



Despatched: 23.01.12

**SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE COMMITTEE**

**31 January 2012 at 7.00 pm**

**Conference Room - Council Office**

**AGENDA**

**Membership:**

Chairman: Davison Vice-Chairman: Brown

Cllrs. Abraham, Mrs. Ayres, Ball, Butler, Edwards-Winsler, Firth, Mrs. George, Hogarth, Horwood, Mrs. Parkin, Pett, Piper, Raikes, Scholey, Towell and Walshe

	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Apologies for Absence.		
1. <b>Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8 November 2011.</b>	(Pages 1 - 6)	
2. <b>Declarations of interest.</b>		
3. <b>Formal Response from the Cabinet following matters referred by the Committee and/or requests from the Performance and Governance Committee (please refer to the minutes as indicated):</b> (a) Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2012/13 and Beyond ( <i>Response from Cabinet – 8 December 2011</i> )	(Pages 7 - 8)	
4. <b>Actions from the Previous Meeting</b>	(Pages 9 - 10)	
5. <b>Future Business, the Work Plan 2011/12 and the Forward Plan</b>	(Pages 11 - 14)	
6. <b>Universal Credits - Stages 1 and 2</b>  (Stage 1 – Scoping and identifying key lines of inquiry and Stage 2 – Familiarisation with subject area.)	(Pages 15 - 26)	Tricia Marshall Ext: 7218
7. <b>Under -Occupation of Social Housing - Verbal Update from Working Group.</b>		Cllr. Mrs. Parkin

- |     |  |                    |                                     |
|-----|--|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 8.  | <b>Completion of works at Hever Road Gypsy and Traveller Site - Verbal Update.</b> |                    | Pat Smith<br>Ext: 7355              |
| 9.  | <b>Housing Strategy Action Plan</b>  | (Pages 27 -<br>48) | Pat Smith<br>Ext: 7355              |
| 10. | <b>I.T. Strategy and Plan for 2012-2015</b>  | (Pages 49 -<br>84) | Jim Carrington-<br>West<br>Ext:7286 |

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

(At the time of preparing this agenda, there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise, the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public.)

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Director or Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

**The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)**

**SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Services Select Committee held on  
8 November 2011 commencing at 7 p.m.

Present: Cllr. Davison (Chairman)

Cllr. Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Abraham, Mrs. Ayres, Ball, Edwards-Winser, Mrs. Firth, Mrs. George, Hogarth, Horwood, Mrs. Parkin, Pett, Piper, Raikes, Scholey, Towell and Walshe.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Butler.

Cllrs. Ayres, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Davison, Mrs. Hunter and Ramsay were also present.

20. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Services Select Committee held on 20 September 2011 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. Mrs. Parkin declared a personal interest in matters relating to housing and benefits as she had relatives in both social housing and on benefits.

22. FORMAL RESPONSE OR CONSULTATION REQUESTS FROM THE CABINET FOLLOWING MATTERS REFERRED BY THE COMMITTEE (Item No. 3)

- (a) Performance Management Performance Report - LPI HB 001, 002, 005 & 006 referred for further consideration (Performance and Governance Committee 27.09.11)

This matter was considered under Minute Item 26.

- (b) Proposed Changes to Staff Terms and Conditions (Cabinet 13.10.11)

A Member of the Committee reported that he had recently met a former Council employee. The former employee was concerned that morale had fallen among Council staff since the budget savings. The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources accepted that the savings had an impact but believed the Council had dealt with the matter better than other local authorities. The process had been transparent and had involved the Staff Consultative Group in finding savings.

The Committee noted the comments of Cabinet.

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23. ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Item No. 4)

The Chairman read an update from the Head of Environmental and Operational Services outlining the last visit to the Material Recycling Facility in Swanley. A further visit was arranged for the Committee in December. Members of the Committee who took part in the visit confirmed they enjoyed it and were impressed. One Member had been told on the visit that, being a smaller facility than some he had encountered before, it was more cost effective.

The second action was considered under Minute Item 25.

As a matter arising, the Vice Chairman had discussed Affordable Housing provision and equivalent financial contributions with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources. He wanted to clarify what and where the provision was and a Question and Answer document had been uploaded to the Members' Portal. He was particularly interested in what income the Council had received for Affordable Housing. He reminded Members that all such funding received would be ring-fenced for Affordable Housing.

24. FUTURE BUSINESS, THE WORK PLAN 2011/12 AND THE FORWARD PLAN (Report No. 5)

The Chairman of the IT Working Group provided an update on the IT Strategy. On 3 November the Group had met to consider an initial draft of the document. A number of comments were made on it but the Group had been pleased with the Officers' work. The Group was to meet again on 30 November 2011 to make final comments but he did not expect that it would have to make many. It was expected the Strategy would be ready soon after the meeting on 30 November and could be presented to the Committee meeting on 31 January 2012. The Chairman of the Committee hoped the Strategy could be circulated to Committee Members for consideration before Christmas.

*Action 1: Officers to circulate the IT Strategy, if complete, to Members of the Committee before Christmas.*

The Committee agreed to move the "Under-occupation of Social Housing – final strategy and action plan" forward to the meeting in June 2012.

25. UNDER-OCCUPATION OF SOCIAL HOUSING – VERBAL UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUP (Item No. 6)

The Chairman of the Members' Under-Occupation of Social Housing Working Group confirmed that the Group had met on 17 October 2011. The Head of Housing, Housing Policy Manager and Cllr. Ayres were also present at that meeting.

The Working Group looked at a range of statistics provided by Officers, including where under-occupation occurred most, as an introduction and considered 2 case studies. They were acutely aware of the sensitivity which surrounded the topic and the distress which can be caused when they move house, particularly to older people. They were very interested in the financial help which may be available to remedy under-occupation.

At the next meeting of the Working Group they were to talk to a representative from West Kent Housing Association, to answer questions about the scale of the problem within their stock and where funding would come from to remedy it. They envisaged considering more case studies and inviting a representative from Moat.

The Head of Housing felt the last meeting had been very constructive. She clarified that further housing associations would be invited to the main panel meeting to be interviewed by the whole Committee at a later stage. She had also provided a series of dates on which the Working Group should take place with Officers. The Chairman of the Committee advised at least 1 meeting per month.

A Member, on the Working Group, hoped to find out whether Affordable Housing commuted sums could be used to help people move house. The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Environment confirmed the sums were not ring-fenced for building but could be used to help people move house. However, she believed that it was the provision of sheltered accommodation, such as White Oak and Hollybush Court previously, which encouraged residents to move.

The Chairman of the Working Group added that the Group was considering how under-occupation could be aided by redevelopment.

The Vice Chairman of the Committee thought it would be useful for the Working Group to have a total for the Affordable Housing Contributions the Council had received.

*Action 2: The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources to provide a total for Affordable Housing financial contributions made.*

The Chairman of the Committee thanked the Group and Officers for their good work raising many issues.

## 26. REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP UPDATE (Report No. 7)

The Head of Finance and Human Resources believed that the average days to process claims was the greatest concern for the Partnership and confirmed the workload had increased by 24% over the past year. Across a range of indicators activities had remained high into October. The introduction of Automated Transfers to Local Authority Systems (ATLAS) had helped to notify of changes to claimants' tax credits. However, this meant that claimants' circumstances had likely changed and needed to be investigated by staff; consequently this had significantly increased the workload. Due to the economic conditions customers were generally reporting more changes to their circumstances than usual. The time taken to process reported changes had begun to fall, though.

The Benefits Team faced difficulties from staff shortages but recruitment was a key focus. The pool of assessors was decreasing because of uncertainty caused by the proposals for Universal Credit.

They had therefore introduced new processes to increase efficiency for new claims. A triage system had been established and information was put onto the computer database more flexibly. Tasks had been re-evaluated so that the more experienced Officers could focus on the more complex cases. They had also reconsidered what activities were undertaken so that any resources, which could be, were moved to

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assessing claims.

The Head of Finance and Human Resources gave an overview of the changes expected from the Welfare Reform Bill. From October 2013 Housing Benefit would be incorporated into the Universal Credit, except for those at pension age. Council Tax Benefit would be abolished from April 2013, with the introduction of a new localised Council Tax Support. This meant two separate benefit assessment systems would need to be in place. She added that there would be little time to organise IT infrastructure because of the delay in publishing the secondary legislation.

Members asked whether the reforms could even mean more work than at present. The Head of Finance and Human Resources confirmed this was possible while the Team had to manage 2 separate assessment systems. Beyond that point, if half of the workload had transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Officers would have to consider how the Team would be structured.

Another Member commented that when the localised Council Tax Support scheme was introduced the Council would be expected to deliver a reduction in spending of 10%. He also believed that taking responsibility for the Social Fund could have significant financial implications. Officers clarified that the savings would be difficult to make because of all the groups Government had said were to be protected. The 10% savings would have to be made from 9% of the total paid out if pensioners and those receiving 100% Council Tax Benefit were protected. It was also not yet clear whether the Social Fund would be passed to the County or District Council.

There was concern at the presumption that claims for Universal Credit would be made online when customers may have neither the resources or ability to use this method. It was noted few currently made their applications this way. The Committee was informed that Officers had raised this matter with the DWP.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Value for Money explained that the uncertainty over transitional arrangements exacerbated the difficulties in planning ahead. Members also had to consider whether, in the future, the Council would need increased income either to cover greater staffing or to compensate for the 10% reduction in funding for the localised Council Tax Support.

Resolved: That the progress made in addressing the challenges facing the Benefits Service be noted and the action being taken to reduce processing times be endorsed.

27. 2012/13 BUDGET AND REVIEW OF SERVICE PLANS (Report No. 8)

The Head of Finance and Human Resources explained that the report formed part of the budget process. There were only 2 growth items totalling £46,500. This reflected the work undertaken in 2010 to agree the 10 year budget and 4 year savings and that Officers were taking these pressures into account.

The Chairman noted the report was modest when compared to previous years. One item was the result of a reduction in the Housing Benefits Admin Support Grant from Government and the Members' IT Allowance had been agreed by the Council on 18 October 2011. He had been informed by Officers that they were still investigating ways to fund the items and these would be passed to Cabinet for approval in due

course.

A Member of the Committee asked whether the Members' IT Allowance had been a reduction in cost from previously, when laptops were provided. The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources explained that the laptops had been provided by a one-off grant from Government but they were now at the end of their functional life. No further grant was expected and this was not a programmed item in the budget.

Several Members queried what replacement services were available since the IT Team no longer provided on-going technical support for Members' IT difficulties. The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources stated that in addition to the Ivysoft Training there were plans to organise hour-long workshops for Members before Full Council meetings. He was happy to bring a note to the Committee, for discussion, about what facilities were available to Councillors and how they could be accessed.

*Action 3: Officers to provide the Committee with information about what IT support was available to them.*

In response to a question Officers explained that they were in consultation with Dartford Borough Council about how they would manage the reduction in the Admin Support Grant. Dartford Borough Council were also still considering the matter.

A Member asked what Officers meant by the phrase "drive behaviour to shift customers from expensive to more cost effective" customer services. The Head of Finance and Human Resources accepted that the phrase should be reconsidered and explained that the Customer Services Team was taking on an increased role with more complicated public enquiries, so that the professional staff would be freed up.

Resolved: That the Committee's views on the 2012/13 Budget and Review of Service plans be communicated to the Cabinet to inform draft budget decisions to be made at its meeting on 8 December.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 8.34 P.M.

Chairman





**FORMAL RESPONSE OR CONSULTATION REQUESTS FROM THE CABINET  
AND/OR SELECT COMMITTEES FOLLOWING MATTERS REFERRED BY THE  
COMMITTEE**

- (a) 2012/13 Budget and Review of Service Plans – (*Environment Select Committee - 25 October 2011; Social Affairs Select Committee – 1 November 2011; Services Select Committee – 8 November 2011*)

The Cabinet considered the comments of the Select Committees which had met in October and November on the 2012/13 Budget and Review of Service Plans. The Cabinet had regard to both the general observations made by the Select Committees and the specific recommendation of the Social Affairs Select Committee relating to the running of the Sevenoaks CCTV Control Room. Most of the Committee's comments had related to additional service pressures, most notably around the CCTV service, the cost of diesel and the workload faced by the housing benefits service. These points had been covered in the draft budget report for 2012/13 considered at minute 53 below.

Resolved: That the Cabinet welcomes and notes the views and comments on the draft budget proposals and Service Plans made by the Select Committees



**ACTION SHEET - Actions from the previous meeting**

<b>ACTIONS FROM 08/11/11</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status and last updated</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>
ACTION 1	Officers to circulate the IT Strategy, if complete, to Members of the Committee before Christmas.	Final copy of the IT Strategy and Plan for 2012-2015 circulated by email on 23.12.11.	Jim Carrington - West
ACTION 2	The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources to provide a total (to the Working Group) for Affordable Housing financial contributions made.	Financial contributions in lieu of on-site provision are being negotiated following the adoption of the new Core Strategy - though being early stages, these payments are yet to start coming through, and therefore at the moment it is not possible to provide the Working Group with a total (as at 18.01.12).	Pav Ramewal
ACTION 3	Officers to provide the Committee with information about what IT support was available to them	An IT surgery was held for Members on 28 November 2011. An email reminding Members of the IT support available to them will be circulated shortly (as at 19.01.12).	Jim Carrington - West



**SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE – WORK PLAN 2011/12**

Topic	31 January 2012	3 April 2012	June 2012	September 2012	November 2012
<b>In-Depth Scrutiny</b>	Working Group to identify panel	Under-occupation of Social Housing – Stages 4 to 5 ( <i>to provide/agree recommendations and options</i> )	Under-occupation of Social Housing – final strategy and action plan		
	Universal Credits – Stages 1 and 2 <i>(Working Group to carry out Stage 3 in Jan/Feb)</i>	Universal Credits – Stages 4 and 5(a)	Universal Credits – Stage 5(b)	Universal Credits – Stage 6	
<b>Housing</b> (Pat Smith)	Completion of works at Hever Road Gypsy and Traveller site – Verbal Update  Sevenoaks District Housing Action Plan	SDHR amended Allocation Policy	Affordable Housing Position Report (information only)		

Topic	31 January 2012	3 April 2012	June 2012	September 2012	November 2012
<b>Licensing</b> (Richard Wilson)					Licensing Update Report (information only)
<b>Payments &amp; Benefits</b> (Tricia Marshall)					Revenues and Benefits Partnership Update
<b>Human Resources</b> (Tricia Marshall)		Human Resources Update (information only)			
<b>Information Technology</b> (Jim Carrington-West)	IT Strategy		Annual IT Update (information only)		
<b>Waste and Recycling</b> (Richard Wilson)			Waste Recycling Report		
<b>Communications &amp; Customer Service</b>	Customer Services Report (information only)				
<b>Budget</b> (Tricia Marshall)					Review of Service Plans Review of Budget Proposals for 2013/14

Topic	31 January 2012	3 April 2012	June 2012	September 2012	November 2012
<b>Referral of Performance Issues from P&amp;G Committee</b>					
<b>Other</b>					

\*Items to be confirmed by the Head of Housing.

Kent and Medway Forum strategy\*

### **Key Stages of In-Depth Scrutiny Review**

- Stage 1 – Scoping and identifying key lines of inquiry
- Stage 2 – Familiarisation with subject area
- Stage 3 – Submission of evidence
- Stage 4 – Deliberation/Consideration of Options
- Stage 5(a) – Formulation of recommendations and reporting
- Stage 5(b) – Outcomes
- Stage 6 – Review and Monitoring

### **Working Group Membership**

#### Members IT Working Group

Cllrs. Abraham, Edwards-Winsor, Pett (Chairman) and Scholey and one vacancy.

#### Members' Under-occupation of Social Housing Working Group

Cllrs. Mrs Ayres, Mrs George, Horwood, Mrs Parkin and Piper.



## SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE – 31 JANUARY 2012

### UNIVERSAL CREDIT INDEPTH SCRUTINY – BRIEFING NOTE

Report of the: Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources

Status: For Consideration

Key Decision: No

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#### Executive Summary:

This report sets out current understanding around the introduction of the Universal Credit and puts forward some possible lines of enquiry for Members to consider.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of Effective Management of Council Resources**

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Ramsay

**Head of Service** Head of Finance and Human Resources – Tricia Marshall

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**Recommendation:** Members note the contents of this report and consider the proposals for possible lines of enquiry for this indepth scrutiny.

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#### Introduction

- 1 Members have recognised that the introduction of the Universal Credit will have a major impact on residents, landlords and the Council, in particular the Benefits and Housing teams. As a result an indepth scrutiny of Universal Credit was added to the Services Select Committee Work Programme.
- 2 Members will be aware that the Benefits Service is a shared service with Dartford Borough Council. Members at Dartford are also concerned about the impact of the credit's introduction and it was considered by their Policy Overview Committee on 13 December 2011.

#### Background

##### Welfare Reform Bill

- 3 On 17 February 2011 the Government published the Welfare Reform Bill. The Bill legislates for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years. It introduces a wide range of reforms that aim to make the benefits and tax credits systems fairer and simpler by:
  - creating the right incentives to get more people into work by ensuring work always pays;

- protecting the most vulnerable in our society; and
  - delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the taxpayer.
- 4 All of the proposed changes will have an impact on the Revenues and Benefits Service to a greater or lesser extent, from increasing queries from residents to wholesale reorganisation of the service for both customers and staff. Members should note that there is a very high volume of change being introduced over a short time period, and that the implementation work for these changes will overlap. The most significant elements are summarised below.

Proposal	Implementation date
Abolition of council tax benefit and introduction of new localised schemes	April 2013
<b>Introduction of the Universal Credit</b>	<b>From October 2013</b>
Household Benefit Cap	April 2013
Social Sector housing under-occupation	April 2013
Changes to arrangements for uprating of Local Housing Allowance	In progress and continuing to April 2013
Single Fraud Investigation Service	April 2013
Extension of single room rent restrictions	January 2012
Social Fund localisation	April 2013

### Universal Credit

- 5 The aim of Universal Credit is to simplify the benefit system, reduce cost and to ensure that it pays to work. It aims to create a leaner but fairer system administered by a single government department. One of the key features is to merge “in and out of work” benefits. There will be no need to sign off benefits to take up employment. The links between benefit payments, earnings and tax should in turn make the system more secure from fraud and error.
- 6 Universal Credit will replace Income Support, Income based Jobseekers Allowance, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Universal credit will be based on households rather than individuals with both members of a couple required to claim. It is envisaged that claims will normally be made through the internet and the DWP expect that most subsequent contact between recipients and the delivery agency will also be conducted online.

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- 7 People will be able to obtain all elements of Universal Credit through a single application. Universal Credit will normally be paid direct to the claimant on a monthly basis. The long term direction is to make Universal Credit as much like a payment of salary as possible with the emphasis on the recipients to manage their own budgets including rent and mortgage.
- 8 The implementation of Universal Credit is a significant project, affecting 19 million individual claims and an estimated eight million households. Details are still sketchy but the current intention is that for working age people, new claims to Universal Credit will commence October 2013 with a view to completing the transfer to Universal Credit by October 2017. For those of pension age, implementation will start from October 2014 and the DWP is not at present assuming that pension age recipients would mainly apply online.
- 9 The DWP will be responsible for the implementation and administration of Universal Credit, but there remain a variety of options for operational arrangements. The potential implications and opportunities for Local Authorities are significant.
- 10 The DWP will hold further discussions with local authorities and their associations about the detail and implications of Universal Credit for their Housing Benefit operations and of the new approach to Council Tax costs. This will include considering whether there may still be a role for Local Authorities in dealing with non-mainstream Housing Benefit cases such as people living in supported and temporary accommodation. Local authorities may also have a role to play in delivering face-to-face contact for those who cannot use other channels to claim and manage their Universal Credit, a view strongly supported by all local authorities in Kent (see attached joint response from the Kent authorities at Appendix A).
- 11 The introduction of Universal Credit will also have a significant impact on Housing and Customer Services teams as well as social landlords, as:
  - Social landlords will no longer receive a direct payment from the Council to cover rent payments for Benefit recipients but will instead have to collect it from the tenant, leading to higher arrears; and
  - Residents with housing difficulties traditionally come to local authorities for assistance. As credit recipients may struggle to manage their own finances it is expected that more will need to seek assistance from the Council on housing issues.

**Implications for the Benefits Team of proposed legislative changes**

- 12 The proposals for the introduction of Universal Credit, abolition of Housing Benefits and introduction of localised Council Tax support do create considerable uncertainty for Benefits staff, as the requirement for Benefits assessors will reduce once the Universal Credit starts to be implemented. The Team has already experienced one staff loss directly as a result of these proposals and it is expected that others will occur over the next two years, as assessors decide to pursue other career options. It takes approximately one

year to train a benefits assessor, so replacing any losses with new trainees is a lengthy process.

- 13 The other Benefit legislative changes being implemented increase the complexity of the system for customers and staff, and are likely to lead to an increase in customer contact.

**Areas Members may wish to investigate**

- 14 Members may wish to investigate the following aspects of the introduction of universal credit:
- The challenges the new system presents to residents and landlords;
  - The impact the new system might have on demand for the Council's own services;
  - How to safeguard the delivery of a benefits service at a time when the staff delivering that service are facing considerable uncertainty about their future job prospects;
  - Whether there is any scope to lobby Government further on the implementation of universal credit, so that unintended negative consequences are minimised.

**Background Papers:** Report to Services Select Committee 8 November 2011 – Item 7 – Benefits Service update

**Contact Officer(s):** Tricia Marshall Ext. No. 7218  
Meryl Young Ext No. 7397

**Dr. Pav Ramewal**  
**Corporate Resources Director**

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Lord Freud

Tel No: 01622 694022

Minister for Welfare Reform

Ask for: Graeme Brown

Department for Work and Pensions  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9DA

Email: [kentforum@kent.gov.uk](mailto:kentforum@kent.gov.uk)

My Ref:

Your Ref:

Date: 5 October 2011

Dear

**UNIVERSAL CREDIT – JOINT SUBMISSION FROM KENT LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

Kent County Council and the other local authorities in Kent have been examining the implications for residents of the introduction of the Universal Credit and their collective views are set out in the attached paper.

It is understood that the aims of the proposed reforms are to improve work incentives, simplify the benefit system and tackle administrative complexity, and the Kent authorities support these aims. However, the Kent authorities do have common concerns over the proposed operating model for the Universal Credit. The attached paper sets out practical and constructive suggestions to combine citizen empowerment, localism and to ensure effective service delivery. In particular, the authorities strongly support a partnership approach between the DWP and local authorities, with local authorities providing a joined up local delivery model for advice and assistance.

The Kent authorities are actively engaging with the DWP in its consultation over the introduction of Universal Credit, and welcome the opportunity to contribute to plans for its delivery. If there is any further information or assistance that Kent authorities can provide that would support the DWP in the development of its implementation plans, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Carter

Chairman, Kent Forum

## Universal Credit - Submission from Kent Local Authorities

### 1. Key Issues with the Proposed Operating Model

- 1.1 In setting out the key issues the authorities took account of the potential impact of other elements of welfare reform that are currently being implemented or have been proposed.
- 1.2 The issues raised also take into account issues that are likely to arise during the transition from the current benefits system and issues that are likely to continue to be present once Universal Credit is fully operational if there are no changes to the proposed operating model.
- 1.3 The primary focus throughout is the impact on residents and service users. However it is also clear that delivery of Universal Credit will also have an impact on social housing providers, landlords and the third sector as well as local authorities and public sector financing.

#### 1.4 Key Issue 1: The preferred delivery model to be internet access only

It is clear that it is expected that the majority of universal credit customers will access services online. Local authorities recognise the savings that can be achieved through online delivery of services and are pursuing many initiatives in this area themselves. However, the complex nature of the service and the vulnerability of many of the service users means that a significant proportion of them are likely to need to continue to access services face to face.

Without a well developed support system that takes account of service users' needs there is considerable risk that the Universal Credit system will not reach those that need the support most. Furthermore, without such support some people may not take advantage of the incentives to take up work that will be built into the system or miss out on the distinct advantages offered by face to face local support such as signposting to critical Social Services assistance as information is shared in the processing of claims locally.

The DWP is yet to come forward with a developed proposal to support those unable to either access or use the internet or for whom more support is required. Local authorities are the place that residents turn to for help and the direct association and links to the housing benefit system and the local housing authority will continue to make local authorities a natural place for residents to seek support. This will create a new and potentially heavy burden on local authorities should a formal mechanism for face to face support not be put in place.

It should also be noted that this centralised proposal for the administration of welfare support is contrary to the localised system being proposed for the future delivery of support with the payment of council tax, which will be designed and operated locally, and for the localisation of social fund administration.

#### 1.5 Key Issue 2: Payment of Universal Credit to be to a single person within the household

It is proposed that Universal Credit would be paid to one individual person within the household, in order to empower those receiving Universal Credit to manage

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their own monies, as they would if they were receiving a wage. However, this creates a significant risk to the welfare of the family if that person leaves the household or squanders the monies.

Within this there is no mechanism for diverting payments to landlords for housing for those in arrears for example, or for diverting payments away from those that have a dependency such as drink or drugs that are unlikely to have the ability to manage their Universal Credit appropriately.

1.6 Key Issue 3: Lack of clarity on the calculation and payment of individual elements of the Universal Credit

Universal Credit is to be paid as a single payment, which will make no individual element that makes up the Universal Credit identifiable to the recipient (so for example, there will be no specified amount for housing costs). However within this there will be caps and limitations on the individual benefits received, which will have significant implications.

With the amount of housing benefit and assistance with mortgage interest payable already being driven down and proposed increases to rents in the social housing sector, there is potential for there to be an insufficient funding within the Universal Credit to pay existing housing costs.

There is also a lack of clarity about how childcare costs are to be taken in to account in the calculation of Universal Credit. Set correctly this will incentivise work, set too low it will create a barrier to work and a potential risk to safeguarding children.

In all cases it is evident that the management of Universal Credit monies to meet costs will be difficult and recipients will have to decide what their spending priorities are. This will be exceedingly difficult for the most vulnerable residents to achieve and is another reason why local face to face support must be available to those that need it.

1.7 Key Issue 4: Links between welfare support and other local services

Key Issues 2 and 3 highlight issues within the payment mechanism for residents. However, there are real concerns that the proposals for the payment of Universal Credit as a single payment to a single individual within each household will have a significant and detrimental impact on local public services and also services provided by landlords and the third sector.

The single payment proposal is likely to increase the level of default on rental payments which will place a high level of strain on the social and private rented housing sector. This in turn will create a strong demand for local authority housing services, such as increased need for housing advice and support and at the worst case increased incidences of homelessness.

Increased levels of rent arrears also creates an increased likelihood that private sector landlords will minimise the number of Universal Credit claimants they accept as tenants, so creating more demand for social housing.

Higher arrears levels will also ensure that registered landlords have less financial resources available to fund new housing, reducing growth in affordable housing.

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Both registered landlords and local authorities with housing stock will need to increase resources devoted to rent arrears collection, reducing resources for other activities.

In addition to pressure on local housing services it is likely that pressures will arise in other services. For example those that have a dependency on drugs or alcohol may prioritise their monies for those purposes. This will create increased pressure on Police, Health and Social Services.

1.8 Key Issue 5: The Government has not yet clarified the precise method of implementing Universal Credit and the transfer of service from local authorities to Government

A lack of clarity on the proposed method of transfer from existing benefits to the Universal Credit will provide significant uncertainty and worry for some of the most vulnerable residents in the County.

If the chosen transfer method is not properly designed it is likely to increase the costs of implementation including costs for local authorities in managing the closedown of their existing Housing Benefits Service. This includes issues such as backlogged claims, the resolution of overpayments and HR and IT costs associated with a service closure.



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**2. Solutions – Key Messages from Kent**

2.1 Set out below are the proposed solutions to the issues set out above. These have been developed by the Kent Forum as the key messages from Kent for lobbying Government. Some of the solutions offered cross over more than one of the issues raised and this is identified within each of the following paragraphs.

2.2 Solution 1: Provision of a local contact point to provide support to the Universal Credit system

*(Addresses problems raised at Issues 1, 3, 4 & 5)*

It is considered highly likely that the Universal Credit system has the greatest chance of successful delivery if support can be provided locally. This support could assist people in accessing the online service planned to be provided by the DWP, answer queries on Universal Credit and deliver solutions, provide support in managing money and provided linked up information and support with other local services such as housing. Local contact points will help reduce uncertainty and worry for residents.

Local support should include the ability to carry out the necessary verification of claims for Universal Credit, including income, capital, identity and place of residence.

To minimise the cost of a local support service it is recommended that the existing skills, experience and infrastructure at local authorities are considered as the first and best option. Previous experience has shown the propensity for residents to contact the local authority in times of need so there remains a strong likelihood that this will continue, with the subsequent need to re-direct vulnerable customers in need of support if local support is not facilitated by local authorities. It is also the case that landlords and third sector organisations that support the welfare system already have strong and familiar links with local authorities and it is likely that this contact will continue if they experience problems with tenants or customers.

With the forthcoming localisation of council tax benefit and parts of the Social Fund local authorities will continue to have an interaction with customers in need of welfare support and have a requirement to undertake financial assessments. The recommendations of the Commission on the Funding of Care and Support (the 'Dilnot Report') will, if implemented, also increase the number of financial assessments required in delivering Social Services and therefore increase local authority interaction on welfare issues still further.

In considering the need for local contact points to aid with the successful delivery of Universal Credit the eventual provider will require access to systems used to calculate, manage and pay Universal Credit to provide effective support. This is particularly the case for local authorities providing financial assessments for council tax rebate, homelessness and Social Service assessments. Without such access there will be costly duplication within the overall welfare system.

Local support providers will also require initial and ongoing training on expectations, system and processes. There will also be a need to ensure this new burden is appropriately and fully funded.

**Item No. 6 - Appendix A****2.3 Solution 2: Create a safety net within the payment processes to ensure housing tenancies and mortgage payments are secured**

*(Addresses problems raised at Issue 2, 3 & 4)*

If customers are unable to manage their Universal Credit appropriately because of a vulnerability or dependency it is essential that a mechanism exists to re-direct parts of the payment to the housing provider or lender to secure their occupancy.

This safety net could be in the form of trigger points as with the Local Housing Allowance, or a default option for certain categories of claimant or be available if requested by the claimant.

**2.4 Solution 3: Ensure a mechanism exists for the swift transfer of payments between householders**

*(Addresses problems raised at Issues 2, 3 & 4)*

To ensure the risk of families experiencing severe hardship there must be a mechanism for the fast track recalculation and transfer of Universal Credit payments between individuals within a household when the current recipient leaves the household.

**2.5 Solution 4: Develop a proposal for a managed transition from existing benefits to Universal Credit**

*(Addresses problems raised at Issue 5)*

The transfer of payments from existing benefits to Universal Credit must be a managed process which sets out clear timelines and roles for the DWP, local authorities and most importantly residents.

Any consideration of a natural transfer where residents migrate to Universal Credit when they place a new claim or have a change in their circumstances would provide too much uncertainty and worry for residents.

A managed transition would be more cost effective and would also reduce the period of uncertainty.

In developing a managed transfer process Government need to provide clear guidance on the arrangements for backlogged benefit claims and the responsibility and powers for the recovery of existing overpayments. Government also need to make arrangements for fully funding the exceptional costs of closing existing benefits departments including HR costs and IT costs.

