



AGENDA

CABINET

Monday, 2nd March, 2020, at 10.00 am
Darent Room, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Denise Fitch**
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Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the meeting.

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UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Introduction/Webcasting Announcement
2. Apologies and Substitutes
3. Declaration of Interests by Member in Items on the Agenda for this meeting
4. Cabinet Member Updates
5. 'Kent's Future, Our Priority' - Kent County Council's 5 Year Plan (Pages 1 - 124)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Benjamin Watts
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Friday, 21 February 2020

From: Roger Gough, Leader

To: Cabinet, 2nd March 2020

Subject: ‘*Kent’s Future, Our Priority*’ – Kent County Council’s 5 Year Plan

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway: Corporate Management Team (01.10.19, 26.11.19, 18.02.20), Cabinet Members (28.10.19, 02.12.19, 10.02.20, 24.02.20), Corporate Board (04.12.19)

Future Pathway: County Council (19.03.20)

SUMMARY: ‘*Kent’s Future, Our Priority*’ will become Kent County Council’s new 5 Year Plan, to replace the previous strategic statement ‘*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes (2015-2020)*’. It captures the council’s ambition to deliver outcomes and objectives that will improve the quality of life for Kent’s residents, businesses and communities. This includes joined-up working with our partners and clear asks of Government. The 5 Year Plan has been informed by extensive engagement and a six week public consultation. The final plan is due to be approved by County Council on 19th March 2020.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

- (1) **Note** the findings of the engagement and consultation which have informed the changes to the 5 Year Plan, summarised in this report and set out in detail in the supporting ‘*You Said, We Did*’ document.
- (2) **Note** the equalities considerations set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, which has been informed by the engagement and consultation process.
- (3) **Agree** to recommend to County Council that they approve ‘*Kent’s Future, Our Priority*’ as the new 5 Year Plan for Kent County Council.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) has traditionally had a series of strategic plans or statements which set out the administration’s ambitions and priorities for the medium term. This is a key part of the Policy Framework in the KCC’s Constitution and influences our strategy, budget, commissioning and service delivery. The current strategic statement ‘*Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes*’, approved by County Council in March 2015, ends in 2020.
- 1.2 In summer 2019, KCC began developing a new 5 Year Plan which could replace the previous strategic statement. This is still grounded in

outcomes to deliver a better quality of life in Kent, but very much shaped by what is important to Kent's residents, young people, staff, partners and businesses. The intention was to create an ambitious yet realistic plan, which aligned with the council's spending priorities and had clear objectives to deliver over the next five years.

- 1.3 Outcomes cannot be achieved in isolation, so although this is predominantly a plan that is clear about what we need to deliver within our direct responsibility as the County Council, it also sets out our convening role and objectives that require close collaboration and joined-up working with partners. The objectives also include asks of Government, where we want to work together to stand up and lobby for the interests of Kent's residents, on issues such as fair and sufficient funding for public services, sustainable infrastructure and devolved powers for local government.
- 1.4 The 5 Year Plan began with open conversations with residents about what is important to the quality of life in Kent. This was part of a wider discussion about our future Budget spending priorities, so we could ensure the plan is realistic and deliverable within our resources and focused on the things that matter most to Kent's council taxpayers.
- 1.5 These ideas helped to crystallise our thinking, shaping a consultation draft that was launched in January 2020. We are pleased to have received such positive and considered responses to the consultation, with 422 responses in total, more than seven times the level of consultation response we received in 2015. We have carefully considered the consultation responses and used this to make substantive changes to the final plan. Further detail on the engagement and consultation process is set out in Section 3 and the changes we have made is summarised in Section 5 of this report.

