

**KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S GROUP**

Full Council 24th October 2006

Report C/26/06 Mid term Review of the Corporate Strategy

Report by Mark Boden, Chief Executive & Frank Marshall, Director of Resources

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To bring to the attention of the Members the amended version of the reviewed Corporate Strategy for adoption by the council.

2.0 Financial, Legal, Risk and Staffing Implications

2.1 There are no financial, legal, risk or staffing implications arising out of the production of the Plan.

3.0 Draft Strategy

3.1 The Corporate Strategy which was adopted in 2004 has been subject to a mid-term review. This is for several reasons including general good practise, but also specifically we want to ensure the corporate strategy is aligned to the medium term financial strategy, given the current budget pressures we are currently facing.

3.2 A meeting of the Leading groups Chairs and Vice Chairs took place earlier this year to look at our current priorities and finances. As a consequence of this meeting workshops were held in June with Members to review priorities and the medium term financial standing.

3.3 A revised strategy was drafted as a consequence of the findings at these workshops and a consultation was agreed at the July meeting of the council earlier this year.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Consultation showed that over 96% of those who responded felt that our four priorities of community leadership, stewardship of the environment, strong, safe and healthy communities and improving council services were still appropriate and 91% felt that the actions we were taking were still right.

4.2 Those consulted were also asked if there were things they would like to see either more and/or less of and also for any further comments. The majority of suggestions indicated support for the outcomes and outputs

that we had already identified. The main amendments to the strategy as a result of consultation are outlined below.

5.0 The main amendments to the strategy as a result of consultation

- 5.1 More and better recycling facilities, particularly the option to recycle cardboard and plastics.

The consultation draft of the strategy had a high level aim to achieve 36% recycling rates by 2008. The amended strategy proposes that we should be achieving 45% by 2010 and that the updated waste minimisation & recycling strategy will investigate the future options with regard to plastic and cardboard recycling.

- 5.2 The environment generally, environmental health standards and general levels of cleanliness, including street cleaning and litter.

The council has over the last few years introduced new cleaning regimes to standards and has also been complimented by the police for these actions to help alleviate anti-social behaviour. Given the concern and importance placed by the respondents to the consultation this target has been moved from 10% (already top quartile) to less than 9% by 2008.

New provisions in local planning guidance will also enable us to request more sustainable new build. The council will establish a target in the Local Development Framework for 10% of energy in new build generated from renewable sources.

- 5.3 Tackling crime and in particular anti-social behaviour.

Kennet has already committed to working with the Community Safety Partnership to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, however as a result of the response the inclusion of a new target to remove 100% of abandoned vehicles within 24 hours and also the % of Acceptable Behaviour Contracts that did not result in Anti-Social Behaviour Orders. We will move the target to implement a single non-emergency number from "Improving council services" to this priority.

- 5.4 Health care, including the provision of facilities, access to those facilities particularly for those with special needs.

Whilst the council has set out what it can do to contribute to the general health care in the district in response to the consultation we have also added an objective "to lobby the new and/or emerging PCT to ensure there is decent access to quality health care within the Kennet district".

The target has been amended to adopt a revised Health strategy by 2007 and to implement by 2010.

5.5 More consultation with local people on issues that affected them.

The council recognises both of these as important and has added that the implementation of its consultation strategy for 2006 – 2010 will be an important contribution to the priority for community leadership. We will use the following key measures - % of residents who feel they have some influence on council decisions and % of consultations undertaken that comply with the Compact standard of 12 weeks. The parishes also felt that there should be more consultation with them on planning matters. We will therefore hold planning roadshows with the area fora to increase engagement with the parish councils.

It is worth noting that there was some criticism of the amount of consultation we undertake.

5.6 The promotion of tourism and the local economy.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is currently reviewing this area of activity. The council will continue to redirect resources from face to face to electronic (web) tourism information provision in order to reach a wider audience and has set a target to achieve 168,650 page impressions by 2008/09 compared to 151,576 in 2005/06.

The council will also continue to support the retention of rural employments space through the Local Development Framework.

5.7 Homelessness

Targets have been amended to reflect the work being undertaken.

We will implement the homelessness strategy and in particular limit the use of bed and breakfast stays to an average of one week and reduce the overall number of households in temporary accommodation to 68 by 2008.

We will bring back into use a minimum of 40 empty homes per year, including the use of new powers to tackle long-term empty properties.

We will reduce the number of households needing to be housed by the council by 10% by 2008 through effective homelessness prevention measures.

5.8 Reduce the amount of paper we produce

When asked what the public would like to see less many expressed a view that they would not like to see council tax rise, yet were unable to suggest areas to reduce expenditure. One area raised was concern over the expense of the amount of paperwork produced by the council.

It was suggested that we should increase the use of email and other electronic means to send information. Whilst the council has tried to achieve this in certain areas we are very conscious that this would put some sections of the community at a disadvantage. However the council is actively looking to make efficiency savings and has set a target to produce all documentation for its own meetings for councillors, parish councillors and partners electronically by 2007/2008.

5.9 Consultation response from Overview & Scrutiny

The Overview & Scrutiny Management Board have considered the draft Corporate Strategy and agreed a response at its meeting on 10th October 2006. The comments have been fed into the strategy set out for adoption.

Recommendations

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED THAT ; Council adopts the revised strategy.

KDS
October 2006