

Ambition Board 3 – To Put Citizens In Control Meeting Covering Paper

Introduction

Following Ambition Board 3's first meeting in June work has continued over the summer, including:

- Meetings with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Ambition Board 3 (9 Aug and 24 Oct);
- Correspondence with members of the Board (Aug / early Sept);
- A Chief Executive meeting (12 Sept);
- Analysis of responses to the Vision for Kent consultation (Sept – Oct).

The agenda for the second meeting includes:

- An update on Ambition Board developments;
- Discussion on the role of Ambition Board 3;
- Discussion on Priority Themes and work areas;
- Scene setting presentations on three potential work areas; and
- An opportunity to agree Ambition Board 3's first year action plan which is due to be presented the Kent Forum on 24th November.

Item 2. Ambition Boards Development

This item sets out the development of Ambition Boards over the summer.

In particular it highlights three potential complementary roles for Ambition Boards, see Appendix 1 (page 10). These roles are as:

- Change Agent
- Champion
- Challenger

The Board may wish to focus on two or three of these roles. Consequently three operating models are possible:

- Model 1 gives equal weight to all three roles;
- Model 2 emphasises the Change Agent and Champion roles;
- Model 3 emphasises the Champion and Challenge roles.

From the early discussions it appears model 2 is favoured by Ambition Board 3 which would provide an opportunity for the Board to develop innovative working, champion the ambition, and refine partnership working towards Ambition 3.

Action - The Board to asked to confirm which operating model it wishes to adopt

Item 3. Priority Themes

Introduction

Item 3 provides an opportunity to identify the key themes Ambition Board 3 may wish to tackle in its first year.

The suggested themes have been informed by:

- Discussion at the first Ambition Board meeting;
- Responses to the Chairman's request for input over the summer;
- Responses to the Vision for Kent consultation exercise;
- Meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair of Ambition Board 3;
- Discussion at the Kent Forum Leaders' Task and Finish Group on the Vision for Kent. This Group which comprises Paul Carter, Jeremy Kite, John Gilbey and Bob Bayford met on 26 October.

This has led to the following 3 key themes and 6 key work areas that endeavour to encapsulate the discussion so far.

1. Engagement

1.1 Consultations

1.2 Information

1.3 Member development

2. Empowerment

2.1 Community Empowerment

2.2 Supporting Locality Boards

3. Personalisation and Responsible citizenship

3.1 Best Practice Development

Themes in more detail:

1. Engagement

A key issue which was discussed at the last meeting, at the Chief Executive pre-meet, and which has emerged from the Vision for Kent consultation is around giving people an effective say in decisions, service development and delivery. The Vision for Kent feedback strongly supports this theme. Three potential work areas emerge:

Consultations:

There is a need to ensure consultations enable 'real' people and interested parties to take part at an early stage in the decision-making process, with use of open questions and different communication methods. For residents it is seen as very important that responses are seen to be taken into consideration and that there is evidence that changes have been made. Ambition Board 3 could sponsor / champion collaborative and shared consultation processes. As a first step it would be valuable to understand how authorities currently consult, identify where there is best practice and spot any early opportunities for collaborative working.

Information:

Provision of information to enable citizens to take control was a key issue. Ambition Board 3 could look at ways to work across authorities on what information is provided (such as on finance, spend, performance), how citizens want to receive this information, how it all contributes to a better understanding of how the public sector works and how they can influence decision making.

Member development:

There was a mixed picture on the role and effectiveness of local politicians from Vision for Kent responses. The main criticism focused on the remoteness of councillors. There is a need for improved, positive, respectful and regular communication with communities to include networking and outreach evidencing that councillors are acting as representatives and community leaders. Response times to letters/emails was an issue. Ambition Board 3 could lead on the development of Councillors role as 'community champions' by offering best practice and overseeing training. For example Ambition Board 3 could champion the 'Charter Mark Plus' Member training currently operating in KCC to wider partners.