**Item No. 6 - Appendix A**

2.6 Solution 5: Work with local authorities to evaluate the impact on local services, including education, housing, homelessness and social services

*(Addresses problems raised at Issue 4)*

There are real concerns that without taking on board the other solutions suggested above there will be an increase in demand for other local authority services from the introduction of Universal Credit.

Government should commit to working with local authorities to regularly assess the impact of their policy decisions after their implementation to ensure the desired outcomes are being achieved with no perverse impact on other services.

Part of this commitment should include reviewing the operation of Universal Credit in light of any findings and ensuring local authorities are properly funded to manage any increase in demand for their services.



## SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE – 31 JANUARY 2012

### HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2012

Report of the: Community and Planning Services Director

Status: For Decision

Also Considered by: Cabinet - 9 February 2012

Full Council - 21 February 2012

Key Decision: Yes

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#### **This report supports the Key Aim of:**

- i) Community Plan; and
- ii) Vision for Balanced Communities.

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Mrs Carol Clark

**Head of Service** Head of Housing and Communications - Mrs. Pat Smith

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**Recommendation to Services Select Committee:** It be RESOLVED that Members recommend the Housing Strategy Action Plan (HSAP) to Cabinet for approval.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:** It be RESOLVED that Members recommend the HSAP to Full Council for approval.

**Recommendation to Full Council:** It be RESOLVED that Members adopt the HSAP as District Council policy.

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**Reason for recommendation:** to agree strategic direction and related housing activity up to 2013.

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#### **Introduction**

- 1 Local authorities are no longer required to produce housing strategies, though it is still considered good practice to do so. These documents provide strategic direction and include a range of tactics to achieve strategic goals.
- 2 The Draft HSAP (Appendix A) has been produced to reflect findings from consultation and latest intelligence, both of which provide an indication of future housing need and demand. Consideration is also given to financial and non-financial capacity going forward, which is a key factor in the current and near-term economic environment.

- 3 If approved, delivery of the HSAP will be overseen by the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) Strategic Housing Sub-group on which sit District Council officers and a number of other partner organisations. Progress reports will be taken to the main LSP and Services Select Committee to update on strategic objectives.
- 4 Minor adjustments are likely to take place during the course of the action plan to reflect developing policy and the changing housing market. This will ensure that local housing strategy is routinely adapted to best effect. A full review and update of the HSAP will then take place in 2014.

### **Key Implications**

#### Financial

- 5 The HSAP will be delivered from existing resources. Bids will be made for external funding to deliver some objectives, as set out in the HSAP.

#### Community Impact and Outcomes

- 6 The HSAP aims to meet housing need and demand across sectors and client groups, with a particular focus on the vulnerable. It also supports wider Community Plan outcomes, such as health, welfare, employment and training.

#### Legal, Human Rights etc.

- 7 This is compatible with the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) and is not likely to result in any HRA implications.

#### Resource (non-financial)

- 8 The HSAP will be delivered using existing resources and there will be no additional non-financial implications.

#### Value For Money and Asset Management

- 9 The HSAP provides opportunities to reduce the impact on District Council assets and will help to create savings.
- 10 Working across local authority boundaries and with cross-sector partners, there is less consequent requirement for office space.
- 11 The HSAP will not have a negative environmental impact - impact would be positive, though negligible.

#### Equality Impacts

*Does the activity have the potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?*

- 12 There is some positive discrimination to assist certain client groups and to equalise opportunities.

*Does the activity make a positive contribution to promoting equality?*

- 13 Yes - it aims to assist those who have fewer opportunities than the norm.

*Summary of Impacts*

- 14 Impacts are positive.

Sustainability Checklist

- 15 Completed and available by request.

**Conclusions**

- 16 The HSAP aims to make best use of limited financial and non-financial resources to deliver housing strategy to best effect - and without placing further strain on constrained local budgets by making best use of external funding and/or shared services, where possible.

**Risk Assessment Statement**

- 17 There are a number of risks associated with **not** adopting the SDHAP, including:
- 18 Not having a strategic document setting the way forward to meet housing requirements in the District and across West Kent; and
- 19 A failure to demonstrate to the community that the District Council is actively working towards related Community Plan objectives.

**Background Papers:** Sustainable Community Action Plan 2012-13  
Vision for Balanced Communities  
See: Supporting Evidence/Intelligence (Appendix A: SDHAP, p12)

**Contact Officer(s):** Pat Smith, x7355  
Gavin Missons, x7332

**Kristen Paterson**  
**Community and Planning Services Director**





## SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

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### HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN (2012)

This publication is available in large print by calling 01732 227000

This publication can be explained in other languages by calling 01732 227000

[www.sevenoaks.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk)

January 2012

Sevenoaks District Council | Council Offices | Argyle Road | Sevenoaks | Kent | TN13 1HG

If you would like to comment on this document, please contact the Housing Policy Team:

01732-227000

[housing.policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk](mailto:housing.policy@sevenoaks.gov.uk)

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## Introduction

The District Council has undertaken a wide-range of consultation and considered feedback against an updated and improved evidence base. This has provided a clearer understanding of housing needs and aspirations across different sections of the community, both at present and looking forward to the future.

Three strategic objectives have been identified to meet current and future housing requirements in the Sevenoaks District, whilst also having regard to the wider West Kent housing market area:

- 1 Providing a good mix of decent and affordable homes across all tenures: offering households choice and sustaining communities
- 2 Improving the quality and use of existing housing and sustaining neighbourhoods
- 3 Meeting the needs of vulnerable and lower income households

In order to deliver the above, a number of policies, programmes and actions have been identified. These are set out in the Housing Strategy Action Plan (HSAP).

The HSAP contributes to a much wider set of outcomes such as economic mobility and development, community safety, and improving the community's health and well-being. It is a key supporting document of the Sevenoaks District Sustainable Community Plan - the District Council's long-term sustainable vision for the area.

The HSAP has been timed to correspond with the remainder of the Sustainable Community Action Plan, which will run until 2013. At that point, both plans will be fully updated and correspond from then onwards.

To avoid repetition of information, references are instead made to supporting surveys, studies and other documents, including numerous related internal and external policies, strategies and plans.

A summary of the District Council's strategic housing objectives is available on the District Council's website. This provides a general overview of housing strategy in an easy-read format.

See: [www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing](http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing)

## Governance and monitoring

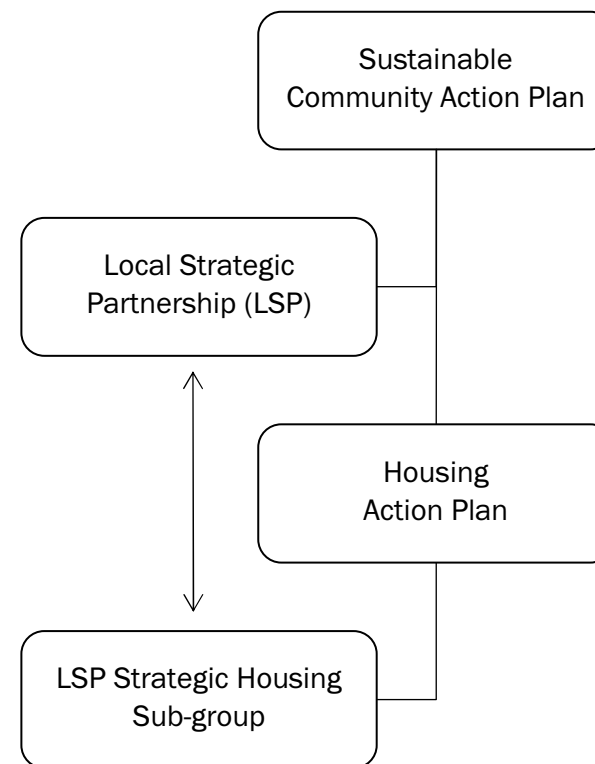
Housing strategy features strongly in the District Council's Sustainable Community Action Plan 2010-13 and this is reflected within the governance structures of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

Monitoring of the HSAP will be undertaken by the LSP Strategic Housing Sub-group and progress reports will be provided to the main LSP. Reports will also be provided to the District Council's Services Select Committee to ensure that the work programme is adequately scrutinised by locally-elected members.

Strategic objectives will remain in place until 2013, though housing tactics will be reviewed regularly as policy develops, impacts are better understood, and new intelligence becomes available. Amendments will be developed by the sub-group and approval sought from the main LSP, when required.

This will see a much more responsive approach to housing strategy and ensure that limited resources continue to achieve maximum results.

A set of key output measures have been linked to a broad range of objectives to chart progress. These are set out on Page – and are available with supporting documentation on the District Council's website.



LSP/Housing Action Plan Structure

NO	OBJECTIVE	– KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	– RESOURCES	– LEAD	– KEY LINKS
<b>PRIORITY: PROVIDING A GOOD MIX OF DECENT AND AFFORDABLE HOMES ACROSS ALL TENURES: OFFERING HOUSEHOLDS CHOICE AND SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES</b>					
1	Enabling the delivery of market and affordable housing; maximising affordable housing contributions on qualifying sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forecast delivery of 14 affordable dwellings in 11/12 (12/13 indicative: 48 units);</li> <li>Agree target for 12/13 by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>Target negotiations to achieve Core Strategy affordable housing contributions; 15+ (40%), 10-14 (30%), 5-9 (20%), 1-4 (financial contribution based on target equivalent of 10% provision);</li> <li>Target a 65/35 rent/intermediate split;</li> <li>Review tenure split in response to affordable rent tenure by 11/12: Q4;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>RPs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>PPM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 8.5, 11.2 (LPI154), 11.3 (LPI155);</li> <li>CS SP3, SP4;</li> <li>CS Affordable housing SPD;</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>SHMA 11.6, p148;</li> <li>SHMA 12.13, p171;</li> <li>KFHS 1-5;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. A;</li> </ul>
2	Enabling the delivery of priority sites; development pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake regular development reviews and prioritise LIP sites that deliver wider benefits, including economic growth, sustainability and regeneration;</li> <li>Provide HCA with regular priority updates to ensure factored into business planning process;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.1, 11.2, 11.3;</li> <li>Major Development Protocol;</li> <li>BC 1, 2;</li> <li>KFHS 1;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. A, E;</li> </ul>
3	Delivering green housing and infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve CSH Level 3 on all new affordable housing schemes;</li> <li>Investigate opportunities for new housing to incorporate decentralised energy sources;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 6 (LPI185-188), 8, 9.1, 11;</li> <li>CS SP2, SP9, SP10;</li> <li>BC 2, 7, 8;</li> <li>KFHS 1, 2;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. E;</li> </ul>
4	Providing decent quality affordable housing that meets minimum space and functionality requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable housing to achieve compliance with current HCA design standards;</li> <li>Social/affordable rented units to meet LHS, subject to site constraints;</li> <li>Develop target for affordable housing to meet wheelchair standards;</li> <li>All new 2-bed housing to be 4-person units;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>CSU;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 1.1, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4, 8.4;</li> <li>BC 1, 3;</li> <li>KFHS 2;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. A;</li> </ul>
5	Promoting low cost home ownership and other intermediate housing choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review intermediate provision in response to affordable rent tenure by 12/13: Q2;</li> <li>Hold Zone Agent drop-in-day once pa (alternate between main reception, north and south local offices);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.3 (NI155);</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>SHMA 12.13, p171;</li> <li>SHMA 12.7.8, p168;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider practical issues for intermediate rented housing by 12/13: Q2 (SHMA, p18, 1.16);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private sector;</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>KFHS 3;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. A;</li> </ul>
6	Delivering affordable and specialist housing through remodelling, reconfiguring and refurbishment of existing facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enable WKHA's programme for re-modelling, improvement, demolition and new build of sheltered housing schemes, as per WKHA Emerald Strategy;</li> <li>Work with Moat to enable the redevelopment of St Andrew's Court to provide mixed tenure choice for older people by 13/14;</li> <li>Undertake options appraisals in partnership with HAS for under-used and outdated social housing stock; by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>Consider reconfiguration of general needs to temporary, specialist and move-on accommodation;</li> <li>Secure HA stock rationalisation disposals to locally-based HAS;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 2.2, 11.5;</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>KFHS 1;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. A, B;</li> <li>WKHA Emerald Strategy;</li> </ul>
7	Managing reduction in capital funding for affordable housing (reduced HCA funding 2011 onwards)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore other delivery mechanisms and financial models for future delivery;</li> <li>Consider claw-back mechanisms on S106 to maximise contributions post-recession;</li> <li>Promote private sector partnerships and joint ventures - to consider land contributions in return for essential worker nominations (larger employers) as per essential worker report;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S106 contributions;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>HCA;</li> <li>Cross-subsidy;</li> <li>Private sector;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.2 (LPI154), 11.3 (LPI155);</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>Grant-free Models for Essential Worker Housing;</li> <li>KFHS 1;</li> </ul>
8	Making best use of affordable housing planning gains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To agree spending priorities with DC; develop criteria/procedures for best use of funds by 11/12: Q4;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>S106 contributions;</li> <li>SDC capital programme;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.3 (LPI155);</li> <li>CS SP3;</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>Core Strategy;</li> <li>KFHS 1;</li> </ul>
9	Identifying and utilising surplus public/community sector land for the provision of affordable and specialist housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess remaining SDC-owned land for housing development;</li> <li>Review status of surplus public sector land and partner sites; aim to secure land contributions as equity/grant-free provision; review public databases and HCA land directory;</li> <li>Review SHLAA for sites consistent with CS on completion of Allocations and Development DPD by</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA grant;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>PPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.1, 11.2 (LPI154), 11.3 (LPI155);</li> <li>BC 1, 7;</li> <li>SHLAA;</li> <li>KFHS 1;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<b>11/12: Q4;</b>			
10	Enabling the delivery of affordable housing in rural settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete 1 new need survey pa (2 in 2011/12);</li> <li>- Complete 1 new scheme by <b>13/14: Q3</b>;</li> <li>- Consider additional community facilities alongside new rural housing schemes;</li> <li>- Develop operational procedure note with DC and Community Development (to cover initial project stages) by <b>12/13: Q2</b>;</li> <li>- Review S106 local letting criteria by <b>11/12: Q4</b>;</li> <li>- Continue to part-fund independent rural enabler post to <b>12/13</b> - to consider further funding from 13/14 onwards by <b>12/13: Q3</b>;</li> <li>- Feed rural housing objectives into neighbourhood plan/parish plan process;</li> <li>- Consider reducing HAs to selected specialist partners by <b>11/12: Q4</b>;</li> <li>- Arrange a promotional rural tour of the District for parish councils, ward members and the HCA; by <b>11/12: Q4</b>;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HCA grant;</li> <li>- HAs;</li> <li>- S106 contributions;</li> <li>- Community trusts;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HPM;</li> <li>- DCM;</li> <li>- PPM;</li> <li>- HAs;</li> <li>- PCs;</li> <li>- ACRK;</li> <li>- ERHA;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 11.2 (LPI154), 11.3 (LPI155);</li> <li>- CS SP4;</li> <li>- BC 1, 2;</li> <li>- SHMA 12.12.5, p171;</li> <li>- KFHS 1, 2;</li> <li>- Rural Homes: Supporting Kent's Rural Communities</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. A;</li> </ul>
11	Maximising opportunities for affordable housing development through effective partnerships; improving specialist knowledge and providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review Preferred Partner Agreement/membership; to consider new agreement by <b>11/12: Q4</b>;</li> <li>- Produce <b>monthly</b> affordable housing development schedule - circulate to partners;</li> <li>- Promote housing delivery and funding through the Kent, Essex and Sussex LEP;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HPM;</li> <li>- DCM;</li> <li>- HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 2.2, 11.3 (LPI155), 11.4;</li> <li>- BC 1;</li> <li>- Preferred Partner Agreement 2008;</li> <li>- KFHS 1;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. C;</li> </ul>
12	Sustaining lettings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop KHG template sustainable lettings plans on new affordable housing developments to ensure mixed communities at first lets - to also consider on existing schemes, where appropriate (template subject to review by KHG in light of changing national policy);</li> <li>- Review each plan after 2-years - review and produce progress report on effectiveness of all plans to date by <b>12/13: Q4</b>;</li> <li>- Work with Kent Consortium to develop strategic tenant policy in response to coalition policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HAs;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 11.4;</li> <li>- BC 1, 8;</li> <li>- KHG Building Sustainable Communities in Kent (SDC signatory);</li> <li>- KFHS 5;</li> </ul>



NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (affordable rent/flexible tenancies) by 13/14: Q2;</li> <li>- Develop local sub-policy of Kent tenant policy by 13/14 Q2;</li> <li>- Compare annual turnover rates and ability to meet need: affordable rent/social rent; produce report each Apr;</li> <li>- All new lettings to be subject to the SDC template Nominations Agreement;</li> </ul>			
13	Utilising the private rented sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to operate the Sevenoaks DC Property Accreditation scheme;</li> <li>- Work with partners to investigate establishment of institutional or private equity funded private rented sector (KFHS, p47);</li> <li>- Hold quarterly sub-regional private landlord forums;</li> <li>- Provide rent-in-advance and deposit bonds to enable access to the private rented sector; consider operating partner LA services to increase income by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>- Consider a private sector leasing scheme by 12/13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Existing;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 11.4, 11.5, 11.6;</li> <li>- BC 1;</li> <li>- KFHS 2, 5;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. B;</li> </ul>
14	Enabling the delivery of pitch provision for Gypsies/Travellers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide 4 x new pitches at SDC site (external CLG funding secured and planning consent in place) by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>- Provide new amenity blocks for all new and existing pitches; upgrade electrical supply, fire safety equip and drainage by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>- Explore further funding opportunities through the LIP to 13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CLG grant (funding in place);</li> <li>- HCA;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- DCM;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> <li>- PPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 11.3 (LPI155), 11.4;</li> <li>- BC 1;</li> <li>- CS SP6;</li> <li>- GTAA 2007;</li> <li>- KFHS 1, 5;</li> <li>- SHLAA;</li> <li>- SE Plan;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. C;</li> </ul>
<b>PRIORITY: IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND USE OF EXISTING HOUSING AND SUSTAINING NEIGHBOURHOODS</b>					
15	Delivering the Private Sector Housing Strategy; achieving and maintaining the Decent Homes Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review and update sub-strategy following completion of SCS and outcome of LIP process by 12/13;</li> <li>- Monitor DHS progress in social sector (c98% compliance at Dec 10); report progress each Apr;</li> <li>- Analyse private sector stock condition survey to inform future private sector policy development by 12/13;</li> <li>- Achieve full spend of remaining RHP programme by</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RHP (N/W Kent);</li> <li>- LIP (2011 onwards);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> <li>- HAs;</li> <li>- In-Touch;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 6.1, 6.3, 11.4, 11.5, 11.6;</li> <li>- BC 1, 7;</li> <li>- PSHS 07;</li> <li>- KFHS 4, 5;</li> <li>- PSHAP 08;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. B;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 11/12;</li> <li>- Review the Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy following completion of SCS by 12/13;</li> <li>- Assess impact on private sector housing quality and availability to lower paid working households following HB capping by 12/13;</li> <li>- Consider enhanced enforcement role in light of reduced grant programme by 12/13;</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RP asset plans;</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
16	Delivering the Empty Homes Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bring 15 long-term empty homes back into use pa;</li> <li>- Review sub-strategy by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>- Transfer empty homes function to Housing Policy Team to build enabling services by 11/12;</li> <li>- Utilise HCA grant funding for Kent initiative (funding decision due 09/11);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- RHP (N/W Kent);</li> <li>- LIP (2011 onwards);</li> <li>- KCC No Use Empty;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HAS;</li> <li>- KCC;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 6.1, 11.4, 11.5;</li> <li>- BC 1, 7;</li> <li>- EHAP 09;</li> <li>- KFHS 2, 4, 5;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. B;</li> </ul>
17	Reducing under-occupation and over-crowding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contribute towards the Small is Beautiful scheme;</li> <li>- Consider positive incentives to improve the turnover of family houses in the social sector (LSP sub-group set up) - produce interim plan by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>- Consider planning gains to fund additional under-occupation incentives (see obj. 6) by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>- Consider awarding higher priority to those under-occupying and looking to transfer (in review of SDHR); by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>- Asses impact of new benefit rules on over-crowding by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>- Participate in SSC in-depth scrutiny of under-occupation and deliver subsequent action plan by 12/13: Q3;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WKHA;</li> <li>- HAS;</li> <li>- Existing budgets;</li> <li>- KHG Innovation Fund;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HAS;</li> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 2.1, 2.2, 11.4, 11.6;</li> <li>- BC 1, 7;</li> <li>- SHMA 1.16, p18;</li> <li>- KFHS 4;</li> </ul>
18	Improving energy efficiency of existing housing stock; reducing carbon use and fuel poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement local, county, regional and national retrofit schemes; reduce carbon use in domestic sector (LPI186); reduce incidence of fuel poverty (LPI187);</li> <li>- Produce domestic sector element of upcoming climate change strategy by 12/13: Q2;</li> <li>- Complete phase 2/3 of Heatseekers programme by 11/12;</li> <li>- Maximise uptake of national schemes: Warm front and CERT to 12/13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HAS;</li> <li>- Various external;</li> <li>- RHP (N/W Kent);</li> <li>- LIP (2011 onwards);</li> <li>- West Kent Fuel Poverty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HAS;</li> <li>- ECO;</li> <li>- HM;</li> <li>- HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SCAP 2.2, 6.1, 6.3 (LPI186-188), 11.4, 11.5;</li> <li>- BC 7;</li> <li>- KFHS 4;</li> <li>- KHAWS;</li> <li>- KES;</li> <li>- KAAP;</li> <li>- WK LIP obj. B;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support the delivery of related RP work plans;</li> <li>Work with KCC to introduce and facilitate Green Deal 12/13: Q3;</li> <li>Actively promote better use of developing systems and technologies;</li> </ul>	Partnership;		
<b>PRIORITY: MEETING THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE AND LOWER INCOME HOUSEHOLDS</b>					
19	Improving housing interventions to prevent crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider multi-agency referral scheme by 12/13;</li> <li>Raise awareness and identification of risks through regular training;</li> </ul>	TBC;	HM;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 2.1, 2.2, 11.6;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> </ul>
20	Enabling people to remain independent in their own homes; supporting vulnerable people in housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieve at least 95% annual DFG grant spend;</li> <li>Provide £250k pa to WKHA for tenant DFG programme;</li> <li>Increase the use of plug-and-place assistive technologies (to monitor);</li> <li>Support the delivery of the KCC Supporting People Strategy 2010-15; achieve assigned targets within timescales to 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>Review local impacts of cuts to SP by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>Support the delivery of relevant client-specific action plans and protocols (as per JPPB);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RHP (N/W Kent);</li> <li>LIP (2011 onwards);</li> <li>Pilot funding TBI;</li> <li>SP;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WKHA;</li> <li>SP;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 2.1, 2.2, 11.4;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>SPS;</li> </ul>
21	Promoting sustainable lending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate access to Houseproud, Kent Savers and other reputable external lenders;</li> <li>Consider SDC mortgage finance and DIYSO initiatives by 11/12: Q4;</li> </ul>	Houseproud;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 2.1;</li> <li>KFHS 2, 5;</li> </ul>
22	Ensuring equality of housing and related services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete housing EQIAs as per EAP;</li> <li>Review BME housing sub-strategy by 12/13;</li> </ul>	Existing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> <li>DCM;</li> <li>PPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.4;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>Equality Action Plan;</li> <li>BME HS;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> </ul>
23	Providing decent housing and related services to meet the needs of older people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess housing needs analysis of older people (to be undertaken through SILK, KMHS) by 11/12: Q4;</li> <li>Update housing chapter in COPS by 12/13;</li> <li>Consider future need for extra care provision (SHMA 10.7, p130); work with KHG older people's task and finish group to develop county strategy by 12/13;</li> <li>Promote the development of specialised housing to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WKHA;</li> <li>Moat Group;</li> <li>Existing;</li> <li>KCC;</li> <li>NHS;</li> <li>KHG;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>CD;</li> <li>KCC;</li> <li>PPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 2.1, 2.2;</li> <li>CS SP5;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>COPS 09;</li> <li>SHMA 1.16, p18;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. C;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	RESOURCES	LEAD	KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meet the needs of older people on suitable sites through the CS policy SP5 and site allocations in the Allocations and Development Management DPD;</li> <li>Review financial support services for older people (SHMA 1.7, p130) by 12/13;</li> <li>Develop and undertake pilot advice service for older people through KHG Older Adult Group by 11/12: Q4;</li> </ul>			
24	Providing decent housing and related services to meet the needs of younger people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop 9-bed housing scheme for vulnerable younger people; secure capital funding (potential site identified and revenue funding agreed) complete by 12/13: Q4 (SP Needs Analysis 09/09, p29);</li> <li>Work with WKHA to accommodate six younger people with support as an interim measure;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HCA capital;</li> <li>SP;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HPM;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>SP;</li> <li>Moat;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 3.1, 3.2, 4.5;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>SPS;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> </ul>
25	Preventing homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver West Kent Homelessness Strategy;</li> <li>WK Homelessness Group to update SHSG quarterly;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WK LAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.6;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>WK Homelessness Strategy;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> </ul>
26	Providing an enhanced housing options service to link with wider community needs; responding proactively to the recession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide HERO surgeries across the District in partnership with Moat, WKHA and 3 x Children's Centres until 2012;</li> <li>Target those unemployed and at risk of losing their homes;</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to expand scheme;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CLG (until 06/11);</li> <li>SDC (post CLG);</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>JCP;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 4.2, 4.5, 9.1, 11.4, 11.6, 12.1, 12.3;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> <li>WK LIP, obj D;</li> </ul>
27	Implementing Home Choice CBL programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with CBL partners to take forward cross-boundary nominations and common-assessment framework;</li> <li>Consider operational standard to support better mutual exchanges;</li> <li>Consider sharing a housing register to reduce operating costs as part of budget savings programme (excl. allocations policies) by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>Update SDC Allocations Policy by 11/12: Q4;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participating LA contributions;</li> <li>CLG;</li> <li>Private;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.4, 11.6, 12.3;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> </ul>
28	Maintaining effective partnership working with WKHA (LSVT RP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update SLA (update document completed Dec 2010) - further review to take place by 12/13: Q3;</li> <li>Hold regular liaison meetings with WKHA Balanced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WKHA;</li> <li>SDC;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>WKHA;</li> <li>HHC;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.4, 11.6;</li> <li>BC 1;</li> <li>SLA 2010;</li> <li>KFHS 1-5;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	– KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	– RESOURCES	– LEAD	– KEY LINKS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communities and Housing Director;</li> <li>Hold bi-annual liaison meetings with SDC Management Team and WKHA CE, directors and Board;</li> </ul>			
29	Delivering the Domestic Abuse Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review sub-strategy action plan; by 12/13: Q4;</li> <li>Develop a local women's refuge - site and capital funding to be identified; SP revenue funding agreed; identify site by 13/14: Q2 (SP Needs Analysis 09/09, p53);</li> <li>Support the delivery of related objectives in LSP Domestic Abuse Action Plan - report back progress to Domestic Abuse Working Group;</li> <li>Assess level of need for additional refuge move-on accommodation by 12/13: Q3;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SP;</li> <li>HCA;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>S106 contributions;</li> <li>Churches Together;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP 11.4, 11.6;</li> <li>BC 8;</li> <li>KFHS 5;</li> <li>KMDAS 2-4;</li> <li>SPS;</li> <li>WK LIP obj. C;</li> </ul>
<b>OTHER</b>					
30	Increasing strategic housing capacity; building capacity of partners, local communities and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold SHSG meetings quarterly;</li> <li>Build further effective partnerships across sectors;</li> <li>Complete skills audit; by 12/13: Q2;</li> <li>Facilitate scrutiny groups on housing and related services;</li> <li>Undertake SDC Business Process Review by 12/13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HHC;</li> <li>HAs;</li> <li>HPM;</li> <li>HM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP;</li> <li>KFHS 1-5;</li> </ul>
31	Delivering housing and related services sub-regionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribute to the West Kent LIP process;</li> <li>Undertake common work projects in partnership with Dartford BC (as per project savings template);</li> <li>Work with KCC to develop county survey process as part of budget savings measures;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WK LAs;</li> <li>HCA;</li> <li>HAs;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HHC;</li> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP;</li> <li>LIP;</li> </ul>
32	Undertaking regular consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold annual housing forums;</li> <li>Ensure SDC New Homes Survey is undertaken for initial lets;</li> <li>Consider other post-occupation consultation by 12/13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existing;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP;</li> </ul>
33	Responding to updated housing intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update SHMA/HMNA (in-house); TBA;</li> <li>Consider demographic change in 2011 Census (due 2012) against SHMA projections;</li> <li>Assess findings of updated GTAA; to include needs of housed G/Ts by 12/13;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TBC;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HM;</li> <li>HPM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SCAP;</li> <li>SHMA 08;</li> <li>HMNA 06;</li> <li>GTAA 06;</li> </ul>

NO	OBJECTIVE	– KEY DETAILS/TIMESCALES	– RESOURCES	– LEAD	– KEY LINKS
34	Assessing/measuring performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Undertake benchmarking exercises with LSVT Benchmarking Group;</li> <li>– Implement updated local performance targets and refocus local housing audit to reflect removal of CAA;</li> <li>– Consider measures to improve local data awareness;</li> <li>– Report progress against related SCAP objectives quarterly and provide full annual HSAP progress reports;</li> </ul>	– Existing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– HM;</li> <li>– HPM;</li> <li>– HAS;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SCAP;</li> <li>– HIP;</li> <li>– ISIT;</li> <li>– CLG Business Plan 2011-15;</li> </ul>
35	Ensuring emergency housing procedures are in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Relevant officers to undertake emergency planning rest centre training;</li> <li>– Provide emergency out-of-hours contact service;</li> </ul>	– Existing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– HHC;</li> <li>– HM;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SCAP;</li> <li>– Emergency Plan;</li> </ul>
36	Ensuring major campsites are safe and habitable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Undertake inspections at major Brands Hatch events;</li> <li>– Identify land intended for public campsites during Olympics; PSH to feed into SDC Olympic Working Group;</li> </ul>	– Existing;	– HM;	– SCAP;
37	Review scope for developing shared services/joint approaches between local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To consider pooling resources, expertise, skills and joint procurement as an ongoing process.</li> <li>– Identify cross-cutting outcomes;</li> </ul>	– Existing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– HM;</li> <li>– HPM;</li> </ul>	– SCAP;
<p>Note: actions without target timescales will be evaluated annually</p>					

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE AND INTELLIGENCE	
Sustainable Community Action Plan (2010-13)	The long-term, sustainable vision for the Sevenoaks District and sets out the local community's priorities for action. <a href="http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/sdc_comactionplan_final.pdf">http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/sdc_comactionplan_final.pdf</a>
Core Strategy (2010)	Sets out the vision and policies for future development in the Sevenoaks District over the period to 2026, as well as providing the policy context for other development plan documents. <a href="http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/core_strategy_draft_for_submission_jan_2010_lores.pdf">http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/core_strategy_draft_for_submission_jan_2010_lores.pdf</a>
Sevenoaks District Stock Condition Survey (2011)	Sets out the basic legislative, government and local reporting requirements on private sector housing, and details the local stock condition using various criteria. <a href="http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing/housing_improvement_and_repairs/default.asp">http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing/housing_improvement_and_repairs/default.asp</a>
West Kent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2008)	Provides an insight into how the local housing market operates both now and in the future. Also provides a basis on which to develop planning and housing policies by considering the characteristics of the housing market, how key factors work together, and the probable scale of change in future housing need and demand. <a href="http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/west_kent_shma_final.pdf">http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/west_kent_shma_final.pdf</a>
West Kent Local Investment Plan (2010)	Sets out how the West Kent Local Investment Plan partnership will deliver a more effective and focused approach to regeneration, affordable housing, transport, and future employment growth in the Sevenoaks District and across West Kent (including the Maidstone Borough). <a href="http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing">http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/housing</a>
Kent Supporting People Strategy (2010-15)	Provides the framework for the local planning, commissioning, regulation and funding of housing-related support services in the Sevenoaks District and across Kent. <a href="http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/HousingStrategy.aspx">http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/HousingStrategy.aspx</a>
Kent Supporting People Needs Analysis (2009)	An analysis of need used to identify priorities and underpin the commissioning process. <a href="http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/HousingStrategy.aspx">http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/HousingStrategy.aspx</a>
Kent Forum Housing Strategy (2011)	Sets out the major housing challenges facing Kent now and in the future, and offers solutions to address local issues having a county perspective. <a href="http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/uploads/KMHSconsultationversion.pdf">http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/uploads/KMHSconsultationversion.pdf</a>

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK – the Housing Strategy Action Plan has been developed having regard to developing policy, though regular reviews of housing tactics will be required as policy takes effect and impacts are better understood.

