



Direct Dial/Ext: 03000416892
e-mail: joel.cook@kent.gov.uk
Date: 17 May 2026

Dear Member

COUNTY COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 21 MAY 2026

Please find enclosed, for consideration at the Annual Meeting of the Full Council on 21 May 2026, the following reports which were unavailable when the main agenda was published.

Agenda Item No

13 **Motions for Time Limited Debate** (Pages 1 - 10)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Watts', is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Benjamin Watts
Deputy Chief Executive

This page is intentionally left blank

By: Joel Cook – Democratic Services Manager

To: County Council – 21 May 2026

Subject: Motions for Time Limited Debate

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary

County Council may consider and resolve Motions for Time Limited Debate submitted by Political Groups, in accordance with section 14.32 of the KCC Constitution.

Three Motions for Time Limited Debate are included in the agenda for the 21 May 2026 meeting of the Full Council.

1. In advance of each ordinary meeting of the Full Council, each Political Group may submit one Motion for Time Limited Debate for debate and decision. Motions are placed on the agenda in the order they are received by Democratic Services.
 2. Motions for Time Limited Debate are different from most normal Committee or Decision papers as they are not prepared by KCC Officers, which always involve standard assurances and operational guidance. The Motions and any Background Information supplied for context are developed and submitted by the Political Groups, who are responsible for their content. They are therefore prepared and considered on the basis that they are political matters, allowing the Council to debate and resolve political positions on a range of issues outside of the main substantive decision-making framework for functions within the responsibility of the County Council.
 3. The official adoption of any substantive changes, if relevant, to strategies or policies referenced in a Motion approved by Full Council, where applicable to matters for which the Council has powers and responsibilities, would be subject to separate and additional relevant governance processes and decision-making.
 4. A maximum of 45 minutes will be allowed for each debate. The Motions must meet the general requirements of Motions as set out in the constitution and the debate is conducted in accordance with normal procedure rules along with any relevant directions given by the Chairman of the Council.
 5. The submitted Motions for Time Limited Debate are appended to this covering report.
-

Recommendation:

The County Council is asked to consider and determine the submitted Motions for Time Limited Debate

Appendices:

1. MTLT – Green Group – Water Resilience
2. MTLT – Restore Britain Kent Group – Protecting Our Farmers
3. MTLT – Liberal Democrat Group – Tourist Travel

Report Author:

Joel Cook
Democratic Services Manager
03000 416892
Joel.cook@kent.gov.uk

Motion for Time Limited Debate

KCC Action Plan for Strengthening Water Infrastructure and Resilience

Proposer: Mr Stuart Heaver

Seconder: Mr Mark Hood

Motion:

This Council resolves to:

1. Welcome the Water Supply Short Focused Inquiry (SFI) report, thank the Members and Officers involved for their work examining the water outages in Winter 2025/2026 and note the requirement for the Executive to provide a response to the report and its recommendations to the Scrutiny Committee in due course but also recognise that there are a range of other water related issues that merit immediate consideration by the Council.
2. Recommend that the Executive to write to Southern Water and request that its published CSO spill data is condensed into a concise Kent-wide Combined Sewer Outfall (CSO) spill report and submitted on a quarterly basis to enable more effective scrutiny of water borne pollution and the progress of spill reduction efforts,- across the county.
3. Recommend that the Executive to write to Southern Water to request a concise quarterly report on the county-wide progress of the Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force and to offer Southern Water any appropriate support from KCC for their efforts to reduce CSO spills across the county and with particular regard to encouraging SUDS on KCC owned buildings and infrastructure such as schools and libraries.
4. Recommend that the Cabinet Member for Environment, Coastal Regeneration and Public Health to write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to recommend that any future fines imposed by the regulator on water companies (or other private or public bodies) for water related failure incidents in Kent, are ring-fenced for water infrastructure and pollution/sewage release prevention improvements.
5. Recommend that the Flood Risk and Water Management Committee consider; asking the Environment Agency to provide a report on the number of pollution incidents for each category report by the Water Companies, many of these resulted in inspections in Kent over the last 5 years; and consider recommending that the Quarterly Environment Agency updates on this matter form part of routine performance monitoring by the Committee.
6. Request that the Executive investigate the feasibility of setting up, facilitating and promoting via Plan Sea or any other appropriate means, the development and support of citizen science testing teams on key bathing water areas and rivers seek greater partnership working between all responsible authorities, including water companies, Districts and the Environment Agency alongside supporting existing projects and research to improve monitoring of bathing water quality.

7. Recommend that the Scrutiny Committee consider requesting a Public Health report on the impact, risks of and KCC responsibilities in relation to water outages and in particular, waterborne pollution in Kent.
8. Recommend that the Executive engages with relevant stakeholders to ensure the first Kent and Medway Spatial Development Strategy has due regard to issues relating to water supply, wastewater management and water demand throughout the preparation, adoption and delivery of the strategy.