2. Empowerment

At its last meeting Ambition Board 3 stressed the importance to link its work to the broad context of Localism and the likely measures in the Localism Bill. These themes were prominent in the Vision for Kent consultation and were discussed by the Leaders' Task and Finish Group. Two work areas have emerged.

Community Empowerment:

A key response to the Vision for Kent consultation was the need for effective use and empowerment of existing community groups including Parish/Town Councils and the VCS (including social enterprises). A desire was expressed by these groups to become more involved and to assume responsibility for the delivery of certain services locally.

The Kent Forum Leaders' Task and Finish Group discussed this at their meeting on 26 October. They were very keen to develop closer working with the VCS supporting them to become more fully engaged and as a result obtain greater value for the public purse. However, regarding other community groups the Leaders saw some risks to devolving services, particularly to the sustainability of services when funding becomes even tighter or key local advocates move on.

Ambition Board 3 may like to give additional impetus to empower community groups further and, given the views of the Leaders' Task and Finish Group, prioritise this work by commencing with the VCS. This could link to a proposal for a KCC VCS Engagement Forum (a proposal discussed between Mike Hill, Bishop Trevor Wilmott and KentCAN). Flowing from this could be the need to identify the barriers to empowerment and to lobby the Government either directly or through the Kent Forum on ways to overcome them.

Supporting Locality Boards:

A possible role which was expressed at the first Ambition Board 3 meeting and also in responses to the Chairman's note to Board members over the summer was to support Locality Boards. The Ambition Boards role could be to research and disseminate best practice, offer new ways of working to Locality Boards, support them in acting as test beds to pilot new ways of working and monitor progress.

3. Personalisation and Responsible citizenship

This theme could look at how we can encourage citizens to take greater personal responsibility in determining services they receive. This can offer users more tailored provision of services to meet their needs and at a reduced cost to the public purse. Recent examples include increasing personalisation of social care and also proposals regarding SEN transport. Over time this could look at how to encourage residents to adopt lifestyle choices which alleviates demands on public services and improves the quality of life for themselves and their communities.

Best Practice Development:

A response to the Chairman's note over the summer to Ambition Board 3 members highlighted the need for the Ambition Board to share thinking on issues such as the implications of Government policy and dissemination of best practice from Kent and nationally. This role may become more valuable later in Ambition Board 3's first year when the direction and detail of Government policy is better known.

Action – Ambition Board 3 are asked for their comments on the suggested key themes and work areas.

Item 4. Briefing Session

1) Engagement: Member's as Community Champions

– Coral Ingleton, KCC's Training and Development Team

Engagement with Members across the County and beyond. How do we build leadership and enhance skills of Members to help them face the challenges of the localism agenda.

Can we build upon the Member Charter Plus, sharing good practice to bring together a focused, cost effective Member training package.

2) Engagement: Consultations

– Ann Millington, CEO Kent Fire and Rescue Service

The benefits of joint working around consultations and information provision to help the public have an effective say in decisions, service development, and delivery.

3) Empowerment: Community Empowerment

– Jacqui Ward, KCC's Service Improvement Team

Members expressed a desire for an effective relationship with the VCS at the 22 Sept Kent Forum. It was also discussed at a subsequent meeting facilitated by Kent CAN with Ambition Champion Trevor Wilmott, Bishop of Dover, Cllr Mike Hill and Amanda Honey.

KCC is establishing a VCS Engagement Forum which may have a role in supporting community empowerment.

Item 5. Ways of Working

An important issue for Ambition Board 3 to consider is how it wishes to take forward work connected with the priority themes. It is vital, with declining staff resource, that we have tight control on commissioning work and wherever possible requests are made through existing structures rather than create anything new.

Three possible models are:

1) Joint Kent Chief's commissioning.

Ambition Board 3 could task all requests through the Joint Kent Chiefs. This option would allow the Joint Kent Chiefs to act as 'Gatekeeper' to commissioning and to ensure duplication does not occur and that links between workstreams are made.

However the Joint Kent Chiefs Group already has a colossal workload which this would add to. A way to mitigate this may be for one Chief Executive from Ambition Board 3 to act as the Joint Kent Chiefs lead regarding Ambition Board 3 and to take decisions on commissioning, etc, on behalf of Joint Kent Chiefs. This has not yet been tested with Joint Kent Chiefs.