KEY HOUSING OUTPUTS (2011/12 – 2012/13)		2011/12 (Forecast)	2012/13 (Indicative)	Total
<b>OBJ</b>	<b>Providing a good mix of decent and affordable homes across all tenures: offering households choice and sustaining communities</b>			
1	Affordable housing completions	14	48	76
1	Market housing completions	*	*	
6	Completion of social housing stock rationalisation transfers to other HAs (by unit)	12	0	12
10	Rural parish housing needs surveys undertaken	2	1	3
10	Rural housing completions (units)	0	14	14
13	Properties accredited	84	84	168
14	Provision of additional public G/T pitches	4	0	4

Agenda Item 9

<b>OBJ</b>	<b>Improving the quality and use of existing housing and sustaining neighbourhoods</b>			
15	Dwellings made Decent	40	40	80
16	Properties where HHSRS Category 1 hazards removed	20	20	40
16	HMO inspections undertaken (units)	80	80	160
16	Mobile home park inspections undertaken	12	12	24
17	Long-term empty homes brought back into use through direct intervention	15	15	30
18	Social housing tenants assisted to down-size	*	*	*
18	Social sector over-crowding cases resolved	*	*	*
19	Energy grants to improve thermal efficiency	*	*	*

<b>OBJ</b>	<b>Meeting the needs of vulnerable and lower income households</b>			
26	Rent-in-advance/deposit bond cases	60	60	120
21	DFGs completed	95	95	190
24	Older people: dwellings made Decent	3	3	6
26	Homelessness preventions	716	716	1432
27	HERO surgeries	240	240	480
28	Social housing lets	300	300	600

\* to be agreed



ABREVIATIONS			
ACRK	ACTION WITH COMMUNITIES IN RURAL KENT	JCP	JOB CENTRE PLUS
BC	BALANCED COMMUNITIES	JPPB	JOINT POLICY AND PLANNING BOARD
CBL	CHOICE-BASED LETTINGS	KA2	KENT AGREEMENT 2
CD	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	KAAP	KENT ADAPTATION ACTION PLAN
CIL	COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY	KCC	KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
CLG	COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT	KES	KENT ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY
COPS	CORPORATE OLDER PERSONS' STRATEGY	KHAW5	KENT HEALTH AND AFFORDABLE WARMTH STRATEGY
CPA	COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT	KHG	KENT HOUSING GROUP
CS	CORE STRATEGY (LDF)	KMDAS	KENT AND MEDWAY DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY
CSH	CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES	KFHS	KENT FORUM HOUSING STRATEGY
CSU	COMMUNITY SAFETY UNIT	LHS	LIFETIME HOMES STANDARD
CSR	COMPREHENSIVE SPENDING REVIEW	LD	LEARNING DISABILITY
DAHS	DOMESTIC ABUSE HOUSING STRATEGY	LEP	LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
DC	DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	LIP	LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN
DCM	DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER	LSVT	LARGE SCALE VOLUNTARY TRANSFER
DFG	DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT	LSP	LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
DPD	DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT	PPM	PLANNING POLICY MANAGER
ECCO	ENERGY CONSERVATION OFFICER	PSH	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING (TEAM)
EHAP	EMPTY HOMES ACTION PLAN	PSHAP	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY
ERHA	ENGLISH RURAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION	PSHS	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING STRATEGY
EAP	EQUALITY ACTION PLAN	RHP	REGIONAL HOUSING POT
EQIA	EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	RP	REGISTERED PROVIDER
GTAA	GYPSY/TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION ASSESSMENT	S106	SECTION 106
HA	HOUSING ASSOCIATION	SBD	SECURE BY DESIGN
HCA	HOMES AND COMMUNITIES AGENCY	SCAP	SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN
HERO	HOUSING ENERGY RETRAINING OPTIONS	SDHR	SEVENOAKS DISTRICT HOUSING REGISTER
HHC	HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNICATIONS	SHLAA	STRATEGIC HOUSING LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT
HM	HOUSING MANAGER (PRIVATE SECTOR AND SOCIAL TEAMS)	SHMA	STRATEGIC HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT
HMNA	HOUSING MARKET AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT	SHOE	SHARED-OWNERSHIP FOR THE ELDERLY
HMO	HOUSE IN MULTIPLE-OCCUPATION	SHSG	STRATEGIC HOUSING SUB-GROUP
HOLD	HOUSING FOR THOSE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES	SILK	SOCIAL INNOVATION LAB FOR KENT
HPM	HOUSING POLICY MANAGER	SP/S	SUPPORTING PEOPLE/STRATEGY
HSAP	HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN	SPD	SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
HSCS	HOUSING STOCK CONDITION SURVEY	WK LIP	WEST KENT LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN



## SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE – 31 JANUARY 2012

### IT STRATEGY AND PLAN 2012-2015

Report of the: Director of Corporate Resources

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Members IT Working Group – 3 and 30 November 2011

Cabinet – 9 February 2012

Council – 21 February 2012

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**Executive Summary:** This report outlines the IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015, its scope and objectives it seeks to achieve through the use, management and development of technology by the Council.

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**This report supports the Key Aim of** Effective use of Council Resources

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Fleming

**Head of Service** Head of IT and Facilities Management – Jim Carrington-West

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**Recommendation to Services Select Committee:** It be resolved that it be recommended to Cabinet that:

- Subject to the comments of this committee, it be recommended to Council that the IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015 be approved and adopted

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 The IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015 sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management, use and development of technology. The Strategy sets out the vision and priorities, how we manage our services, and our plans for the next four years. Within the strategy consideration is given to the Council's strategic priorities, policies and other key strategies. The strategy also sets out key assumptions being made to deliver the required outcomes.
- 2 The draft IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015 has already been considered by the Members IT Working Group and their comments have been taken into account and incorporated into the document. The group provided valuable input into shaping the content and relevance of the strategy.

**IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015**

- 3 The IT Strategy and Plan 2009-2012, Community Plan, Corporate Performance Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan have all been used to inform the attached Strategy. As have the Members IT Working Group and the IT Steering Group.
- 4 The key objectives of this IT Strategy & Plan are:
  - To align existing and future technical solutions with business requirements, the District's Community Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan, and the Government's National Transformational Agenda.
  - To support current, planned and future use of operational ICT systems throughout the Council and to improve the technological environment provided for the Members and Officers of Sevenoaks District Council.
  - To ensure that the most comprehensive and appropriate set of access channels to Council services are made available to all citizens and customers.
  - To ensure that the Council's ICT service is delivering excellent quality and value for money to all its customers.
  - To contribute towards the Council's goal of providing first class services and maintaining its 'Excellent' status.
  - To ensure that all developments in ICT used throughout the Council are assessed in terms of the Council's equalities work.
- 5 The methods by which it is intended these objectives are met are explained through sections covering :
  - The Council's vision and priorities.
  - Managing our business, including Consultation and Engagement, Improving Outcomes for the Community, Customer Focus, Partners, Accessibility and Environmental Footprint.
  - Managing our resources. This covers Members, Council Staff, Performance Management, Investment and Asset Management.
- 6 The plan then details, in a three tier structure:
  - Strategic commitment and vision
  - Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy
  - Development Plan for 2012-2015

## **Key Implications**

### Financial

- 7 The delivery of the objectives defined within this Strategy and Plan relies on the existing commitment of budgets as agreed in the Councils 10 year budget and summarised in the Investment and Asset Management section of the Strategy itself.

### Community Impact and Outcomes

- 8 The services and systems supported and developed as a result of this IT Strategy and Plan are used by all Council service areas to deliver their services to the public and as such this Strategy plays a key role in achieving the Council's key objectives.

### Legal, Human Rights etc.

- 9 The maintenance and development of a fit-for-purpose technical environment contributes significantly to the ability of the Council to implement and comply with legislative changes across many service areas.

### Resource (non-financial)

- 10 Sufficient available resources within the IT service are key to the delivery of the IT Strategy and Plan. Any future variations in resource will need to be assessed in terms of impact on delivery of these outcomes.

### Value For Money

- 11 Having an agreed IT Strategy and Plan for the period 2012-2015 has a significant impact on ensuring effective value for money arrangements for the council. This is achieved by setting out a clear future direction for the use of technology and ensuring development and expenditure is co-ordinated across the council as a whole.

### Equality Impacts

- 12 An equality impact assessment of the IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015 has been completed. It highlighted one area of potential impact on those with visual impairments as a result of the development and promotion of web-based systems for customer interaction.
- 13 One of the key objectives stated in the IT Strategy is: "To ensure that all developments in ICT used throughout the Council are assessed in terms of the Council's equalities work."
- 14 As a result of this, the re-design of the corporate website currently underway includes moves to maintain and improve the compliance with accessibility standards. Consultation has taken place with Kent Association for the Blind to inform this process.

**Conclusions**

- 15 By committing to the previous IT Strategy and Plan 2009-2012, the council has achieved a well-planned, co-ordinated development of the use of technology across the organisation. The new IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015 seeks to continue this development in line with corporate objectives and within funding and resource constraints.

**Risk Assessment Statement**

- 16 In the absence of an integrated policy and priority driven business process, it will become difficult for the Council to deliver on its priorities and maintain a sustainable technical environment.

**Appendices**

Appendix A – IT Strategy and Plan 2012-2015

**Background Papers:**

IT Strategy and Plan 2009-2012

Council's agreed 10 Year Budget

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**Corporate Resources Director**

# Sevenoaks District Council

## Information Technology Strategy & Plan 2012-15



## Our vision

*To deliver quality, cost effective, responsive and visionary services that are customer focused and valued*

**We are always interested in ways to improve and welcome your suggestions**

### Contact us

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Online: via the IT page on the SDC Intranet

Phone: Ext. 7444 or 01732 227444

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<http://servicedesk.sevenoaks.gov.uk> or via the Members' Portal

Face to Face: 1st Floor, Argyle Road Offices, just opposite the Chief Executive and Leaders offices.

### Publication details

#### **Purpose of the Strategy & Plan**

To inform Sevenoaks District Council Members, staff and stakeholders of the Council's IT operating environment, priorities and plans for 2012-15

#### **Publication date**

February 2012



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Foreword



Cllr Peter Fleming  
Leader of the Council  
and Portfolio Holder for  
Information Technology



Jim Carrington-West  
Head of Information  
Technology and Facilities  
Management

*“This Strategy & Plan sets out how we plan to provide excellent IT services to enable you to deliver first class performance”*

We are pleased to introduce to you **Sevenoaks District Council’s IT Strategy & Plan 2012-15**

This Strategy & Plan sets out our vision and priorities, how we manage our services, and our plans for the next four years.

It outlines in a realistic and practical manner, the current and future role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) within Sevenoaks District Council.

The Information Technology and Facilities Management service, part of the Corporate Resources Department, is responsible for identifying technology that would benefit the Council to support and enable the continuous improvement of Council services.

Technology covers all data (all electronically captured data, whether alphanumerical, image or sound), voice communication and the integration of these technologies to improve customer service.

Sevenoaks District Council does not seek to separate the IT part of the Council’s operations as a separate business unit, or see IT as a component without service objectives. Our challenge is to use technology with existing systems

throughout the Council to improve the service received by customers, whilst strengthening the Council’s business capability.

We are also supporting service areas through partnership working in the continuing aim to deliver quality services whilst maintaining or improving value for money.

*“We live in a time when we as a council can’t deliver services without the IT systems we all use every day. To continue to deliver the highest possible quality services to our residents we need to constantly evolve and improve our IT systems.”*

Cllr Peter Fleming  
Leader of the Council  
and Portfolio Holder for IT

**IT – Innovation and Transformation enabling customer focused services**

## Our vision and priorities

Our **vision** sets out our focus for the coming years,

# Our Vision



The **key objectives** of this IT Strategy & Plan are:

- To align existing and future technical solutions with business requirements, the District's Community Plan, the Council's Corporate Plan, and the Government's IT Strategy.
- To support current, planned and future use of operational ICT systems throughout the Council and to improve the technological environment provided for the Members and Officers of Sevenoaks District Council.
- To ensure that the most comprehensive and appropriate set of access channels to Council services are made available to all customers.
- To ensure that the Council's ICT service is delivering excellent quality and value for money to all its customers.
- To contribute towards the Council's goal of providing first class services.
- To ensure that all developments in ICT used throughout the Council are assessed in terms of the Council's equalities work.
- To ensure the continued support of partnership working initiatives in order to deliver quality services and value for money.
- To contribute towards the delivery of the Council's agreed ten year budget.

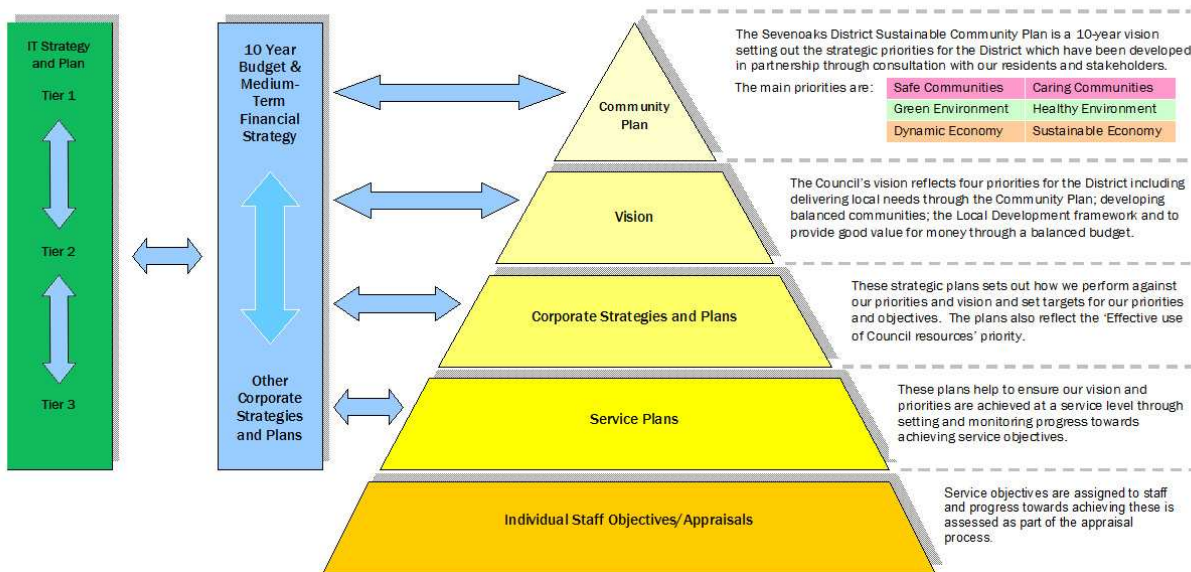
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## How our plans work together

The Council’s IT Strategy sets out how we will use information technology to support the achievement of the Council’s priorities. The financial implications included in the Strategy are reflected in the Financial Plan.