Background Information Provided by the Green Group:

Kent has experienced a growing number of incidents that highlight the vulnerability of the county's water infrastructure and the real-world consequences for residents when systems fail. Water outages, contamination events, and wastewater spills have caused significant disruption to daily life, placed added pressure on local services, and raised legitimate concerns about public health.¹

The recent Water Supply Short Focused Inquiry (SFI) report makes an important contribution to address this issue by highlighting key concerns and making important recommendations. Recognising that the SFI was designed to be short and focused on water outages in the winter of 2025.²⁶ it did not seek to cover all aspects of Kent's water infrastructure, this motion seeks to address some of those other aspects.

The Royal Academy of Engineering reports failing wastewater systems can expose communities to harmful pathogens in rivers and coastal waters, reinforcing the risks to public health.² These failures can limit access to safe drinking water and reduce hygiene standards in homes, schools, and care settings, placing vulnerable groups at higher risk. National reviews have also warned that ageing water infrastructure and underinvestment are increasing risks of leaks, service failures, and sewage discharges, emphasising the need for more proactive and coordinated planning across the sector.³

Ensuring the resilience of Kent's water infrastructure requires effective implementation of national policy, careful regulation, transparent reporting, strong partnership working, long-term investment. It also requires robust local governance.

Local authorities can support clear scrutiny arrangements, the timely sharing of operational and regulatory information, and proactive communication during incidents, all of which are essential to maintaining public confidence, supporting emergency preparedness, and enabling informed decision-making. Greater visibility of regulatory activity, alongside monitoring approaches such as community-based and citizen science initiatives, can strengthen understanding of local conditions and enhance accountability.

¹ **The Guardian**. South East Water could lose operating licence after outages in Kent. Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2026/jan/14/south-east-water-operating-licence-ofwat-review-outages-kent-sussex>

² **Royal Academy of Engineering**. Wastewater Risks. Available at: <https://nepc.raeng.org.uk/wastewater>

³ **Gov UK**. Water and sewerage companies in England: pollution incident report 2016 to 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-and-sewerage-companies-in-england-pollution-incident-report-for-2016-to-2024>

As the SFI highlights, water companies should be integral to the planning processes, Strengthening the integration of water infrastructure within planning and policy-making would support more sustainable growth by enabling earlier identification of constraints and more effective investment planning. Existing planning arrangements can constrain the ability of water and wastewater providers to deliver upgrades in line with development, increasing pressure on already constrained networks as growth continues.

While KCC is not responsible for the UK's water industry there are sensible and pragmatic measures it can take now to protect residents from the vulnerability of local water infrastructure.

This page is intentionally left blank

Restore Britain Kent Motion for Time Limited Debate:
Protecting and supporting Kent's Farmers

Proposer – Oliver Bradshaw

Seconder – Dean Burns

MOTION

This Council resolves to:

- 1) Recommend that the Executive engage with Kent schools, hospitals, businesses, and other publicly funded organisations to encourage them to prioritise sourcing Kent produced food, fruit, vegetables, and game where possible, thereby supporting local farmers, and game dealers.
- 2) Recommend that the Executive work with relevant partners to explore options for agricultural land management in Kent that maximise farming use and best support and promote the permitting of sustainable conservation practices and countryside pursuits.
- 3) Recommend the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport examines the impact of deer in Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs) across Kent and consider whether a county-wide Deer Management Plan could help mitigate such incidents and improve public safety.
- 4) Recommend the Executive explores and reports on how country pursuits and other conservation activities can contribute to Kent's environmental targets, biodiversity goals, Local Nature Recovery Strategies, and rural economic development.
- 5) Recommend that the Executive develops a strategy for youth involvement in agricultural or agricultural adjacent fields by promoting apprenticeships, vocational opportunities or volunteering and the potential reopening of school farms to provide opportunities for young people and combat the growing level of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) in the County.
- 6) Recommend the Executive explores the viability of offering support or incentives for farmers and similar rural business operators to aid in helping tackle winter services such as road gritting.
- 7) Recommend that the Executive explores with District Councils and other relevant partners, the options for reviewing water extraction rights for farmers to reduce strain on the public water supply.
- 8) Recommend that the Executive explore, with District Councils and other relevant partners, options for the active promotion, support and incentivisation of solar schemes focused on existing buildings and other infrastructure instead of on farmland itself.

