



The Kent Agreement

Serving Kent Together



Foreword

All of us working in public services want to deliver better services to the people of Kent. However well we think we are doing, there is always more that can be achieved – and we are all increasingly aware that a key part of achieving this is for our individual organisations to work much more closely together.

With this in mind we have joined together to form the Kent Public Service Board. We share a vision for Kent and a determination to improve public services and the quality of life in our county.

This vision is reflected in the Kent Agreement, which comprises the Kent Local Area Agreement and the Kent Public Service Agreement. The Kent Agreement sets out targets that require all of our organisations to work together if we are to achieve them.

It is this coming together that has resulted in initiatives such as the Supporting Independence Programme, an attempt to bring agencies across the county together to help people achieve independent and more fulfilling lives.

These initiatives will be driven forward by the Kent Partnership and the Kent Public Service Board. Joined-up working has come a long way – but there is much more to be done. This document attempts to set the scene.

The Kent Public Service Board

Foreword



Introduction

Introduction

Local Authorities, the police and fire services, health agencies, Jobcentre Plus, other government agencies, voluntary organisations and the private sector are all playing their part in a major and long-term campaign to build a better future for the people of Kent.

These organisations are responsible for our schools and hospitals. They police our streets and help people find work, recover from disability, look after their children, escape the benefits trap, learn new skills and make all those other life changes that can lead to a better future for individuals and communities. They are all now committed to working together for a common goal, sharing resources and expertise, ideas and solutions to help people achieve the independence that allows them to look forward with confidence to the future. To achieve this and turn targets into real life-changing improvements in the services offered to Kent residents, forums such as the Kent Partnership and the Kent Public Service Board have been established.

The Vision for Kent (V4K) is the shared vision of the Kent Partnership. It is a long-term vision of where we want Kent to be in 20 years' time (see www.kent.gov.uk/vision/contents.html for more information). The Kent Agreement supports the Vision for Kent and provides a focus for delivering the key building blocks from which the vision will be realised.

This brochure is designed for all the people who work in the partner organisations. It is the Kent Partnership and the Public Service Board that bring together the people who can make a difference. The Supporting Independence Programme binds the people and the initiatives together in a clear and simple goal of making lives better, but is by no means the only initiative that aims to improve lives. All of the partner organisations are driving forward initiatives designed to improve services.



The Kent Partnership is made up of representatives from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors. It directs and oversees progress on the Vision for Kent and has a key role in encouraging community leadership, new initiatives and the effective delivery of services.

The Kent Public Service Board is accountable to the Kent Partnership. It was established in September 2004 and brings together the key public sector decision-makers in Kent. The bodies represented have a combined annual budget of about £7 billion.

The board's role is to support the Kent Partnership in realising the Vision for Kent and to bring Kent's public services together to support this aim. Board members will make sure that the various agencies' policies, services and budgets are committed, where necessary, to initiatives that need joint action. They will help to achieve the targets set out in the Kent Agreement and help Kent make the most effective use of all the public expenditure across the county. The aim is to create added value and improved services through better co-ordination, innovation and joint working across local public services and with government.

The Kent Partnership

The Kent Public Service Board

New opportunities

The Kent Agreement

It is no surprise to find that public bodies across Kent want to provide better services to the public. That is, after all, the reason for their very existence. They are working together as partners to maximise their effectiveness and to achieve common goals.

The Kent Agreement comprises the **Local Area Agreement** (LAA) and the **Local Public Service Agreement** (LPSA).

The Kent Agreement was signed on 25 July 2005. It sets out the outcomes and targets that will need to be achieved and how the agencies will work together in the drive to join up services across the county.

Widespread consultation with all the Kent partners has resulted in a set of key priorities for the agreement. They are:

- Thriving young children**
- Motivated children in excellent schools**
- Pathways to employment**
- Healthy living**
- Stable and independent families**
- Independent living for older people**
- Helping vulnerable people to help themselves**
- Work as the best form of welfare**
- Clean Kent and safe Kent**
- Personal security (violence, abuse and aggression)**
- Active communities**
- Quality regeneration**
- Growth in Kent**
- Dynamic Kent**
- An effective public sector**

It is achieving these key priorities that is driving the work of the Kent Public Service Board and the Kent Partnership.