The vision for the use of IT services within the Council is one of a **service enabler**. We are committed to IT as an integral part of service redesign in order to produce maximum efficiency, quality and the highest outcomes for our community, yet recognising the limited resources.

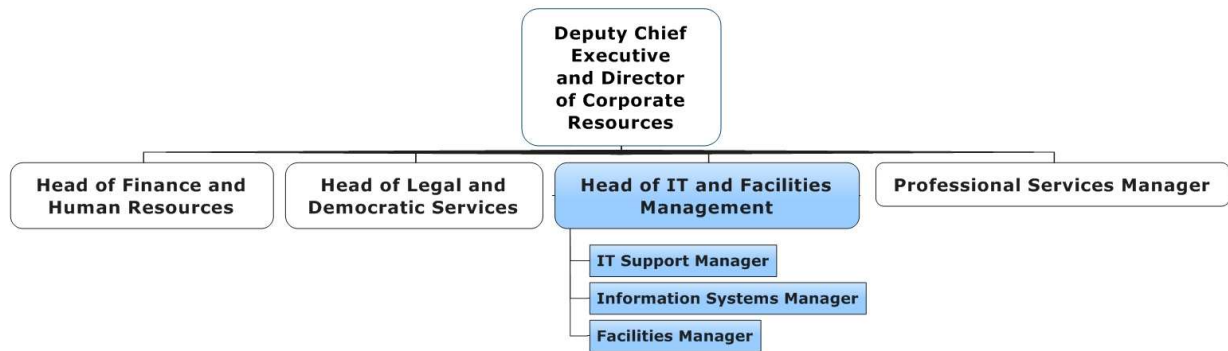
The vision is not restricted to the use of IT but more to the enabling role of technology in the use and interaction of information throughout the Council.



The IT Strategy and Plan itself comprises a three tier structure. This begins with the high level commitment and vision of the IT Service and how this supports the Council’s wider objectives. Tier two comprises the detail around the key initiatives that will contribute to achieving the Corporate goals. Finally, Tier three, is a more detailed plan of specific actions to be taken to contribute to these initiatives. In this way, each initiative, through exploiting IT as an enabler for transformation can be clearly linked to the aims set out by Members as the drivers for the Council as a whole.

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## About the Council's IT Services



### IT Services is broken down into two key areas:

- IT Support
- Information Systems

#### IT Support team

The IT Support team comprises the Service Desk Supervisor, Service Desk Assistant, three Technical Support Engineers, an IT Developer and the IT Support Manager. They are the initial contact point with IT and will support you with any issues or questions you may have. The IT Support Manager is responsible for ensuring that IT delivers a first class service to all our customers.

We endeavour to:

- Act and communicate with our customers with a professional, can do manner
- Respond quickly with the correct solution to all problems
- Keep our customers regularly informed about how the resolution is progressing
- Be pro-active in foreseeing potential problems occurring and informing our customers
- Arm our customers with information and knowledge to make them more confident in using their IT systems

- Meet our agreed Service Level Agreements (SLAs)

The team is structured so that any issues can be quickly identified and escalated where necessary and the team can put in place any ideas that they feel will improve customer service.

The team ensures that the IT systems provided to the Council are fit for purpose, robust and well maintained. They also investigate new technologies that will assist the Council in becoming more efficient, enabling more effective communication with customers.

The team plays an active role, as part of Kent Connects, investigating and implementing partnership working and sharing knowledge across the county.

#### Information Systems team

The Information Systems team aim to ensure that the most efficient information systems and technology are in place to support Council services.

This is achieved through working with all areas of the Council to ensure that:

- The most appropriate technologies are being used
- The systems used complement each other
- All systems support the use and sharing of information within the Council.

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### About the Council's IT Services

More specifically the Information Systems Team will:

- Investigate innovative ways of using technology to support the use of information within the Council
- Be responsible for the end to end deployment of information systems, working with the IT Support Team during implementation and afterwards for day to day support
- Provide assistance and consultancy in the scoping and use of the Council's information systems
- Manage the GIS, UNI-form and IDOX systems and maximise their corporate use
- Manage the Local Land and Property Gazetteer and the use of address based information within the Council
- Provide a cartographic service delivering high quality mapping and map based analysis
- Provide innovative ways of using technology to improve the access of the community, including vulnerable and hard to reach groups, to the Council's services.

#### Our services

We provide many services to help with day to day work. For officers these include an online self service portal facility where you may log, view and update your IT Service Desk calls, look through our News Archive to find out about new developments and also our Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) system which will help you troubleshoot your own problems - this is great as a first point of call before contacting the IT Service Desk.

In addition to this daily support function, the team have implemented a number of key IT Systems across the Council that have had a major impact on the operation of the Authority and the Community it serves.

Examples include:

- Customer Relationship Management system, allowing over 70% of customers queries to be resolved at first point of contact.
- Consultee Access for Licensing allowing statutory Consultees and members of the public to consult on Licensing applications for Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Councils through an automated online system, providing greater access and reducing the overhead on staff time.
- Automated Telephone Payments system, delivering more flexible methods and reduced time to process payments for Council Services. Currently 75% of Revenues and Benefits payments are received using this system.



# Managing our business

## Consultation and engagement

The engagement of our customers continues to ensure that technology is considered a key mechanism to enable the transformation of all Council services to better suit the needs of our community.

## Improving outcomes for the community



By supporting the redesigning of services, the IT Service has a direct impact on improving outcomes for the community.

As an example, the IT Service has played a significant role in implementing public access for Planning and Licensing. Through IT assisting in the redesign of processes and the more effective use of technology, the Council has enabled the electronic submission of comments for Planning and Licensing applications and reduction in paper based processes, allowing for a simplified overall process.

IT systems also assist the Council in monitoring partnership plans in regard to initiatives such as the Community Safety Partnership.

The Council also seeks to engage with the Community using a wide range of available access channels. These include face to face, email, the Council's website, which is



currently in the process of being re-designed, and by utilising social media to publish information via twitter.

## Customer focus

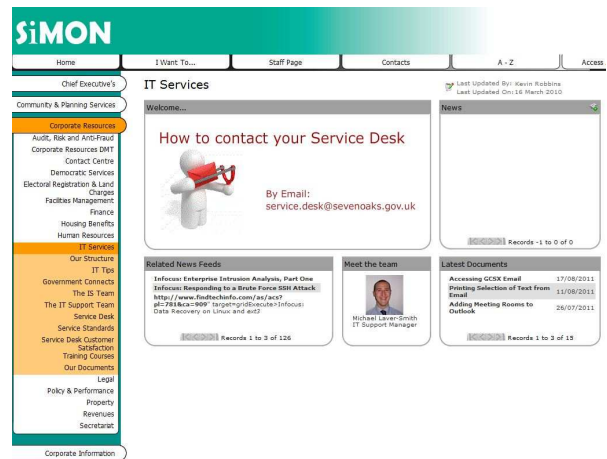


To ensure our internal and external customers get the best possible service, we set out the level of service our customers can expect in:

- the Council-wide customer standards leaflet
- our Service Level Agreement (SLA).

Our pages on the intranet also provide our customers with information about:

- our Service Desk call management process
- our definitions of priorities.



## Our partners

IT Services work with many partners, including:

A Kent Wide partnership, delivering solutions including wide area network provision and disaster recovery services.



Jointly procured financial management system, hosted at Sevenoaks.



Joint Revenues and Benefits Service with a system hosted at Sevenoaks.



A three Council Licensing Partnership with IT Systems hosted at Sevenoaks.

We greatly value these partnerships and the significant contributions they make, ensuring value for money and sharing of best practice throughout the IT service.

## Accessibility

We aim to ensure all our services are delivered without discrimination and take into account the needs of our local communities.

All ICT related deployments will be assessed at the planning stage to ensure equality groups are taken into account and systems cater for all groups appropriately.

In this regard we are constantly liaising with our public facing service areas to ensure the feedback they receive is reviewed, considered and improvements built into systems where necessary.

## Our environmental footprint



We are committed to improving our environmental performance and reducing the environmental impact of our work.

The District Council aims to reduce its carbon emissions in line with Government targets and has developed processes to deliver improvement, and measure and report progress.

We are contributing to this aim by:

- increasing the energy efficiency of the IT equipment in use throughout the Council
- reducing waste and increasing sustainable procurement
- recycling redundant IT equipment according to WEEE regulations
- maintaining a constant awareness of new and emerging technologies that enable first class service delivery but not at the cost of the environment.

Our focus is direct reductions in carbon emissions, as soon as possible, rather than a reliance on indirect carbon offsetting to achieve carbon neutrality.

## Managing our resources

### Making IT happen together

Developments in technology continue rapidly. New technologies offering scope for new ways of working and improving service can present great opportunities.

Effective partnering between the IT team and the rest of the Council is essential to reap the benefits available through the use of technology.

### Members

All members have access to Council information electronically via the Members' Portal, allowing them to carry out their public duty in the most effective manner, enabled by technology.

Members contribute actively to the ongoing use and development of IT across the organisation through the Members IT Working Group, providing a key advice and scrutiny function. The work of the Group has enabled a number of improvements across the Council in areas such as Strategic Direction, Business Continuity, Data Security and Infrastructure Replacement.

### Council staff

The IT Service engages with Officers at all levels in order to provide a fundamental role in enabling service redesign and continuous improvement in terms of both efficiency and value for money.

This role is overseen by the IT Steering Group, which comprises a cross departmental representation of Officers up to and including Directors.

The Group meets on a monthly basis to review new and existing projects in terms of priority and cost. This is achieved through the use of documents contributed by relevant officers, based on the Prince2

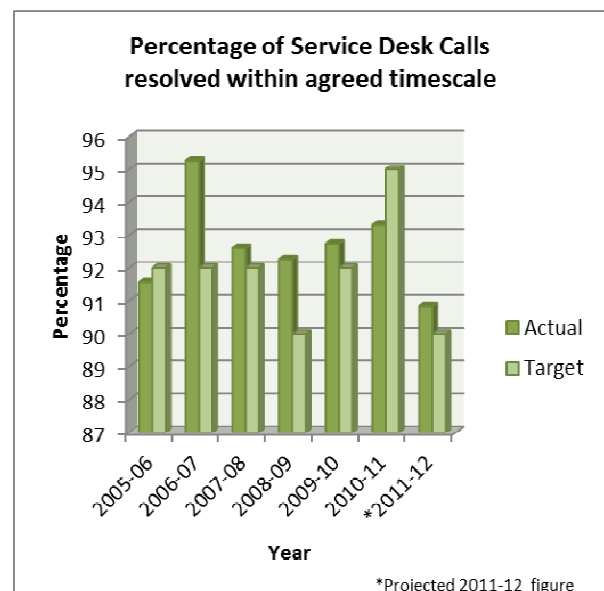
project management methodology and managed through an electronic performance management system.

### Performance management

Our performance management arrangements, allow us to examine our performance, look for trends over time, compare our performance with other authorities and produce meaningful reports which can be used as a guide for improvements. We are also able to monitor targets to ensure they are both achievable and challenging.

### Our performance

The IT Service has provided a consistently high level of service in relation to the amount of resources it has available. The service underwent a 26 % reduction in the budget over recent years, contributing significantly to the Council's efficiency agenda. Performance targets for 2011-12 continue to reflect the drive for a quality service delivered with available resources.



The IT Service at Sevenoaks continues to provide this high level of service at the same time as being the smallest IT Service in the county in terms of number of IT Staff per 1000 users.

**Investment and Asset management**

The Council currently has an allocation for ICT expenditure of around £1,000,000. This is annual expenditure that includes; staff costs, costs associated with software maintenance and licensing, network provision and hardware maintenance in order to ensure the IT infrastructure remains fit-for-purpose.

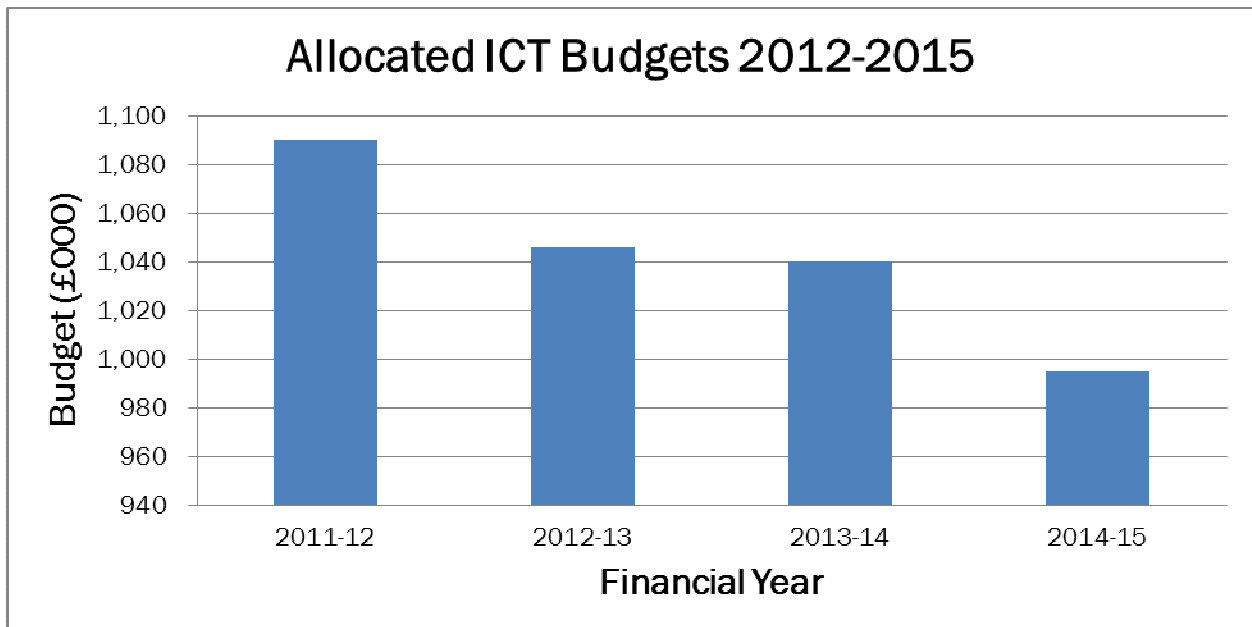
Using these resources we are committed to investigating new technologies in order to continually improve value for money and community outcomes. The server virtualisation programme is a key example of where more value was achieved from the budget allocation by utilising an alternative method of delivering a fit-for-purpose infrastructure.

Projects requiring major expenditure are overseen at an officer level by the IT Steering Group, following consultation with the Members IT Working Group. If necessary, a decision may be taken at Cabinet. In this way, Members and Officers together share the responsibility for investing in the future of technology within the Council.

The IT Financial plan for 2012-15 is taken directly from the Council’s agreed 10 year budget. Any proposed changes in one can be directly seen in the other to assess potential future impact.

This commitment to fund the development of technology within the Council to continually improve services, underlines the push for even greater and beneficial outcomes to the community.