Background Information provided by the Restore Britain Kent Group

- Agriculture is a major component of Kent's rural economy. In 2023, total income from farming in Kent was £187.76 million. The county is renowned as the "Garden of England" and a national leader in high-value horticulture, producing a significant proportion of the UK's top fruit, soft fruit, apples, cherries, vegetables, and hops. Around 62% of Kent's land area is farmed, and the sector supports thousands of jobs directly and indirectly while underpinning the county's food and drink industry as farming enterprises (crop and animal production) account for 86.5% of food and drink production enterprises in Kent.
- Kent's food and drink production sector is substantial, with 2,145 enterprises across Kent employing around 20,500 people and accounting for 3.3% of all enterprises in the county. This sector, closely linked to farming and horticulture, underpins local supply chains and contributes significantly to the county's economy and the UK's wider £120 billion food and drink industry.
- Kent farmers and gamekeepers help maintain the county's extensive public rights of way network of over 4,300 miles and play a vital role in managing significant areas of woodland, including the ancient Blean Woods complex, contributing to landscape preservation and biodiversity.
- Medium-sized shoots in Kent, together with larger estate shoots and numerous farm syndicate shoots, contribute to the local rural economy through employment, supply chains, tourism, and community activity. Nationally, shooting generates £9.3bn of wider economic activity.
- The Covid-19 period highlighted the vulnerability and strategic importance of Kent's farming sector, with pressures on labour, investment, and supply chains reinforcing the need to maximise domestic food production.

The Restore Britain Kent Group believes that:

- Farmers are the backbone of the country. They work long hours year-round, often in unpredictable weather, to grow high value crops and raise animals, ensuring food security and supporting Kent's rural and wider economy.
- Productive farmland, including orchards, soft fruit fields, arable land, and grazing areas, must be protected from inappropriate mass housing, industrial development, and large scale solar farms, while enabling farmers to diversify sustainably through farm shops, storage, processing facilities, agritourism, and other on farm enterprises.
- Farming, horticulture, viticulture, and gamekeeping apprenticeships and rural skills pathways should be actively promoted and expanded to encourage young people into these vital careers and sustain Kent's rural heritage and workforce.
- The farming and shooting sectors, alongside conservation activities, provide significant economic and employment benefits across both rural and urban Kent.

Motion to Call for Urgent Government Support for Tourist Travel in Kent

Proposer: Mr Tim Prater

Seconder: Mr Antony Hook

Motion

The County Council resolves to:

1. Recognise that there is a real risk of significant traffic delays in Kent during the forthcoming summer due to tourist and other traffic subject EES, in addition to the well-known delays caused by freight management through Operations Brock.
2. Request the Cabinet Member for Highways produce and publish an action plan to mitigate the impact on Kent residents, so far as the council is able to do so with the tools available to it.
3. Agree that Kent's unique national role as the UK's principal gateway to mainland Europe should be recognised by Government and that Government should:
 - Put forward a credible plan to manage freight traffic without Operation Brock.
 - Provide additional funding, policy levers, and operational powers to support Kent County Council in actively managing traffic subject to EES during peak travel periods and periods of cross-Channel disruption.
 - Work in partnership with Kent County Council, National Highways, border agencies, and port operators to deliver a coordinated national approach to tourist traffic management that reflects the risks associated with the Entry-Exit-System and seasonal travel demand.
 - Utilise Sevington, or another suitable facility, for offline queuing or traffic management purposes, to alleviate pressure on the strategic and local road network, and to minimise the impact on Kent residents and businesses.

And that the Clerk to the County Council should provide a copy of the motion to the relevant Government Officers.

Background information provided by the Liberal Democrat Group:

Kent holds a unique and disproportionate role as the United Kingdom's principal gateway to mainland Europe, resulting in the county accommodating millions of passengers and freight movements each year. During peak travel periods such as Easter and the summer holidays, traffic volumes through Kent increase substantially, placing sustained pressure on both the strategic and local road network and heightening the risk and impact of cross-Channel disruption.

The introduction of the Entry-Exit System (EES) presents a further and ongoing risk to the resilience of Kent's road network. During Easter 2026, EES operations across Europe resulted in markedly increased processing times, technical failures, and long queues, with authorities repeatedly suspending or reverting checks in order to manage pressure and congestion. France became a focal point of these operational challenges, with technical failures affecting kiosks and border processing, leading to significant delays. The application of EES at Kent's border points significantly increases the risk that even minor disruption will quickly escalate into severe constraints on traffic movement during the summer period.

Kent residents are painfully familiar with the challenging consequences of Operation Brock, the traffic management system that uses sections of the M20 as a lorry holding area when cross-Channel services are delayed. While Operation Brock is intended as a necessary contingency, its activation causes significant negative impacts for Kent residents, including prolonged congestion on roads across Kent, restricted access to communities, pollution, litter and noise impacts, business disruption, and delays to emergency and care services. Further to this, Operation Brock manages freight travel but does not address the volume of tourist and private vehicle travel passing through the county. Despite Kent acting as the main gateway for millions of visitors each year, the county does not receive adequate national support, funding, or operational tools to actively manage tourist traffic during peak travel periods, leaving our communities to absorb the full impact.

Taken together, the combined effect of increased summer travel, Kent's role as a vital link in the UK's transportation network, and delays associated with the implementation of the Entry-Exit System mean that Kent is likely to experience severe pressure on its road network and travel delays during summer 2026. Kent residents will once again bear the consequences of systemic and recurring operational pressures beyond their control, with little respite from Operation Brock and without sufficient government support or intervention to manage the volume and impact of tourist traffic generated by Kent's national gateway role.