2) Commission work from partnership groups.

There are a number of officer groups which could be utilised such as the Kent Policy Managers Group and the Kent Community Development Managers Group. Ambition Board 3 could commission work directly from these groups. However this option poses a risk that duplication will occur in commissioning. It would be better for these groups to be commissioned by the Joint Kent Chiefs.

3) Commission work from individual authorities.

A further option is to commission work from individual authorities, particularly where they have an existing lead, strong connection or interest in a piece of work. Examples include developing VCS relationships and Charter Mark where work is underway in KCC. It will remain important that Joint Kent Chiefs is aware of this work to identify links and avoid any duplication of effort.

Action: For Ambition Board 3 to consider working arrangements.

Item 6. Developing Aims, Actions and Deliverables

In line with the other two Ambition Boards, an Ambition Board 3 Action Plan is due to be taken to the Kent Forum on 24 November.

Appendix 2 (page 11) is a draft plan and develops the key themes into 4 aims, 7 actions, and 11 deliverables.

Ambition Board 3 will need to consider where they can have the biggest impact and what is achievable in their first year.

NB. A key issue which will need to be considered is resource allocation in order to deliver the actions.

Actions:

- Ambition Board 3 are asked to comment on the draft action plan.
- Ambition Board 3 are asked to agree for the action plan, following amendments, to be taken to the Kent Forum 24 November meeting.

For Approval by Correspondence. Terms Of Reference

Following the first meeting of Ambition Board 3, minor amendments have been made to the Terms of Reference, see appendix 3 (page 15).

All members of the Board were eager to not prolong discussions on governance arrangements and therefore we have suggested agreeing the terms of reference by correspondence outside of the meeting.

Ambition Board 3 members are asked to submit any comments on the draft ToR to the Chairman via David Firth david.firth@kent.gov.uk within two weeks of the meeting. Necessary changes will be made and the ToR will be confirmed and circulated.

Appendix 1

Ambition Board Models



CHANGE AGENT	CHAMPIONING (Common to both Model 2 and 3)	CHALLENGING
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- Identify creative and innovative working such as pooling resources, shared commissioning, using alternative providers
- Pilot new ways of working,
- Implement cross-Kent approaches

- Champion ambition countywide and nationally
- Exchange best practice across Locality Boards
- Pooling ideas / resources
- Promote culture of collaboration
- Resolve barriers
- Align / absorb partnerships
- Influence other public service providers

- Test whether there is support from partner agencies in helping to deliver the ambition
- On behalf of Kent Forum, hold Locality Boards to account
- Scrutinise Locality Boards' (or other local arrangements') focus on the County-wide Ambitions
- Performance Review against agreed PIs/ project implementation

Ambition Board 3 - To put the citizen in control
Aims, Actions and Deliverables plan
November 2011 - November 2012

Long-term aim: For power and influence to be in the hands of local people so they are able to take responsibility for themselves, their families and their communities.

We will know we are achieving this when:

- Long-term measures / outcomes that will tell us if we are progressing 'to put citizens in control'
 - xxx
 - xxx
 - xxx
- } TBC

Aims	Actions	Deliverables (+ deadline if approp.)	Resources / Capacity	Progress
1. Engagement To give people an effective say in decisions and service development and delivery.	a. Consultations	Champion standard consultation processes and best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District who have an interest in consultation processes • Specific Countywide group ? 	
		Encourage / sponsor effective consultation joint working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District who have an interest in consultation processes • Specific Countywide group ? 	