Kent is again leading the way. It was one of the first areas to agree a Local Area Agreement (LAA). It has been signed by government and endorsed by all of the partners in Kent. It is designed to underpin the relationships and the partnerships that are needed to deliver the county's key priorities and set out what must be done to deliver them.

The essence of the agreement is the need for all the Kent partners to work together towards a set of outcomes that will make a real and lasting difference to the people of Kent. Those outcomes are:

Children and young people

- 1 To promote the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of young children so they flourish at home and at school
- 2 To significantly improve performance in literacy and numeracy in primary schools
- 3 To improve the education of children in care
- 4 To improve the behavioural, emotional and social stability of children
- 5 To increase attendance in primary schools
- 6 To increase the number of young people who have the skills and vocational qualifications for work
- 7 To improve participation and engagement by all children and young people in youth, cultural and community activities

Outcomes



Outcomes

Safer and stronger communities

- 9 To make Kent a safer place in which to work, live and travel (Safe Kent)
- 10 To reduce crime by 15%
- 11 To reduce the harm caused by substance misuse (especially alcohol and drugs), including substantially increasing the number of drug misusing offenders entering treatment through the CJS (criminal justice system?)
- 12 To reassure the public by reducing the fear of crime and antisocial behaviour and by improving public confidence in the criminal justice system.
- 14 Cleaner and greener public spaces (Clean Kent)

Outcomes

Healthier communities and older people

- 15 To promote independence through employment for those who are able to work
- 16 To promote the health of Kent's residents and reduce health inequalities by addressing variations in health across the county
- 18 To promote independent living for all



Economic Development and Sustainable Communities

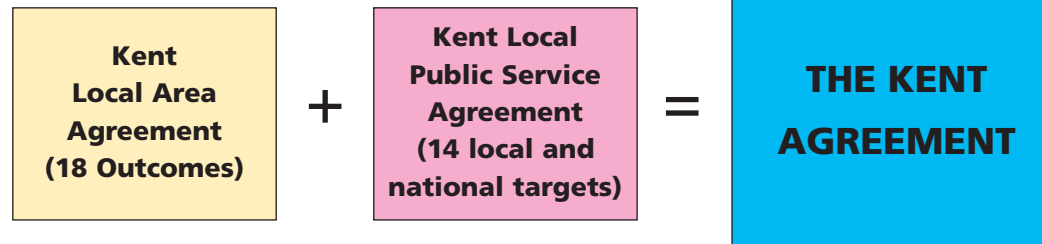
- 8 To develop the economic prosperity of Kent
- 13 To increase the capacity of local communities so that people are empowered to participate in local decision-making and are able to influence service delivery
- 17 To improve Kent residents' access to homes of excellent quality, in the right place, at the right time and at the right cost

Outcomes

The Kent agreement includes key targets agreed jointly between the Kent partners and government. These targets are designed to be challenging but achievable and they reflect a move towards preventing problems arising rather than simply tackling problems at a later stage.

The agreement goes well beyond being a simple list of targets. Government offers a Performance Reward Grant for meeting the LPSA targets, together with the opportunity to negotiate freedom from regulation and prescription. Success in the first LPSA, which ended in April 2005, brought with it a Performance Reward Grant of around £21 million.

The Kent Agreement brings Kent's partners together to work for the people of the county with the aim of increasing independence and raising personal fulfillment.



The Kent Agreement includes at least one target for the main partnerships with the health service, the police, district councils and the fire service, and all the targets are linked to the key priorities agreed by the partners. All of the targets within the LPSA are embedded in the Local Area Agreement. Taken together, these two agreements form the Kent Agreement.

