

Kent Partnership Bulletin



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INDEX (You may need to press the Ctrl key and click to activate the link)

[Adult Services](#)

[Children & Family](#)

[Communities](#)

[Consultation papers](#)

[Education](#)

[Employment](#)

[Environment, Highways & Waste](#)

[Finance](#)

[Government](#)

[Health](#)

[Local Government](#)

[Parliamentary Business](#)

[Regeneration](#)

Consultation papers

Third sector strategic funding and investment review

The Department of Health is undertaking a funding and investment review to develop a strategic framework for its investment in the third sector that transforms current arrangements into a strategic portfolio of investment that more explicitly supports delivery of the Department's objectives and priorities.

Open until 20 March 2008.

(Also see:

[House of Commons Statement](#))

The New Place Survey: Consultation

This consultation document sets out the Government's 1.1 s proposals for a new survey to be undertaken by local authorities. This new survey will replace the Best Value User Satisfaction Survey (and also the Planning, Benefits and Library surveys).

Open until 8 February 2008.

(Also see:

[Public to set local priorities](#))

[Back to top](#)

Local Government

Communities Secretary Hazel Blears and LGA Chairman Sir Simon Milton signed a [Central-Local Concordat](#) on Wednesday.

It says that 'Councils have the right to lead the delivery of public services in their area and shape its future without unnecessary direction or control' and that both local and central government have the responsibility to 'devolve power and engage and empower communities and individual citizens - in debate and decision making and in shaping and delivering services.'

It presents a framework of how central and local government will deliver and work together

The LGA Chairman, Sir Simon Milton, [said](#) at the signing that NHS and police should be more accountable to their local communities

(Also see:

[New Local Government Network \(NLGN\) comment](#)

[Council leaders demand power to sack failing police and hospital chiefs](#)

[Councils should get powers to appoint and dismiss police and NHS chiefs](#))

While it is reported that the LGA was in last minute talks with the Government over the recent finance settlement – and this could have prevented the Concordat from being signed off

(Finance battle begins (Local Government Chronicle (LGC), 13.12.07, front page)

The LGA have this week published - [A councillor's guide to the new Local Area Agreements \(LAAs\)](#)

It gives some illustrations of what some council's want to achieve through them.

However it is reported that Hazel Blears is not happy about some of the proposals - notably of funding.

(Also see:

Blears sceptical over report (Local Government Chronicle (LGC), 13.12.07, page 4)

The LGA has publishes a list of '[100 banned words](#)' which it suggests should not be used in council communications for risk of alienating the public

(Also see:

[100 banned words](#))

A new LGIU pamphlet [Greening Growth -how local government can build the green economy](#) says that councils must work to integrate their policies on economic growth and development with those on promoting environmental sustainability

The Councillors' Commission published its Report - [Representing the future: The report of the Councillors Commission](#) on Monday

'The report sets out 61 proposals to transform local councils as well as encourage greater participation in local elections including lowering the voting age to 16 and creating regional Local Government Days when all seats for authorities in those areas are contested on the same day.'

It seeks to raise the profile of being a councillor, how to be elected and how councils communicate what they actually do.

(Also see:

[Councillors Commission backs action at local levels to rebuild trust between citizen and state](#)

[LGA Response](#))

All councils will have access to a new branding scheme that the LGA has devised.

'The new brand called 'My Council' is designed to demonstrate to residents the wide range of services that councils provide and how local authorities deliver value for money.'