2. THE 5 YEAR PLAN

- 2.1 The full 5 Year Plan is available in **Appendix A**. This is a word document, which will be updated into a bold, visual document for County Council that will bring to life the beauty, distinctiveness and diversity of Kent. The design version of the 5 Year Plan will be available as an electronic copy only to improve accessibility and minimise environmental impact, with no printed copies to be made.
- 2.2 The 5 Year Plan is the flagship strategy for KCC and therefore is necessarily a substantial document, given the breadth of KCC's responsibilities, the many important issues raised during the plan's development and the variety of audiences the plan needs to respond to. To help to keep the plan as simple and accessible as possible, we have taken the following actions:
 - Developing a highly visual and creative **design** for the final plan
 - Including a **plan summary** to summarise our ambition at a glance
 - Creating seven distinctive '**outcome chapters**', each with colour coding and sub-sections to make it easier for people to 'dip into' areas of specific interest

- Highlighting **objectives** throughout the document, to make it clear what actions and improvements we will take to respond to the opportunities and challenges raised in the document
- We are developing a simple 10 page **resident summary**, to capture key messages in plain English, to be launched on 30th March 2020
- Clear **signposting** of the detailed plans and documents which explain issues and actions in greater depth.

2.3 The 5 Year Plan is structured around seven outcomes which reflect the key things that stakeholders said were essential to a good quality of life in Kent. Each outcome has a headline ambition, narrative sections with supporting KCC 5 Year objectives, areas of collaboration with our partners and asks of Government.

3. ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION APPROACH

3.1 The content of the 5 Year Plan has been informed by extensive, meaningful engagement with a broad range of stakeholders, which started in August 2019, followed by formal consultation in early 2020.

3.2 A critical aspect of the engagement process was hearing the views of **Kent residents**, with a focus on engaging general council taxpayers rather than service users to balance a broad range of issues, attitudes and perspectives. The engagement included qualitative workshops with residents in East, North/Mid and West Kent, held in accessible community venues over a series of weekends in September. This was important to reflect the diversity and distinctiveness of issues in different parts of the county.

3.3 Professional market research recruitment helped to ensure a balanced mix of residents were able to attend, reflecting the demographics of each area and including people with disabilities. The four-hour workshops were independently facilitated by Westco Communications who were able to help explore in depth what mattered most to people's quality of life, their top spending priorities and how they wanted KCC to work in the future.

3.4 The resident engagement was targeted at adults over the age of 18, so it was important to also listen to **young people**. Workshops were held with Kent Youth County Council and the Young Adult Council, which includes young people aged 16-25 with experience of the care system. This helped to understand distinctive priorities for young people including protecting the environment, wellness, mental health and the importance of affordable housing. Broader online engagement was also available to schools, colleges and young people over the age of 16, promoted through our education and further education networks.

3.5 The hard work and commitment of our **staff** is essential to delivering the 5 Year Plan, so it was important that our staff helped to shape the outcomes and objectives, drawing on their frontline service experience. Many of our staff are also Kent residents so were also able to share that perspective. A workshop in October 2019 with operational managers (the 'T200' group) explored the same themes as residents, so we could compare and

contrast their feedback, with the exercises available online for managers to encourage further conversations in their teams. In February, T200 helped to identify creative ideas to help make the 5 Year Plan real, meaningful and relevant for staff. Senior managers, including Heads of Service and Directors were also engaged through the 'Challenger' and 'Extended Corporate Management Team', to ensure we gathered views from a wide variety of KCC services.

- 3.6 As a 5 Year Plan to be agreed by County Council, it is was important that all KCC **Elected Members** had the opportunity to reflect the issues that matter to the communities that they represent and the views they hear from regularly engaging with local residents, charities, community groups, parish and town councils and businesses. A cross-party Member workshop was held to gather views in November 2019, in addition to political group briefings, with all Members able to participate in the consultation.
- 3.7 As we need to closely collaborate to achieve better outcomes, **partner** engagement was an essential part of the process, with the Leader personally writing to key partners to welcome their views in the consultation. A wide variety of partners were engaged including:
- **Parish and town councils** – including an early engagement workshop with the Area Committee Chairs of the Kent Association of Local Councils
 - **Public sector partners** – including district and borough council Leaders and Chief Executives, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue, Further/Higher Education and health partners through the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Board
 - **Members of Parliament** – were invited by the Leader to contribute to the consultation
 - **Businesses** – including Business Advisory Board, Chambers of Commerce and online surveys open to local businesses
 - **Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector** – including engagement events linked to the development of KCC's forthcoming Civil Society Strategy and online engagement open to local charities, community groups and social enterprises.
- 3.8 This extensive engagement helped to shape the draft outcomes and objectives. The draft 5 Year Plan provided an opportunity to test these back with stakeholders during a six-week public consultation period which ran from 6th January to 17th February 2020.
- 3.9 In total, 422 responses were received during the consultation, with is an unprecedented level of engagement for a high-level strategic document of this nature. This is over seven times the level of responses received during the 2015 consultation. The consultation identified clear feedback themes, where multiple stakeholder agreed issues were important and needed to be strengthened or clarified in the plan.
- 3.10 The consultation responses were received from a wide range of residents, staff, partner organisations and Elected Members. This included:

- 208 residents (including some who attended the resident engagement workshops earlier in the process)
- 127 staff
- 28 voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations
- 14 Elected Members (councilors from county, district, borough, parish and town councils)
- 7 district and borough councils
- 8 local community groups and resident associations
- 4 businesses
- 3 education partners
- 1 non-Kent resident
- 22 others (including wider partners, town and parish councils)

3.11 We particularly welcome the level of engagement from our partners which helped to shape the final changes to the 5 Year Plan. We received many positive and constructive suggestions for collaborative joint working with public sector partners, including district, borough, parish and town councils. Responses from the voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations reflecting strong support for the ‘stronger communities’ and ‘Civil Society’ objectives. We also appreciated the time and effort put into considered responses from wider partners including:

- 7 district, borough and city councils, including Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone and Hythe, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Thanet and Tunbridge Wells
- Kent Association of Local Councils
- Kent Police
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company (probation)
- Accountable Officer for Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Groups
- KIMS Hospital
- Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
- East Kent College Group
- West Kent Partnership
- Creative Folkestone
- Arts Council
- Cultural Transformation Board
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Port of London Authority
- Getlink (Eurotunnel)
- Road Haulage Association
- Environment Agency
- Unison

3.12 Of those that responded to the consultation, 247 people chose to provide personal information which provides an insight into the demographic reach of the consultation, which is further described in the supporting equality analysis. The respondents included a good balance of geographies, with responses from all Kent’s district areas, gender and age, with most responses from adults aged 35-59. 31 respondents considered themselves disabled (as set out in the Equality Act) and 28 considered themselves carers.

3.13 The '*Kent's Future, Our Priority*' **You Said, We Did** document sets out in detail the views that were shared with us during the engagement and consultation process and how those views influenced and informed changes in the final plan. The main changes are summarised in Section 5.

4. EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 As the 5 Year Plan covers a huge breadth of issues that matter to all residents and communities in Kent, it was vital that we revisited our equality analysis regularly throughout the process. The initial Equality Impact Assessment screening was updated following engagement, consultation and discussions with KCC's Corporate Equalities Group.

4.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the equality analysis set out in **Appendix B**, which has informed changes to the 5 Year Plan. The key findings are summarised below. The consultation raised a couple of individual comments on specific protected characteristic groups (e.g. transgender, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community), which are accepted as important issues for the council but were too detailed to be included in the main plan. These will be properly considered and taken forward as part of refreshing KCC's **equality objectives** during 2020.

4.3 The main equality considerations for the 5 Year Plan included:

- There are no negative/adverse impacts on protected groups directly related to the 5 Year Plan. There is the potential for plan to have a positive impact on people from all of the protected characteristic groups through aiming to improve their quality of life.
- Consultation feedback said there should be more inclusion of older people within the strategy – references to our support for older people has been included in multiple outcomes, such as adaptable 'lifelong' and multi-generational housing for older people and extra care housing, sufficient health and care infrastructure for an ageing population and services to support connected communities where older people feel included, involved and less isolated.
- Consultation feedback cited the importance of public transport which disproportionately affects older or younger people, those with disabilities and those without access to a private car. Sections on public transport, integrated travel, bus travel and sustainable transport (e.g. walking and cycling) have all been updated and strengthened as a result.
- Any specific proposals or changes arising from the delivery of the 5 Year Plan will be subject to equality analysis and consideration of equality impacts.