The Kent Agreement is complex and will be challenging to deliver. It involves many different partners, including the county council, 12 district councils, multiple primary care trusts and local strategic partnerships, three growth area delivery boards, four area partnerships and 12 crime and disorder reduction partnerships – and many more. The agreement is not an end in itself but the beginning of a process of learning and working together.

Improving lives

Supporting Independence is about giving people the opportunity to take control of their lives and their destiny. It might involve helping them to find a job, get back into work or join a training course. The aim is to help them achieve some structure and purpose in their lives and to take control of their future and their family's destiny.

The Supporting Independence Programme brings together a wide range of organisations within Kent and beyond which have a part to play in delivering this goal. From education and social services professionals to health workers and probation staff, the wide-ranging yet simple focus of the initiative impacts on agencies across the county and provides the focus that binds them together in working to make life better for the people of Kent.

The programme has set out a number of groups of people who need particular help to become more independent. They are illustrated in the chart opposite.



The Supporting Independence Programme



Some facts and figures

School leavers with low educational attainment – At summer 2004, there were 1,061 young people not achieving five A to G GCSEs, which is 6.56 per cent of all year 11 pupils in that year. This was down from 1,859 in 2003.

Adult and youth offenders – In May 2005 there were 86 live proceedings against young offenders (aged 10 – 17 years) in the KCC area. This compares with 108 in May 2004.

Young people in care / leaving care – At March 2005 there were 2,486 'looked-after children' in Kent.

Lone parents – At August 2004 there were 15,805 lone parents claiming Income Support (IS) – 1.9 per cent of Kent's working age population. These figures reflect a continuing year-on-year decrease in rates of lone parents on IS over the past 24 months – an 8.3 per cent decrease since August 2002.

People lacking basic skills including life skills, social skills and those with a low level of literacy or numeracy – At Census 2001 there were 32,056 25- to 49-year-olds with no qualifications who were not in education, employment or training.

People with alcohol or substance addictions – According to the Adult Drug Treatment Plan for Kent 2005/06, 2,947 people were in treatment for drug and alcohol problems during 2004/05 – that's 0.2% of the population.



Some facts and figures

People with health problems, learning or physical disabilities who are on, or are applying for, long-term incapacity benefit – At August 2004 there were 47,520 people of working age on Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) - 5.7% of the 16-64 population. This compares to 46,775 (5.64%) in 2003 and 46,745 (5.6%) in 2002. At August 2004 there were 18,535 disabled people claiming Income Support.

Transient or seasonal populations – In January 2005 there were 806 asylum seekers in Kent. This figure shows a reduction of 564 since September 2004, when there were 1,370. There were the equivalent of 2,711 households classified as statutorily homeless in Kent.

Long-term (six months or more) unemployed aged 50-plus – In June 2005 there were 1,165 Job Seekers Allowance claimants aged over 50 who had been claiming for more than six months. This is 0.47% of the 50 – 64-year-old population in Kent. This total represents a peak after a continued rise since February, from a low of 1,035. However, this is only a rise from 0.42% of the 50+ population.

Vulnerable older people – At March 2005 there were 10,546 people aged 65 and over who were receiving help to live at home – this is 4.62% of the 65+ population in Kent. This represents a very small decrease of six people from 10,552 in April 2004.

Many different public and voluntary bodies provide support to these groups of people – helping them is not a new idea. The problem in the past has been that the various agencies have not always worked together as effectively as they could, which has meant that services have not achieved maximum effectiveness.

The organisations working in this field need to devise policies which support each other, pool their resources and work together if they are to achieve maximum impact and help as many people as possible. The Supporting Independence Programme has brought these groups together and is already making a difference across Kent.

While working together is clearly important, it can only be achieved if there are common goals and targets – and that is the role of the Kent Agreement. Supporting Independence is not the only initiative aimed at improving lives. All of the partners on the Public Service Board are contributing to this and have actively embraced this challenge. For example:

The Kent Agreement is an exciting opportunity to enable positive change and improvement and is one that Kent Police has seized. Kent Police acknowledges the diversity and uniqueness of the county it serves. Our community deserves the best service available and by embracing this cross-cutting public sector agreement they are assuring the county's policing future.