IT Financial Plan 2012-15



## Progress on the previous strategy

Achievements from the previous IT Strategy and Plan (2009-2012) include:

Maintain IT Service Desk customer satisfaction	100% of respondents express themselves “satisfied” or “very satisfied”
Replace user workstations within appropriate timescales to ensure fit-for-purpose hardware	All user workstations identified in the asset replacement programme have been replaced with new equipment
Replace existing Citrix and central servers within appropriate timescales to ensure fit-for-purpose hardware	New Citrix servers have been built, tested and implemented
Identify new business partners and develop detailed rules of engagement	Partnerships implemented and developed with other Local Authorities including; Dartford, Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells, Tandridge, Tonbridge and Malling
Research, procure and deploy a VOIP system integrated to the current network	Existing analogue telephone system replaced. VoIP system successfully deployed
Upgrade MS Office suite of applications to 2007	MS Office products upgraded to 2007
Migrate all remaining payment types onto new electronic payments system	New payments system implemented, improving efficiency in processing transactions. The old payment system has been decommissioned.
Review and redevelop intranet system (SiMON)	System is up to date and provides an efficient source of information to all service areas
Deploy automated system for taking payments via the telephone	System deployed and improved efficiency for citizen transactions. Around 70% of Council Tax card payments are now taken via this method
Provide meaningful, clear reports to IT Steering Group on progress of IT projects as well as the IT elements of non-IT projects	Prince2 based reports produced for IT Steering Group with support from the Covalent system for managing live actions.
Continually consider Council’s overall financial position and the financial implications on the annual budget and the medium and long term financial plans	IT and Facilities Management (FM) contributing £378k to the agreed 10 year budget framework
Complete Government Connects Code of Connection (CoCo) requirements and submit document	The council has achieved and remains CoCo compliant

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Implement Uni-form Taxi Licensing module	A complete Uni-form based Licensing system has been implemented supporting Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells councils
Complete back-scanning exercise relating to Development Services Review	All appropriate information captured in electronic format
Contribute to and make full use of Kent Connects programme	A number of efficiencies have been achieved from initiatives identified through Kent Connects, including resilient internet links, email scanning, remote access
Upgrade Uni-form system to 7.5 to ensure continued support and reliability	All required Uni-form upgrades have been completed in order to ensure continued support, reliability and system development

Other notable achievements during this period include:

- Creation of a unified service desk providing a single point of access to all IT and FM related services
- Delivered the IT elements required to create a joint Revenues and Benefits team, located at Sevenoaks, providing services to residents of both Sevenoaks District and Dartford Borough, delivering £250k of corporate savings per annum.
- Provision of significant amounts of GIS mapping information for inclusion in the Local Development Framework (LDF) core strategy and associated supplementary documents
- Implementation of IT systems supporting the Licensing Partnership between Sevenoaks, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells councils
- Liaised with Kent Police, delivering IT requirements for the Community Safety Unit (CSU) locating key police staff and the Sevenoaks police front counter within the Argyle Road offices
- Implemented integrated multifunction devices, rationalising the desktop printing estate and generating a more efficient printing environment
- Developed the online planning facilities to enable easier, more comprehensive access to planning information by members of the public
- Implemented an online consultee access system allowing more efficient processes for statutory and public consultees to comment on licensing applications
- Liaising with the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to assist in the delivery of the 2011 census
- Restructure of the Print Studio to enable more efficient processes for internal bulk printing, generation of increased external income and an ongoing agreement with Dartford Borough Council to provide bulk printing services

## Tier 1: Strategic commitment and vision

The District's Community Plan focuses on *"improving the quality of life for people who live and work in the District"* and this Strategy aims to support the Community Plan by:

- improving the quality of the service provided and
- making a positive contribution to the efficiency, effectiveness and value for money of the Council's administration and delivery of services to the public.

This is achieved by bringing together the most appropriate technological tools with quality data and providing our customers and users with high quality support.

**1.1** The Council will seek to e-enable as many of its services to citizens as appropriate and in line with government priorities and standards. Where available, e-pay and e-procurement initiatives will be deployed as required.

**1.2** The Council will embrace all appropriate local and national projects that will add value to its services or provide efficiency savings.

**1.3** The Council will seek to maintain standardised and secure technical infrastructures and applications that facilitate a range of cost effective and flexible working alternatives. Where appropriate, updates, upgrades and expansions to existing systems will be completed in line with service demands and/or support requirements.

**1.4** To ensure that all new developments comply with the Council's strategic objectives. Operationally IT will be directed via an IT Steering Group representing all services of the Council. This group will assess all proposed developments and establish and review the relative priorities of projects within the overall IT programme.

**1.5** The IT Strategy has been developed in consideration of the Council's overall financial position and its financial implications are contained within the agreed 10 year budget.

**1.6** IT and Facilities Management will provide a comprehensive support service to users, providing adequate training, and Service Desk services.

**1.7** Where required and authorised, each Council Officer and Member will be provided with a standard set of the most effective tools and access to information sources for them to complete their tasks. Non-standard (but supported) applications will be available where there is a clear business requirement.

**1.8** IT and Facilities Management will assist in identifying IT training needs and core IT competencies required by the organisation.

**1.9** Where appropriate, the Council will seek to comply with best practice and industry standards.

**1.10** The Council will seek to achieve Value for Money in the procurement, implementation and on-going support of all IT systems and services through stringent procurement, product selection and negotiations as well as producing full cost benefit analysis for all major purchases.

**1.11** The Council will, where appropriate, work with approved partners but, whether internally or externally developed, all initiatives will follow established standards for the Council's IT infrastructure and comply fully with statutory and other adopted standards for data handling.

**1.12** The Council will adhere to guidance and legislation set out in regards to Equalities in all areas, including the development and use of IT and related systems.

## Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

<p><b>2.1 Supporting the Council’s main objectives</b>                  The District’s Community Plan and the Council’s Corporate Plan identify four key themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%; vertical-align: top;"> <span style="color: magenta;">■</span> Safe and Caring Communities                 </li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%; vertical-align: top;"> <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Dynamic and Sustainable Economy                 </li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%; vertical-align: top;"> <span style="color: green;">■</span> Green and Healthy Environment                 </li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%; vertical-align: top;"> <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Effective Management of Council Resources                 </li> </ul> <p>The IT Strategy’s primary objective is to ensure that services and systems are fit-for-purpose in terms of having a direct or indirect impact on these strategic aims, whilst maintaining an agility to adapt to changing demands without an excessive reliance on pre-change documentation.</p>	<p>Link to Tier 1</p>
<p><b>2.1a Safe and Caring Communities</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will utilise our membership of the Kent Connects partnership to provide fast and secure information exchanges vital to the success of partnership working in the District.</li> </ul>	<p>1.2 1.11</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council website will continue to be used to promote and consult on community safety issues, and provide a self service facility for citizens requesting services from the Council.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 1.12</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All other access channels, including social media and SMS text messaging, will be considered and used as appropriate to provide timely information to the community.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 1.12</p>
<p><b>2.1b Green and Healthy Environment</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Planning Portal and 1App system enables full interaction with citizens and is fully integrated to the National Planning Portal. This enables citizens to participate actively in the planning process, supported further by the Council’s own <i>Publicaccess for Planning</i> system, influencing their local environment.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council has signed up to the National Land Information Service (NLIS) and other search providers and is able to receive electronic requests for searches and will continue to work towards a fully automated system.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will seek to maximise the take up of Council services electronically, thereby eliminating the need for many postal or face-to-face interactions with their associated costs and environmental impact; this means we will be constantly seeking to enhance our website and self service systems.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1</p>



<b>2.1c Dynamic and Sustainable Economy</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-commerce can help firms to lower costs – in procurement, production, selling and distribution – as well as to stimulate the development of new markets and services.</li> </ul>	1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will continue to abide by the principles laid out in the West Kent Area Investment Strategy. The Strategy provides a comprehensive picture of the West Kent economy as well as setting a clear agenda for action for all economic agencies and ensuring that the area wins recognition of its needs. The Strategy sets out three strategic objectives, which we will endeavour to support by the use of technology in further enabling public services:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Support the development of entrepreneurship and businesses - More active promotion of entrepreneurship and help for existing local businesses to maximise their competitiveness and growth and, in the medium-term, a drive to seek to attract appropriate inward investment</li> <li>○ Support the development of labour force and skills base - Greater intervention in the labour market to address skills shortages and other constraints on the capacity of the West Kent economy to develop involving a focus on developing and expanding the FE/HE provision which already exists in West Kent to meet both current and emerging skills demand</li> <li>○ Support the development of connectivity - Investment to improve aspects of connectivity within West Kent including broadband.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.2
<b>2.1d Effective Management of Council Resources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will ensure that we follow best practice guidelines in the procurement, delivery and support of the Council's IT resources. This will include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Following Prince 2 methodology for all IT projects and IT elements of non-IT projects</li> <li>- Following ITIL (IT Infrastructure Library) approach to IT Service Management.</li> <li>- Storing all our information assets with respect to the guidance of the ISO/IEC 27000 series.</li> <li>- IT project and workload priorities to be set by IT Steering Group to ensure alignment with Council's own priorities, budgets and plans.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.9  1.9  1.9  1.4
<b>2.2 Serving Citizens, Members and Officers</b>	Link to Tier 1
<b>2.2a IT Services</b>	
<p>The IT and Facilities Management team has been subject to significant reductions in resources over recent years and is projected to reduce further over the period of this strategy in order to meet the Council's agreed 10 year budget. The team has been structured in a way that it will continue to commit to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a quality customer service</li> <li>• Display a flexible 'can do' attitude</li> <li>• Communicate effectively</li> <li>• Working with, rather than for, our customers</li> </ul> <p>Service Level Agreements are in place and these documents outline our commitment</p>	1.6

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### Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

to:	1.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform staff of all planned or other known about work that may affect system or network availability</li> </ul>	1.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse performance data and take proactive action to reduce downtime and minimise repeated incidents of problems</li> </ul>	1.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and where possible further improve speed and availability of the systems</li> </ul>	1.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share information with all members of Information &amp; Technology Services to achieve improved IT performance and responsiveness to customer problems. In addition, customers views will be assessed through formal surveys</li> </ul>	1.6
<b>2.2b Change Management and Business Transformation</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IT Service is committed to playing a major part in the review of all services with the aim of better utilising technology, flexible working and process redesign to transform the operation of the service and provide improved outcomes to the Community.</li> </ul>	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IT team will be involved in the identification, design, planning and implementation stages of reviewing all relevant services in order to produce the most effective outcomes.</li> </ul>	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4
<b>2.2c Flexible Working</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A strategy has been developed by the Council to aid the recruitment and retention of staff recognising the potential benefits that flexible working arrangements offer both the employee and the organisation.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote access to the Council's core systems is available in several forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to Council email available to all staff via a web based portal</li> <li>- Full access to Council systems for nominated home workers</li> <li>- Access to key information by Members through the Members' Portal</li> <li>- Mobile access to specific Council systems enabling Officers to provide services "on the move"</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will carry out further research and programmes required to improve "on the move" access to systems for those Officers with a genuine business requirement.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will endeavour to implement the most appropriate, cost effective mobile working solutions as they become available and required. This will include the use of suitable applications, hand held devices, laptops, mobile phones and tablet devices depending on needs of the customer but always ensuring full technical compatibility and remaining supportive of the overall strategic direction.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.10
<b>2.2d Training</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will provide incoming Members and Officers with suitable induction training based on the specific systems and services available to them.</li> </ul>	1.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff will be given the opportunities to develop e-skills. Having achieved Investors in People accreditation, the Council takes seriously the role of both training and developing staff to attain full potential.</li> </ul>	1.6 1.8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Officers have Internet access and will continue to be encouraged to utilise available networked training programmes on offer.</li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the IT and Facilities Management team will alert Human Resources of any training requirements required by specific Members or Officers highlighted through our Service Desk system.</li> </ul>	1.8
<b>2.2e GIS</b>	

Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) and mapping system that is used for various tasks, particularly within the Development Control and Land Charges service areas, to support decision making processes.</li> </ul>	1.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council is a member of the Public Sector Mapping Agreement (PSMA) for the supply, use and regular receipt of updated digital maps and information for the District. Access to these digital maps can be made available to staff requiring it.</li> </ul>	1.1 1.7 1.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wherever appropriate we will standardise our GIS and mapping applications on those provided by ESRI and GeoCortex, such as ArcGIS and ArcGIS Server, GeoCortex Essentials</li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will promote the use of Development Control and Licensing GIS information via the 'Public Access' website.</li> </ul>	1.1
<b>2.2f Uni-form</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will work to ensure that full value will be achieved through the significant investment the Council has made in the IDOX UNI-form system by using applicable modules to replace disparate systems where possible and appropriate. This system currently covers areas such as Planning, Environmental Health, Licensing and Land Charges</li> </ul>	1.3 1.10
<b>2.2g Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council will maintain a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) for the District in BS7666 format. This will be maintained through the Gazetteer Management System module in the UNI-form system supplied by IDOX.</li> </ul>	1.7 1.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The LLPG will be seen as the definitive land and property dataset for the District and will be maintained by the Information Systems team, within IT and Facilities Management.</li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daily updates will be provided to/from GeoPlace as the National Hub.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wherever appropriate we will standardise our land and property information systems on those provided within the UNI-form suite of applications.</li> </ul>	1.7
<b>2.2h EDMS and Workflow</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The use of Electronic Document Management Systems (EDMS) and workflow can provide integration between the customer-facing front office and the data processing back-office functions. It can also provide efficiency benefits by improving the back-office processes.</li> </ul>	1.7 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council currently uses EDMS and Workflow in Revenues and Benefits, Development Services, Building Control, Licensing, Finance, Land Charges and Electoral Services departments successfully.</li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further roll out to other areas will be considered on a case by case basis with appropriate regard to a business case. EDMS and Workflow has significantly enhanced our ability to undertake the administrative tasks associated with those services already using it and it will likely have a similar impact on the other service areas. Full integration with the relevant back-office system will form part of this plan where appropriate.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.7
<b>2.2i Customer Relationship Management (CRM)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council has researched and implemented the most appropriate and cost effective CRM solution - Lagan Frontline CRM - that integrates with core back-office systems. This will continue to be deployed to further service areas as appropriate and under the direction of the IT Steering Group.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.4 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CRM system will provide a single point of access to all citizen and property</li> </ul>	1.3

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### Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

information held within the Council.	
<b>2.2j Intranet</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council will use the corporate intranet as the main internal resource to find and share information.</li> </ul>	1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The intranet will be maintained, developed and enhanced by a combination of the IT team, service representatives and the IT Steering Group.</li> </ul>	1.6
<b>2.2k Procurement</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-Procurement saves time and resources. The Council will undertake those steps outlined in the Procurement Strategy that identified e-procurement as a key aim. Corporate purchase cards have been introduced and the electronic BACS system will be used for invoice payment where possible.</li> </ul>	1.1 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will continually review how enhanced use of e-procurement can be achieved and look to embrace the relevant national projects where appropriate.</li> </ul>	1.2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will support the Kent Connects partnership and Kent Buying Consortium in developing and utilising potential procurement systems for Kent-wide use.</li> </ul>	1.2 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will provide secure authenticated transactions for citizens choosing to use electronic access channels.</li> </ul>	1.1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will make use of Government Procurement Service agreed procurement programmes wherever available and beneficial to the Council.</li> </ul>	1.2 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All IT systems and services will be procured centrally through the IT and Facilities Management team to ensure value for money, consistency and quality assurance.</li> </ul>	1.6 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All IT payments systems will be maintained as PCI-DSS compliant where necessary</li> </ul>	1.9
<b>2.2l Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will continue to provide a robust, tested, secure, flexible solution and plan for use in the event of a disaster.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wherever possible consideration will be given to the procurement of these services jointly through the Kent Connects partnership, as is the current solution, to ensure maximum value for money.</li> </ul>	1.2 1.3 1.9 1.10 1.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will provide a suitable and cost effective solution to ensure business continuity in the event of minor system or process failure.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.6 1.10