[\(New brand for local government launched\)](#)

The Department for Communities and Local Government have published - [The Department for Communities and Local Government's Public Bodies 2007](#)

The Local Government Chronicle (LGC) carries an article this week on Local Area Agreements and Multi Area Agreements and what they actually translate to in practice – *Everyone in agreement?* (LGC, 13.12.07, pages 16 – 19)

[Back to top](#)

[Education](#)

The Government published a new ten year [Children's Plan](#) on Tuesday
[Summary](#)

Some key points:

- Provide two expert parenting advisers in every local authority;
 - Every child will have a personal tutor and acts as a main contact for parents;
 - Provide more family learning;
 - Improve the quality of teaching for children with SEN;
 - Create a new Parents Panels and Parents Councils;
 - Help families in which children care for others;
 - Offer new 'age not stage' tests, as a trial, with a view to replace Key Stage tests at ages 11 and 14;
 - Allocate £25 million over the next three years to an [Every Child a Writer](#) programme;

 - Develop a personal progress record on childrens development - from the early years to primary school;
 - Nursery care is to be rolled out to children of two years and above and subsidised places will be on offer for disadvantaged families.
 - Invest £117 million over the next three years in the early years workforce;

 - Pilot new forms of alternative provision. Create further '[studio](#)' schools to give specialist tuition. Excluded pupils will be offered more vocational courses.
 - Ask Sir Alan Steer to review progress since his report and the effectiveness of behaviour partnerships;
 - LEA's to collect and publish performance data for pupils not on a school roll;
 - Invest £160 million, over the next two years, to improve activities for young people;
 - Invest £20 million, over the next three years, on [Acceptable Behaviour Contracts](#) to ensure young people receive support at the same time as an ASBOs;
- (The Ministry of Justice is to pilot a [Youth Restorative Justice Disposal](#) in 2008, to deal with first time offenders committing low level offences and a forthcoming report by the Institute for Public Policy Research (ippr) will say that 'ASBO culture' can become a self-fulfilling prophecy and that ASBOs for young people should be made more effective'.
- ['ASBO culture' making kids criminals](#)
[Thinktank calls for use of ASBOs to be reviewed](#))
- Review sex and relationships education.
 - Legislate to raise the participation age to 17 from 2013 and 18 from 2015;

 - Offer every LEA funding that would allow up to 3,500 playgrounds nationally to be rebuilt or renewed and made accessible to children with disabilities;
 - Encourage local authorities to create 20mph zones to assist in reducing child pedestrian deaths by 70 per cent.

'It also means a new leadership role for [Children's Trusts](#), a new role for schools as the centre of their communities, and more effective links between schools, the NHS and other children's services so that together they can engage parents and tackle all the barriers to the learning, health and happiness of every child.'

(*Children's trusts play more central role in services* (Local Government Chronicle (LGC), 13.12.07, page 3)

The Children's Plan details the following to be published in 2007/08 –

- A play strategy (summer 2008);
- A Child Health Strategy (spring 2008);
- The Staying Safe Action Plan (early 2008);
- Guidance within the [Building Schools for the Future](#) programme - so that new buildings allocate space for co-located services;
- A youth alcohol action plan (spring 2008), at a similar time to the new Drugs Strategy;
- A Green Paper (in 2008) on young offenders education in and when they leave custody;
- A Children's Workforce Action Plan (early 2008), looking at all who work with children and young people;
- Publish a consultation on reducing the size of governing bodies;
- Consult on creating a new independent regulator of qualifications (before the end of 2007);
- A consultation on transferring funding for 16–19 learning from the Learning and Skills Council to LEAs (early 2008);
- Commission an independent assessment of the impact of the commercial world on children's wellbeing.

The Government have also unveiled a review of mental health services for children and young people
[\(Balls and Johnson announce review of child and adolescent mental health services\)](#)
[Government launches review of child mental health services\)](#)

(Also see:

[Ed Balls launches plan for children](#)
[The Children's Plan: blueprint for a generation](#)
[Children's Plan - Age by age breakdown](#)
[Health services to be located in schools](#)
[Schools will have to make room for social workers and the police](#)
[All school pupils to get a behaviour mentor](#)
[Teachers: We can't correct all society's ills](#)
[Plan for children being unveiled](#)
[Balls puts parent power at heart of schools blueprint](#)

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) have said that [education must be made a priority in the Children's Plan](#)
[National Union of Teachers say Children's Plan is flawed](#)

Ed Balls also gave a [speech on child poverty](#) on Monday, just as interim research for the DWP suggests that the majority of people do not believe there is much child poverty in the UK