The Kent Agreement will strengthen existing partnerships, facilitate greater public service co-operation to tackle anti-social behavior and reduce crime, thereby increasing the percentage of people in the county who not only feel safe but also are safe. Partnership working has a proven track record for delivering success in an innovative and focused way. The partnership approach inculcated within this new agreement has already driven forward a number of initiatives:

- Alcohol abuse by children and young adults has been identified as both a crime driver and a concern within society. Working together with the health service, Kent Drug and Alcohol Action Team and the private sector, Kent Police will be putting into place practical interventions to address this problem.

Police



Police

- By creating an environment of opportunity, Kent Probation will be working together with colleagues leading “clean” and “safe” Kent initiatives in both urban and rural areas, thereby improving the lives, recreational opportunities and safety of Kent communities.

Both Kent Police and the Kent Police Authority are actively supporting this innovative partnership agreement, which represents a further and major step forwards in helping to improve the lives, and support the independence, of the people of Kent. This is directly in line with the Kent Police vision:

“We will work with partners to create a safe environment for everyone in Kent, where the public feel protected by a visible and accessible police service displaying a sincere commitment to reducing crime and disorder.”

Health

The NHS is mid-way through a radical and ambitious ten-year improvement plan, with greatly improved access to services and a 56% increase in funding nationally in the five years to 2007/08. **Creating a patient-led NHS** aims to help patients make choices and take control of their health and healthcare. Those choices will ensure services listen and respond to patients to provide personalised care, supported by the biggest IT programme in the world which will hold records, keep test results, and make x-rays and other imaging accessible at the click of a mouse.



Health

At the same time, people with long-term conditions, who make the most use of healthcare services, will be helped to take a bigger role in managing their own health.

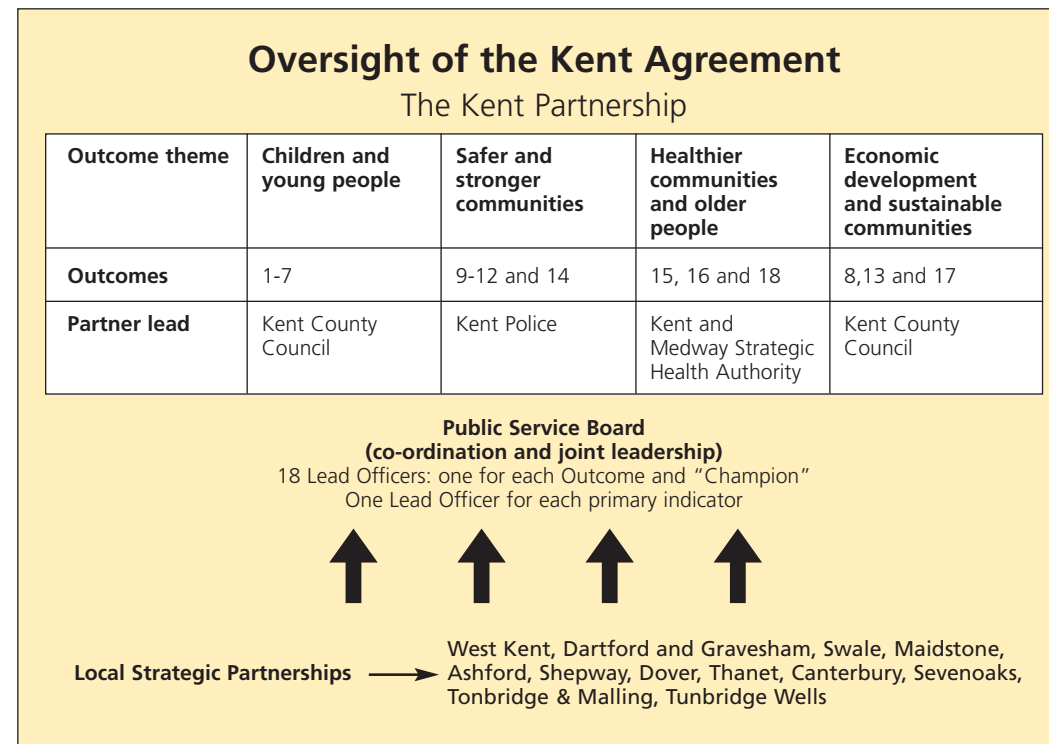
The White Paper **Choosing health: making healthy choices easier** sees the NHS as a true health improvement service, as well as an organisation that treats sickness, and it recognises that improving public health needs contributions from local government, the police, the NHS and other partners. There are five key priorities: reducing the number of people who smoke, reducing obesity, improving sexual health, improving mental health and wellbeing and encouraging sensible drinking, alongside the importance of reaching those most at risk of poor health.