<b>2.3 External Influences and Stakeholders</b>	Link to Tier 1
<b>2.3a Working in Partnership</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Council recognises that working in partnership can bring significant benefits in terms of improved services, economies of scale and access to initiatives which would be impractical for a single District authority. There is tremendous potential for the public and private sector to work together in mutually beneficial partnerships. Cost savings may be available, as could additional capacity and capability, resulting in improved services and increased customer satisfaction.</li> </ul>	1.5 1.10 1.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current examples of local partnership working include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environmental Health: Sevenoaks/Dartford</li> <li>- Fraud and Audit: Sevenoaks/Dartford</li> <li>- Revenues and Benefits: Sevenoaks/Dartford</li> <li>- Licensing: Sevenoaks/Tunbridge Wells/Maidstone</li> <li>- Development Control: Sevenoaks/Tunbridge Wells</li> <li>- Building Control: Sevenoaks/Tonbridge and Malling</li> <li>- Financial Systems: Sevenoaks/Tandridge</li> <li>- Bulk Printing: Sevenoaks/Dartford</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.5 1.10 1.11
<b>2.3b Kent Connects</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From a technology perspective, our key partnership is with Kent Connects. They provide a number of key projects to the Council in those areas where partnership working of this nature is most appropriate. All fourteen local authorities in Kent have joined together with other public service providers, including Kent emergency services, to set up a partnership that aims to link up people and public services. By identifying and improving the IT infrastructure across the county, Kent Connects is effectively removing the barriers to joined up working. It offers solutions to practical issues that are common to all Kent's public service organisations. In sharing the costs and the risks of this investment, partners are also sharing ideas, skills and expertise across the county.</li> </ul>	1.2 1.5 1.10 1.11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to Kent Connects, the Council will continue to establish partnerships with other local authorities, public services and private sector organisations where benefit for the Council can be achieved.</li> </ul>	1.2 1.5 1.10 1.11

<b>2.4 Technical Environment and Direction</b>	Link to Tier 1
<b>2.4a Network Infrastructure</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of Local Area Networks (LAN) within all Council offices and facilities requiring one. Each LAN to be Ethernet topology. A minimum of 100Mbps should be provided to the desktop, whilst working towards 1000Mbps where required.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of wireless network connections in all Council offices and facilities with a genuine requirement, including a separate "public" wireless network for access by non-council staff in the Argyle Road building.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of a Wide Area Network (WAN) linking the Argyle Road office to every Council office and facility, with appropriate bandwidth required for use.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of low cost backup solution to the WAN to enable some communication between the sites and some essential work to be performed when the main WAN is not operational.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.7 1.10

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### Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to the Kent Connects network to enable current and future joined up services to be provided with and between other local authorities in Kent.</li> </ul>	<p>1.2 1.3 1.5 1.11</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a corporate connection to the Internet with a minimum of 100Mbps bandwidth. Connection to be via the most cost effective and resilient route, which is currently via the Kent Public Services Network (KPSN). Need to monitor usage and plan for future requirements together with other Kent Connects partners.</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 1.2 1.3 1.11</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation on the use of CISCO routers throughout the Council, wherever practical, to enable compatibility, resilience and ease of installation and support.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation on the use of 3COM network switches throughout the Council, wherever practical, to enable value for money, compatibility, resilience, network monitoring and ease of installation and support.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3 1.10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a fit-for-purpose IP based Telephony system (VoIP) to ensure maximum compatibility with partners and value for money in terms of both equipment and call charges</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure design is such that it ensures capability is in place to accommodate voice as well as data traffic.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<b>2.4b Network Operation and Security</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The standard server operating system will be the latest proven Microsoft server operating system, currently Server 2008.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of firewalls and demilitarised zones (DMZ) where required to prevent unauthorised access to Council data from outside the authority.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of a unique username and password to each member of staff to gain access to the network. Renewal of network passwords will be enforced at an appropriate interval. Separate username and/or password security will also be required for access to specific operational applications.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff, members and contractors will be directed to a copy of the Council's IT Security Policy which must be adhered to.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-virus protection to servers and PCs will be maintained with the most appropriate and effective solution.</li> </ul>	<p>1.3 1.9</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The IT Infrastructure and systems will be maintained as per the standards required of the Government Connects Code of Connection</li> </ul>	<p>1.9</p>
<b>2.4c Desktop Facilities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where required and authorised, each Officer to be provided with a desktop PC or laptop purchased from the Council's main supplier at the time.</li> </ul>	<p>1.7</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewal of desktop PCs and laptops to be on an appropriate cycle to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose at the same time as maximising value for money.</li> </ul>	<p>1.7 1.10</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCs and laptops to run the Microsoft operating system, which will be standardised on Windows 7 but will be updated as appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>1.7</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each member of staff using a PC will normally have access to the following facilities as a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- MS Outlook (for email, calendar, contacts, tasks etc)</li> <li>- MS Office (for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access)</li> <li>- MS Internet Explorer (for access to the Internet)</li> <li>- Intranet</li> <li>- Adobe Acrobat reader</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>1.7</p>

Tier 2: Actions and commitments in support of the Strategy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Central network drives for document storage</li> <li>- Access to suitable printing solutions</li> <li>- Any other licensed software application where requirements exist (e.g. MS Project)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications will be deployed through the use of Citrix thin-client technology.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to the Internet will be provided to all staff, subject to compliance with the IT Security Policy guidelines around acceptable Internet usage.</li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation on the use of Canon Multifunction printers throughout the Council, wherever practical, to enable value for money, compatibility, resilience and ease of installation and support.</li> </ul>	1.7 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewal of printers and other desktop equipment will be on an ad-hoc basis when necessary. Criteria for renewal will include increasing unreliability, current/future incompatibility, excessive maintenance costs or no longer meeting business needs.</li> </ul>	1.7 1.10
<b>2.4d Servers</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All central servers will be located within a secured environment, with appropriate power, air conditioning and space.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardisation on DELL servers running a VMWare virtual environment to ensure value for money, compatibility, resilience and ease of installation and support.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All central server data will be backed up on a daily basis according to the back up procedures and the latest copies will be secured in a fire proof safe located in an appropriate location onsite. Previous weekly and monthly copies of data will be stored in the fireproof safe located in a secure offsite location.</li> </ul>	1.3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Servers will be renewed on a 3-5 year replacement programme where appropriate.</li> </ul>	1.3 1.10
<b>2.4e Applications</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to the standard desktop applications, certain Council staff have access to various systems where a business need has been highlighted. Amongst others these may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNI-form</li> <li>- IDOX Electronic Document Management System</li> <li>- Lagan Frontline Customer Relationship Management System</li> <li>- Agresso Financial Management System</li> <li>- Committee Minutes System</li> <li>- Covalent Performance Management System</li> <li>- Selima Payroll / HR</li> <li>- Strand Electoral services</li> <li>- BACS-IP (Albany)</li> <li>- Capita Academy Revenues and Benefits System</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1.7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council will be committed to reducing the number of ad-hoc systems deployed within the Council to reduce support overheads, improve consistency of service and remove duplication of similar systems with particular attention given to ensuring that full value for money is gained from our commitment to the UNI-form suite of applications.</li> </ul>	1.1 1.10

## Tier 3: Development Plan 2012-2015

	Actions	Target	By When	Link to Tier two
<b>3.1 Service Performance</b>				
3.1a	Maintain IT Service Desk customer satisfaction (see 2.1d)	95% expressing themselves “satisfied” or “very satisfied”	Ongoing	2.2a
3.1b	Work with Human Resources to ensure all staff have received adequate training in the full use of core office systems	100%	Ongoing	2.2d
3.1c	Achieve agreed level of Service Desk calls resolved with agreed timescales	90% of Service Desk calls resolved within agreed timescales	Ongoing	2.2a
<b>3.2 Infrastructure</b>				
3.2a	Replace user workstations within appropriate timescales to ensure fit-for-purpose hardware	100%	Ongoing	2.4c
3.2b	Replace existing Citrix servers within appropriate timescales to ensure fit-for-purpose hardware	New servers built, tested and live	April 2012	2.4c 2.4d
3.2c	Identify new business partners and develop detailed rules of engagement	New partners identified	Ongoing	2.3e
3.2d	Maintain a single integrated infrastructure for data, voice and image	System maintained and tested to provide single voice/data/image infrastructure	Ongoing	2.2b 2.4a
3.2e	Research, procure and deploy replacement core network infrastructure.	Existing core infrastructure replaced and successfully deployed	March 2014	2.1d 2.2c 2.2k 2.4a
<b>3.3 Applications</b>				
3.3a	Upgrade MS Office suite of applications to 2010	All MS Office products upgraded to 2010	December 2012	2.4c



3.3b	Migrate all appropriate remaining payment types onto new automated telephone payments system	New automated telephone payments system improving efficiency in processing transactions	March 2013	2.1d 2.2b 2.2i
3.3c	Deploy self service e-forms and knowledge solution to the corporate website	Solution deployed and more services available through self-service to citizens.	April 2012	2.1a/b 2.2b/i
3.3d	Review and redevelop intranet system (SiMON)	System is up to date and provides an efficient source of information to all service areas	March 2013	2.1d 2.2j 2.4e
<b>3.4 Project Management</b>				
3.4a	Prince 2 methodology and templates used by SDC to be reviewed to ensure they continue to meet the Council's Project Management needs	Templates to be amended where appropriate	January 2013	2.1d
3.4b	Continue to provide meaningful, clear reports to IT Steering Group on progress of IT projects as well as the IT elements of non-IT projects through Covalent.	Format of reports approved and used comprehensively	Ongoing	2.1d
<b>3.5 Local and National Projects</b>				
3.5a	Contribute to and make full use of Kent Connects programme	Achieve efficiency gains and cost savings in yet to be determined areas	Immediately and ongoing	2.2b 2.3f
3.5b	Research and make full use of national projects available to SDC and also make SDC available for national pilot projects	Achieve efficiency gains and cost savings in yet to be determined areas	Immediately and ongoing	2.2b 2.3c
<b>3.6 Administration and Security</b>				
3.6a	Reduce the amount of printed output through awareness and promotion of alternatives	15% reduction (based on the quantity of paper used)	March 2013	2.1d
3.6b	Maintain an up to date IT Security Policy and related documents	Ensure information held by SDC is secure in an appropriate manner in accordance with ISO guidance	Ongoing	2.1d 2.4b
3.6c	Continually consider Council's overall financial position and the	Ensure annual budget targets are achieved without	Ongoing	2.2k

	financial implications on the annual budget and the medium and long term financial plans	negative impact on service delivery through the use of monthly monitoring and annual planning		
3.6d	Complete annual Government Connects CoCo requirements and submit document	Compliance with all CoCo requirements	March 2012 and Ongoing	2.1d 2.3a
<b>3.7 UNI-form and GIS</b>				
3.7a	Complete data capture exercise for Total Land Charges (TLC)	100% of all data available within TLC system	December 2012	2.2g
3.7b	Upgrade Uni-form system to 8.2 to ensure continued support and reliability	Upgrade completed and tested	June 2012	2.2f 2.4e
3.7c	Implement and develop replacement Intranet and Internet Mapping solution	System implemented and tested to provide mapping to staff and the public	March 2012	2.2e 2.2f 2.4e
<b>3.8 Flexible Working</b>				
3.8a	Deploy a softphone solution to expand flexible/remote working while reducing costs to the Council	Achieve efficiency gains and cost savings, scope yet to be determined	September 2012	2.2b 2.2c

## Summary and Conclusions

The 2009-2012 IT Strategy and Plan has enabled the IT Service to become a key enabler in the transformation of services across the Council. In this period, the IT Service has played a fundamental role in assisting the Council to achieve the following:

- Level 4 2009 Use of Resources (Audit Commission Rating)
- Investors in People Gold Status
- 2010 Best Public Sector Place to Work – Best Local Authority
- Licensing Partnership (Sevenoaks/Tunbridge Wells/Maidstone)
- Shared Revenues and Benefits Service (Sevenoaks/Dartford)
- IRRV Silver Award for Excellence in Partnership Working
- Shared Audit, Risk and Anti-Fraud Service (Sevenoaks/Dartford)
- A new Community Safety Unit and Reception space shared with Police
- Bulk Printing Service for Dartford BC

The 2012-2015 IT Strategy and Plan sets out to continue this level of performance. We aim to achieve the delivery of the Council's vision whilst maintaining the smallest IT team in the County and an IT Revenue budget which, based on 2010 figures, was 6.9% of the Council's total net budget as compared to a National Average of 9.2% for Shire Districts.<sup>1</sup>

This will be achieved in an environment where business agility, the ability to deliver business transformation, is key to the success of delivering improving public services in a recessionary economic environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) benchmarking figures 2010

### Glossary of Terms

BACS (Bankers' Automated Clearing Services) - the not-for-profit, membership-based industry body is owned by 16 of the leading banks and building societies in the UK, Europe and US. Responsible for the schemes behind the clearing and settlement of automated payments in the UK including Direct Debit and BACS Direct Credit.

CSU - The Sevenoaks District Community Safety Unit (CSU) is a new initiative jointly run by Sevenoaks District Council and West Kent Police and is based in Sevenoaks District Council's Argyle Road Offices. Residents can use the unit to report various Community Safety Issues.

DMZ - (sometimes referred to as a perimeter network) is a physical or logical subnetwork that contains and exposes an organisation's external services to a larger untrusted network, usually the Internet. The purpose of a DMZ is to add an additional layer of security to an organisation's local area network (LAN).

Ethernet - A family of computer networking technologies for local area networks (LANs) commercially introduced in 1980.

FE/HE – Further Education/Higher Education

Firewall - a device or set of devices designed to permit or deny network transmissions based upon a set of rules, frequently used to protect networks from unauthorised access while permitting legitimate communications to pass.

FM – Facilities Management

GIS – Geographical Information Systems. Systems used for plotting data to produce a map based output.

Government Procurement Service - Government Procurement Service is an executive agency of the Cabinet Office. It's overall priority is to provide procurement savings for the UK Public Sector as a whole.

ISO/IEC - the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and by the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) who in this context publish information security standards

IT/ICT – Information Technology/Information and Communication Technology

LAN - A local area network (LAN) is a computer network that interconnects computers in a limited area such as an office building. The defining characteristics of LANs, in contrast to wide area networks (WANs), include their usually higher data-transfer rates, smaller geographic area, and lack of a need for leased telecommunication lines.

LDF (Local Development Framework) - a set of local planning documents, which set out the strategy for future development in Sevenoaks District.

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PCI DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard - an information security standard for organisations that handle cardholder information for debit and credit cards.

Prince 2 - (PProjects IN Controlled Environments) is a process-based method for effective project management. PRINCE2 is a de facto standard used extensively by the UK Government and is widely recognised and used in the private sector, both in the UK and internationally.

Softphone - A softphone is a software program for making telephone calls over the Internet using a general purpose computer, rather than using dedicated hardware. Often a softphone is designed to behave like a traditional telephone, sometimes appearing as an image of a phone, with a display panel and buttons with which the user can interact. A softphone is usually used with a headset connected to the PC.

SiMON – The council's internal intranet, providing information to officers.

VoIP - Voice over Internet Protocol (Voice over IP, VoIP) is a family of technologies, methodologies, communication protocols, and transmission techniques for the delivery of voice communications and multimedia sessions over Internet Protocol (IP) networks, such as the Internet or an internal company network.

WAN - A wide area network (WAN) is a telecommunication network that covers a broad area. Business and government entities utilise WANs to relay data among employees, clients, buyers, and suppliers from various geographical locations. In essence this mode of telecommunication allows a business to effectively carry out its daily function regardless of location.

WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive) - is the European Community directive on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) which became European Law in February 2003, setting collection, recycling and recovery targets for all types of electrical goods.

# Sevenoaks District Information Technology Strategy & Plan 2012-15

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