(Also see:

[Research shows 41% of people believe there is very little child poverty](#)
[Balls promises end to child poverty by 2020\)](#)

Ed Balls has given an interview ([Am I trying to run the Government or run Downing Street? Of course I'm not](#)) to the New Statesman this week

Christine Gilbert, the Chief Inspector of Schools, told the House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Select Committee on Wednesday that schools can expect more snap inspections

(Also see:

[*Schools to face surprise checks*](#)

[*Ofsted will visit without warning to foil 'rehearsals'*](#)

[*'No-notice' inspections planned for schools*](#))

The [Primary Review](#) has published a further four Reports.

[Overview briefing document: Children in Primary Schools](#)

- [*Children's Cognitive Development and Learning*](#)
- [*Children's Social Development, Peer Interaction and Classroom Learning*](#)
- [*Children in Primary Education: demography, culture, diversity and inclusion*](#)
- [*Learning Needs and Difficulties among Children of Primary School Age: definition, identification*](#)

(Also see:

[*Studies fault competition in primary schools*](#)

[*Latest primary review research surveys question assumptions about how young children think and learn; and how their specific needs are identified and met*](#)

[*Experts back more talk in class*](#))

The results of an inquiry by the National Association of Head Teachers concludes that there is too much testing in schools

(Also see:

[*Primary schools 'have lost their sense of fun and play'*](#))

The National Audit Office (NAO) has published a Report on - [Partnering for success: preparing to deliver the 14-19 education reforms in England](#)

The Report covers the development of Diplomas and looks at the effectiveness of the joint, multi agency, local 14-19 partnerships.

[Back to top](#)

Regeneration

Judith Armitt, Chief Executive of the Thames Gateway Regeneration scheme has stepped down after only a year in the job.

She has been replaced by Joe Montgomery, who is currently the Director General, Regions and Communities at the DCLG.

Mr Montgomery has had board-level sponsorship of the Thames Gateway since October 2007.

(Also see:

[Thames Gateway chief resigns 'after clash with minister'](#)

[Thames Gateway project chief quits](#)

[Thames Gateway head leaves post](#))

[Back to top](#)

Environment, Highways & Waste

· Environment

The Government has this week published a [Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report](#) which it hopes will give the green light to more offshore wind farms

(Also see:

[Huge expansion for wind turbines](#)

[Sea wind farms could light up Britain](#))

Economists have concluded in a report, *Too Good To Be True? The UK's Climate Change Record*, that the UK is responsible for a greater carbon footprint that was thought

(Also see:

[UK's official CO2 figures an illusion - study](#)

[Carbon emissions are higher than claimed, say academics](#))

The Prince of Wales has also published a 'Connected Reporting Framework', on environmental performance indicators.

[The Climate Change Bill is currently at the Committee Stage in the House of Lords](#)

The Audit Commission has [published a Report on the summer floods](#)

· Highways & Transport

[The Local Transport Bill was read a second time in the House of Lords this week](#)

· Planning

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) and RICS have published a Report on how planning authorities are implementing affordable housing strategies

(Also see:

[*How local planning authorities are delivering policies for affordable housing*](#))

The [*Planning Bill*](#) was read for a second time in the Commons on Monday

(You may be interested in a [Research Paper on the *Planning Bill*](#) – published by the [House of Commons Library](#))

The DCLG have this week announced funding to help authorities cut the number of unauthorised gypsy sites

(Also see:

[The Road Ahead: Final Report of the Independent Task Group on Site Provision and Enforcement for Gypsies and Travellers](#)

[*New drive to improve Gypsy and traveller site provision*](#))

[Back to top](#)

Employment

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) have published a Report on the British workforce - [*Market, Class, and Employment*](#)

(Also see:

[*Workplace opportunities and stresses are both increasing*](#))

[Back to top](#)

Finance

The LGA have published [a series of presentations](#) from the Annual Local Government Finance conference: a new three year settlement - analysis and interpretation

House of Commons Statement on Local Government Pensions

[Back to top](#)