Aims	Actions	Deliverables (+ deadline if approp.)	Resources / Capacity	Progress
	b. Information	Sponsor / pilot new ways of front-line communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District who have an interest in communication / front-line delivery / data provision (e.g. Gateways or Kent Connects) • Specific Countywide group ? 	
		Sponsor / pilot new methods for information / data provision		
	c. Member development	Agree standards / expectations of Councillor community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District who have an interest in consultation processes • Specific Countywide group ? • KCC's Charter Mark Training • KCC's CEMs • KCC's Pioneers • Information Point 	
		Oversee Member development training package focused on 'community leadership'		
	Improved Member / community briefings			
2. Empowerment Empower Parish/Town Councils and the VCS to take	a. Community empowerment	Understand and effectively empower current community groups, including VCS, Social Enterprises, Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead Ambition Board 3 Member • Possible VCS Engagement Forum • Nominated officers 	

Aims	Actions	Deliverables (+ deadline if approp.)	Resources / Capacity	Progress
responsibility and deliver certain services locally.		Councils, etc	from County and District who have an interest in VCS engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary and community sector groups including Parish Councils to be invited to attend / present to Ambition Board 3 as required 	
		Support further personalisation mechanisms for services		
	b. Support Locality Board and Community Budget development.	Exchange best practice and offer new ways of working for Locality Boards to pilot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District • Specific Countywide group ? 	
3. Personalisation and Responsible Citizenship Encourage citizens to take responsibility to adopt lifestyle choices that reduce demand on public services and improves the quality of life for themselves and their communities.	a. Assess and share learning, from national and local case studies. Understand opportunities and applications to public policy making.	Learning presented to AB3 to challenge / disseminate to Locality Boards and other agencies. Government lobbied through Kent Forum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lead' Ambition Board 3 Member • Nominated officers from County and District • Specific Countywide group (e.g. Kent Policy Managers Group) 	

Aims	Actions	Deliverables (+ deadline if approp.)	Resources / Capacity	Progress
4. Partnership Rationalisation Minimise bureaucracy involved in delivering Ambition 3 across the county and maintain the benefits of partnership working	Review and make recommendations for the future of partnership boards / groups that aim to put citizens in control	Rationalised partnership working approach with recommendations for the future of all groups - i.e. retain, merge, change focus, remove etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence already available from Kent Forum partnerships review. • Officer groups and boards - to be determined. 	October 2011 - One of the roles of AB3 in its Terms of Reference. TBC

David Firth (Kent Forum Team) to support Ambition Board 3 to manage delivery of this plan.

Will need reviewing in light of the priorities set out under Ambition 3 in the final version of Vision for Kent, as agreed by Kent Forum (during November 2011 - January 2012.)

May need updating during the year to take into account further development of Locality Boards.

Terms of Reference for Ambition Board 3 – Putting Citizens In Control

Introduction

1. Ambition Boards are partnership Boards that exist within the Kent Forum structure. There is an Ambition Board for each of the three countywide ambitions in the Vision for Kent 2011-2021:
 - To grow the economy
 - To tackle disadvantage
 - To put citizens in control

Status

2. Kent Forum has agreed that the three Ambition Boards will be accountable to the Kent Forum.
3. Ambition Boards are advisory in capacity and are not formal decision-making bodies. Recommendations made by Ambition Boards will need to be taken through the decision-making process of the organisations involved in the recommendation in order for them to be implemented.

Responsibilities

4. Ambition Boards role is to act strategically as a 'change agent' in relation to that ambition. They will be expected to stimulate new ways of working, challenge barriers to improvement and cascade good practice. This 'change agent' role may manifest itself in the following ways:
 - Ask the difficult questions such as is this a service which needs delivering;
 - If so, examine alternative ways of delivering services, either from among Kent's local authorities or by alternative providers;
 - Identify the barriers that will inhibit achieving the Ambitions, whether they are local, county or national barriers, resolving those that are within the remit of local authorities;
 - Minimise the bureaucracy involved in delivering the ambition, with a remit to rationalise many of the unfocused, overlapping and unaccountable partnerships, without losing the benefits of genuine partnership working;
 - Stimulate innovative working by piloting new approaches;
 - Learn from best practice from within Kent and outside of the county;
5. Ambition Boards will also work with Locality Boards:
 - to act as pilots for stimulating innovative working, such as in the case of Community Based Budgets;
 - remove barriers to improvement;
 - to deliver local priorities that contribute to the countywide ambitions;
 - support Locality Boards in the rationalisation of existing partnerships, seeking to improve efficiency by reducing the number, cost and bureaucracy associated with partnerships.
6. Ambition Board 3 – Putting Citizens In Control will determine and agree their aims on a yearly basis (see point 8.)