Best of Health is a new five-strand programme to improve Kent and Medway's NHS services. It comprises:

- An Academy – to develop staff capacity and capability
- Awards, presented annually, to recognise excellence and spread good practice
- A Cabinet of clinicians, patients, NHS and social care managers, voluntary and private sector partners to inspire and drive improvement
- Quarterly workshops to help frontline clinical and support staff tackle top priorities. This year they will focus on infection control, diagnostics, care for people with long-term conditions and waiting times for community health services.
- Funds to target people and resources to tackle the biggest challenges.

Making it happen

This document has introduced the various elements of the better Kent that the partners involved are committed to creating. The Public Service Board and the Kent Partnership bring those partners together to achieve the outcomes and targets set out in the Kent Agreement.



The Economic Development and Sustainable Communities block does not appear as a formal outcome block in the Kent Agreement



To ensure that all of the outcomes in the Kent Agreement are achieved, detailed work is being driven forward by the Public Service Board on developing specific targets to support each of the outcomes and developing work programmes to ensure that the targets can be met. The illustration above shows how the outcomes are being grouped together and which partners are leading on the outcome themes. This is not to say that the other partners are taking a back seat. Far from it – all of the Public Service Board members and the voluntary sector partners in the county will play a critical role in making this improvement happen.

And who are the people who will create a better, brighter, more independent future for the people of Kent? You, the readers of this brochure. It is the everyday work, care and commitment of every one of the people involved in the frontline delivery of services across Kent that will make the real difference. Plans, agreements, partnership and targets have a major part to play, but it is the workforce – professional, caring, committed and dedicated people working across the county in scores of individual organisations – that will, in the end, help to create new and better opportunities for the people of Kent.

Contacts

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Kent Partnership Members

The Leader and Chief Executive of Kent County Council

The Chairman and Director of the Kent and Medway Economic Board

Leaders and Chief Executives of district councils

The Chief Fire Officer and Chief Constable

The Chairman of the Learning and Skills Council

The Chair of the Kent and Medway Strategic Health Authority

Private sector leaders from Pfizer, Saga, Land Securities, MORI, the Federation of Small Businesses and chambers of commerce

The Director of the South East Environment Agency

The Team Manager of English Nature

Voluntary sector representatives from the Council of Voluntary Youth Services, North

West Kent Racial Equality Council and Community Action Network

Kent Association of Parish Councils

Vice Chancellor of the University of Kent

The Bishop of Dover, representing Churches Together in Kent

The Managing Director of the Port of Dover

Representatives from South East England Development Agency, Government Office for the South East and Medway Council

Kent Public Service Board Members

Chairman, Kent Partnership

Chief Executive, Kent & Medway Strategic Health Authority

PCT Collaborative Representative

Chief Executive, Learning & Skills Council

Vice Chancellor, University of Kent (HEKAM)

District Manager, Job Centre Plus

Chief Constable, Kent Police

Chief Fire Officer, Kent Fire & Rescue Service

Director for South East, Government Office for the South East

Chief Executive, South East England Development Agency

Chief Executive, Ashford Borough Council

Chief Executive, Dover District Council

Chief Executive, Kent County Council