Children & Family

According to a [Report](#), by the LSE for the Sutton Trust, despite various Government initiatives, the class divide has increased and the brightest children from disadvantaged backgrounds are still outperformed

[Summary](#)

[Report](#)

(Also see:

[Low social mobility in UK has not improved in 30 years - finds LSE research](#)

[Low social mobility in the UK has not improved in 30 years](#)

[UK social mobility fails to improve](#)

[Bright poor children 'slip back'](#)

[Brightest poor children do worse than wealthy but dim classmates](#)

[Deprived UK children 'still trapped by poverty'](#)

[Children from poor families 'doomed' as social mobility stalls](#))

An Ofsted Report, [Children on care standards](#), published on Wednesday, sets out the views of 433 children and young peoples' views on what the new National Minimum Standards for children's social care

A Statistics Commission [Report](#) claims that 80% of new jobs in the last 10 years have been filled by foreign workers

(Also see:

[Higher figures for foreign workers undermine ministers' claims](#)

[Study finds foreigners in 80pc of new jobs](#)

[Foreigners 'have taken 80 per cent of new jobs'\)](#)

The NUT has published a report that finds that advertising is harming the health of young people

(Also see:

[Study finds commercialism harms Britain's kids \)](#)

It is reported that of the estimated 20,000 children living with foster carers only 1,250 are registered

(Also see:

[Thousands of foster children may be at risk \)](#)

On Thursday the House of Commons had a [debate on Asylum Seekers](#). Its reference point was the Government Response to the Tenth Report from the Joint Committee on Human Rights, Seventeenth Report, Session 2006-07, the Treatment of Asylum Seekers, HC 790; and the memoranda received by the Committee from the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association, Citizens Advice, the Asylum Support Programme Inter-Agency Partnership and the Asylum Appeals Project

[Back to top](#)

Adult Services

[A question was raised in the House of Lords this week on the new social care reform concordat and how it will affect the provision of adult social care](#)

• Older People

[Putting People First A shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care](#) was published on Monday. One of the proposals is to allocate a personal budget to everyone who uses social care services

'This landmark protocol seeks to set out and support the Government's commitment to independent living for all adults. It also outlines the shared aims and values, which will guide the transformation of adult social care.'

(Also see:

[House of Commons Statement](#)

[Personal care budgets and extra £520 million to transform care for older and disabled people](#)

[Move gives control over social care to users](#)

[Revolution in home care for old people](#)

[Disabled to get cash to choose care options](#)

[Elderly to get control of their own care budget](#)

[Elderly to get personal care cash](#))

[Westminster Hall this week held a debate on Vulnerable Adults \(Residential Homes\)](#)

[Back to top](#)

Health – For further information on items in this selection please contact David Turner Tel: (01622) 694196, Freecall: 7000 4196 or email: david.turner@kent.gov.uk

On Thursday, the health secretary announced the [Operating Framework for the NHS for 2008/09](#). This comprises the health and service priorities for the year ahead; the reform levers and enabling strategies; the financial regime and the business processes. It includes a series of fines for hospitals who do not meet super bug and waiting time's criteria

(Also see:

[House of Commons Statement](#)

[More money going to frontline NHS than ever before](#)

[Hospitals face fines for missing targets to cut super bug cases](#))

While the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) have published [Safety First: One Year On](#). 'The publication shows how NHS organisations are pulling together with other key partners, including the Royal Colleges and international partners, to push for patient safety.' At the launch the chief medical officer is reported to have said that hospitals should be fined if patients receive substandard care.