Accountability and reporting

7. The Ambition Board is accountable to the Kent Forum. On a day to day basis the Joint Kent Chiefs will, on behalf of the Kent Forum, support Ambition Board in reporting to the Kent Forum.
8. The Ambition Board will develop and manage an action plan for the year (or more regularly if appropriate), outlining the priority areas where it will make a difference in its role as change agent. This action plan will be submitted to the Kent Forum annually.
9. The Ambition Board will maintain an overview of the county's progress in achieving the Ambition that it is responsible for.
10. Every six months on a rolling cycle, each Ambition Board Chair will present a progress report from their Ambition Board to the Kent Forum, having first reported to Joint Kent Chiefs. The report will set out progress towards the Ambition Board's own action plan, including an overview of performance. The report will draw out any actions that the Kent Forum need to authorise such as approval to pilot new ways of working, action to remove barriers to improvement or other actions to correct weak performance.
11. Ambition Boards are required to action the decisions and requests made by Kent Forum.

Chairing and membership

12. The Ambition Board will appoint a Chair and a Vice Chair from its core membership. The Chair and Vice Chair will come from different tiers of Local Government, i.e. one will be a County Council representative and one will be a District Council representative. Chair and Vice Chair appointments will be reviewed annually.
13. Kent Forum have agreed that core membership of each Ambition Board is:
 - a. two KCC Cabinet Members;
 - b. four District Council Leaders or the Chairman of Kent Fire and Rescue; and
 - c. one representative of KCC Corporate Management Team;
 - d. three District Council Chief Executives or CEO of Kent Fire and Rescue.
14. The core membership for Ambition Board is:

Jeremy Kite	Leader	Dartford Borough Council
Robert Bliss	Leader	Shepway District Council
Andrew Bowles	Leader	Swale Borough Council
Robert Atwood	Leader	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Michael Hill	Cabinet Member	Kent County Council
Bryan Sweetland	Cabinet Member	Kent County Council
Robin Hales	Chief Executive	Sevenoaks District Council
Sue McGonigal	Chief Executive	Thanet District Council

David Hughes	Chief Executive	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Ann Millington	Chief Executive	Kent Fire and Rescue Service
Amanda Honey	Chief Officer	Kent County Council

15. The core membership of each Ambition Board can invite other individuals to become members of the Ambition Board if they agree this is necessary to support the Ambition Board in fulfilling its role.

Meeting and meeting arrangements

16. Meetings will be held on a quarterly basis.

Conflicts of Interest

17. Members must notify the Chairman if they have any personal or prejudicial interest in any item under discussion at the Ambition Board (in accordance with the Code of Member Conduct) where that item could reasonably have a greater impact on the wellbeing and/or financial position of that individual and/or their family and friends than for other citizens, If a prejudicial interest, the Chairman will require the member to have no further part in that matter under discussion and to leave the meeting pending any discussion on that particular matter.

Decisions

18. Every effort will be made to ensure that decisions are taken by consensus. No decision of the Ambition Board as a whole can override the decisions of individual organisations. Rather, decisions made by the Ambition Board are intended to influence partners to work with all other partners and adopt a common position.

Access to Information

19. The Ambition Board will adhere to requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Confidentiality

20. All members will respect the confidentiality of information supplied by other members when the relevant tests can be met

Conflict Management

21. Where a conflict remains unresolved within or between any Ambition Board members, the issue may be referred by any Ambition Board member to the full Ambition Board to advise on the best way of achieving a final resolution.

Exit

22. Any member wishing to resign from the Ambition Board shall give at least two months' written notice to the Chairman. In the event that such notice is given, that member shall cooperate with the Ambition Board during the notice period so as to facilitate a smooth exit from the partnership working arrangements.