

A Vintage Year for Kent

Kent Legal Services, the multi-award-winning public sector legal team, announced a record contribution of over £3.7 million to Kent County Council for 2012/13. The figures represent their best ever year despite the difficult economic climate, especially given the massive financial cuts facing the public sector.

The specialist legal outfit made a record profit of £2.42 million against a £12 million turnover, whilst an additional £1.3 million was delivered through savings arising from the Kent team's ambitious 'Evolution, Efficiency, Enterprise' project, launched last year to save the council £3 million by the end of 2015.

The year brought a number of significant successes for the team, including the negotiations to bring paralympic cycling to Kent and a new mortgage scheme for first time buyers that is now being replicated elsewhere. The team is advising on a number of major pieces of work including Kent County Council's ambitious grammar school expansion scheme and high speed broadband project.

Geoff Wild, Director of Governance and Law at Kent County Council said

"It's been a phenomenal year for Kent Legal Services. Our record figures combined with the first year of our Evolution project mean that we have made a significant contribution to the council at a time of great financial pressure. Our work with clients on suppressing their legal risk has borne real fruit and is massively reducing Kent's legal costs in real terms at a time of growing need and shrinking budgets. Our profit this year means that Kent Legal Services has now contributed nearly £11 million over the past 10 years to front-line council services."

Wild has ambitious plans for the year ahead:

"We are very proud of the role we take in helping clients use our knowledge to transform the lives of others. Our Evolution project is on target to save a further £1 million this coming financial year and we are continuing to develop our offering to meet the rapidly changing legal market."

Notes for Editor:

The legal team at Kent is uniquely different from any other in-house legal department, whether in local government or the commercial sector. The team runs on a zero budget, receiving no internal subsidy, showing all of their overheads and costs above the line. Kent Legal Services has no guaranteed work or tied clients and competes for work in the open market whilst operating a full trading account.

The unit earns every penny of its budget through charging for its services and all profits are returned in full to Kent County Council, which then re-invests the money in front-line services. The team provides services to over 300 public sector clients nationwide under local government trading powers and through Law:Public, the innovative collaboration with regional law firm, Geldards, which was last year

recognised by the FT in their prestigious Innovative Lawyer Awards. Wild himself was recognised by inclusion in the Legal Business GC Powerlist 2013; named Legal Industry Pioneer in the FT Innovative Lawyer Awards 2012; and General Counsel of the Year: British Legal Awards 2012.