(Also see:

[Hospitals to pay for harming patients](#)

[Hospitals 'should be fined for bad patient care'\)](#)

The [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) has revised the way it measures alcohol consumption – due in part to stronger brands and the size of measures

(Also see:

[The \(13.5%\) proof that our drinking problem is worse than we thought](#)

[Britons drink more than we thought, says minister](#))

The [British Medical Journal](#) this week carried an article on Obesity and the different ways it could be tackled

In a House of Lords question this week, it was revealed that the Government is considering making the contraceptive pill available over the counter, without a prescription

(Also see:

[House of Lords Statement](#)

[Pill to be available over the counter](#)

[Teenage girls will get Pill over the counter to help cut pregnancies](#))

The [Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health](#) has said in a Report that mental health costs employers £26 billion each year

(Also see:

[Mental ill health costs UK employers £25billion, says new report](#))

A two day inspection took place this week at the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS trust, as a follow-up to the damning Healthcare Commission report

The *Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill* has been in House of Lords Committee this week

[10 December](#)

[12 December](#)

The National Audit Office (NAO) has published a [Report on the NHS Summarised Accounts 2006-07: Achieving financial balance in the NHS](#)

It is reported that one in four hospitals is in debt by up to £1 billion

(Also see:

[NHS services threatened by hospital debts](#))

Researchers from Bath University have concluded that the anti drink campaigns do not work

(Also see:

[Anti-drinking campaign ads may be “catastrophically misconceived”](#)

[Anti-drink ad 'not effective'](#)

[Anti-drink adverts 'failing as young enjoy escapades'](#))

[Back to top](#)

Government

Gordon Brown told the House of Commons Liaison Select Committee on Thursday that private sector involvement in public sector reform will go “wider and deeper”

(Also see:

[Personalised services promised in Gordon Brown’s public sector reforms](#)

[Wider and deeper, Brown sets out agenda](#)

The Government published a new welfare document on Thursday - [*Ready for work: full employment in our generation*](#)

It includes 50 new welfare-to-work policies.

(Also see:

[*Moving benefit claimants from passive dependents to active job seekers*](#)

[House of Commons Statement](#))

Chris Grayling, the Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary, has also given a speech this week [on welfare to the Policy Exchange](#)

(Also see:

[*Tories unveil plans to get lone parents back to work*](#)

[*Parties compete over 'tough love' mantle as Hain unveils new plan*](#))

Gordon Brown gave an interview this week that was published in the Times - [*Did I ever think it would be fun? . . . well you can never get bored*](#)

The Cabinet Office has unveiled a new funding programme to boost local community organisations with access to small grants and long-term financing

(Also see:

[House of Commons Statement](#)

[*Community Development Foundation appointed to deliver £130 million 'grassroots grants' scheme*](#))

The CBI have published the [results of a survey](#) that criticises the Governments approach to public procurement

(Also see:

[*CBI - badly managed government procurements threaten public service transformation*](#))

Peter Wilby writes in the New Statesman ([*A year when the personal became political*](#)) that personalised services will still be at the top of the agenda for 2008

[Back to top](#)

[Communities](#)

· [Sport](#)

Tessa Jowell made a [Statement this week on the Olympics \(Baseline Budget\)](#)

(Also see:

[House of Commons Questions on the Olympics](#)

[*£1bn extra for Olympic Park puts more pressure on Games budget*](#)

[Cost of policing the Olympics soars to £1.2bn](#)
[Rising security costs threaten to break the Olympic budget](#)
[Olympics costs 'could rise again'](#))

The Liberal Democrats say that a loophole in planning law is being exploited by developers who wish to build on school playing fields

(Also see:

['Loophole risk' to playing fields](#))

[Back to top](#)

Forthcoming Parliamentary Business

Monday 17 December

Commons: Children, Schools and Families (Oral Questions); Statement on the European Council; Statement on the Poynter Review.

Lords: Was the Government consulted by the Post Office on its recent statement that no Post Office closure decisions will be made before the local elections on 1 May 2008, Climate Change Bill (second Committee day); Local Transport Bill (third Committee day).

Tuesday 18 December

Commons: Health (Oral Questions); Human Rights Act 1998 (Meaning of Public Function).

Westminster Hall: House building and infrastructure; Policing of UK airports; Treatment of failed asylum seekers during deportation.

Lords: Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill; Child Maintenance and Other Payments Bill (Second Reading).

At close of business both House rise for the Christmas Recess and sit again on Monday, 7 January 2008.

[Back to top](#)