces the intelligence on customers, services and markets needed to commission and de-commission services effectively. Delivers - and is seen to be delivering - value for money, and fully understands the cost, spend and value of each part of the business and uses this to drive up our productivity.
 13. Our structure will be as flat as possible to ensure the appropriate number of tiers between the Corporate Management Team and the front line (no more than five tiers of management) with effective spans of control throughout the organisation. Planning, monitoring and management systems will drive corporate accountability for delivery by officers across all levels of the organisation.
 14. Provides a framework for creative discipline for managers with a "tight-loose" relationship which allows decisions to be taken at the appropriate level and managers having operational freedom within an underpinning 'one council' approach. Only those decisions that need be escalated up the management chain will

be, and managers will be personally held to account for delivery.

15. We will utilise all the councils assets strategically to support our front line service model and rationalise back office functions – people, money, contracts and buildings – to deliver as one organisation.
16. KCC will have a local and personal presence - residents will understand what we do for them, their families and their local community - as well as for the wider county of Kent. Builds a mature relationship with the people of Kent based on an honest conversation and a clear understanding of what is possible and affordable.
17. There is only one KCC brand. We will establish a residual brand value with the people of Kent that goes beyond individual services and maintain a clear corporate message to all audiences through a single system of internal control for all communication and marketing activity.



This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. For details please call on 01622 694027.