Why is KCC thinking of withdrawing from Tonbridge Gateway?

To make sure every pound spent in Kent is delivering better outcomes for our customers, communities and businesses, we need to ensure our Gateways are delivering their services in the most effective and efficient way for everyone.

We anticipate that KCC will be able to generate savings by putting our services in buildings which we own and we know have capacity. Each year we contribute £46,000 towards the property costs of Tonbridge Gateway. In a time where public funding is being considerably reduced, we believe relocating these services to buildings which are owned by KCC is a sensible way of saving money whilst maintaining face to face services in a convenient location.

KCC has a Library and Adult Education site near the Tonbridge Railway Station. Many of our services are currently available from the Library, including Smoking Cessation clinics. The Adult Education centre already delivers a broad range of KCC services from the same site.

What is the purpose of the public consultation?

To identify how new/existing customers and Gateway partners could be impacted, should KCC decide to re-locate our services from Tonbridge Gateway. The consultation offers a proposal for our services and we welcome feedback on this. The consultation will include KCC services and those that we provide some funding to or commission to deliver services on our behalf, such as Carers First.

Is KCC planning to close the Gateway?

No. We are consulting on the future of KCC and our commissioned services within the Gateway, rather than the future of the Gateway itself.

How will I/my customers be able to access KCC services in the future?

If you currently use Tonbridge Gateway to access a face to face KCC service (such as Life Choice Independent Living), you would still be able to access this service in the future, just from another location in Tonbridge. Our proposed location, which we are consulting on, is the Tonbridge Library and Adult Education site.

What if the public consultation indicates a likely negative impact from KCC leaving the Gateway?

We will use the consultation to understand and identify the impact of re-locating our services, from Tonbridge Gateway. Based on the information collected during the consultation, we will carry out an impact assessment of the proposals. The outcome of the public consultation and impact assessment will be discussed at KCC Policy and Resources Committee in March 2016, which is webcast. Following this, the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Traded Services will make a decision on KCC’s future in Tonbridge Gateway.
What will happen about the other Gateways?
We have already consulted on relocating KCC services from Maidstone Gateway and a
decision is expected in January 2016. We will shortly be consulting on re-locating our
services from Dover Gateway. In next 18 months we will be looking at the options for re-
locating our services from Tunbridge Wells Gateway and Gravesham Gateway, with a view
to consulting publicly on these. We have a presence in a number of other Gateways
throughout Kent, but are not looking to move our services from these buildings.