5. YOU SAID, WE DID – KEY CHANGES FOLLOWING CONSULTATION

5.1 The Leader has carefully considered the consultation feedback and updated equality analysis which has helped to inform the final changes to the 5 Year Plan, and discussed this with Cabinet Members. Important points and constructive suggestions were raised during the consultation which has resulted in extensive changes from the consultation draft.

- 5.2 The detailed feedback and how this has changed specific sections and objectives in the 5 Year Plan is set out in the '**You Said, We Did**' document in **Appendix C**. A full design version of this document will be prepared for County Council and will be made available on our website, so people can see how their voice helped to make a difference.
- 5.3 The key general comments about the consultation draft and how we responded to those in the 5 Year Plan are summarised below.

Table 1: Summary of You Said, We Did general consultation feedback

You said	We did
The title should be less personal and more specific to Kent.	88% of respondents liked the draft title ' <i>Your Future, Our Priority</i> '. We agree it should be distinctive to Kent and have changed it to ' <i>Kent's Future, Our Priority</i> '.
The outcomes are the right things to focus on	We have kept the outcome the same and are pleased that 219 (57%) of respondents fully supported and 137 (36%) partly supported the outcomes as reflecting issues that were important to their quality of life.
KCC needs to be clear how it will deliver the plan and if it has the capacity to deliver within funding restraints	We have included a new section early on to explain this. We have made the objectives within each outcome clearer and more action focused and signposted detailed plans and strategies. It is important that the 5 Year Plan is realistic, so our 2020-21 budget has made available additional investment for the spending priorities identified in the 5 Year Plan.
Progress needs to be clearly measurable	We have committed to developing a framework for measuring the 5 Year Plan and making this publicly available. We have included more detail in an improved 'How will we measure success?' section.
The plan is long and the language can be hard to understand	The plan covers a large range of issues which people felt were important to include. We have simplified the text, objectives and removed acronyms where possible. We know that not everyone will want to read the full plan so we will produce a plan on a page and residents summary in plain, simple language.
The outcomes should be in a different order	We carefully considered comments about putting environment and people outcomes first. The outcomes are all inter-linked and equally important, but we think this order is the most logical way to flow from one topic to another.
More context is needed about things that will be important in Kent over the next 5 years	We have included a new section at the start of the plan called 'What could affect the 5 Year Plan?', which outlines major changes such as national Government policy, climate change and digital technology. We have also updated the 'Kent's Strengths and Challenges' sections to provide additional context.
KCC needs to be honest about things	We agree it is important to be clear about the direct role of the council, where we have a convening role,

<i>You said</i>	<i>We did</i>
that are not in their direct control	or the issues are the responsibilities of other partners and providers. We have updated the text to make this clearer, including on housing, local planning, transport, highways, rail and buses.

5.4 We received many detailed comments about the outcomes and objectives. We've reflected as much of the main themes of consultation feedback as possible, however in a high-level, countywide plan it is not always appropriate to respond to detailed policy or issues in specific locations. We will share this more feedback with services and partners to inform our service delivery and strategy development. The main changes that have been made from the consultation draft are summarised below. The figures relate to those who answered set consultation questions online, via post or email.

Table 2: Summary of You Said, We Did outcome consultation feedback

<i>You said</i>	<i>We did</i>
Outcome 1: Enterprise and investment	
135 (37%) of people fully supported and 138 (38%) of people partly supported Outcome 1 objectives. Strengthen content on town centres and high streets, garden towns and communities, inward investment, adult skills and creative industries (including those beyond East Kent). Recognise the role of further and higher education and cultural organisation partners.	We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues. We expanded the 'Ambitious people and places' section to provide more context about challenges in different parts of Kent and to be clearer about our role. We added a new paragraph on creative industries. We substantively improved the 'Sustaining Kent's town centres' and 'Skills for life' sections to respond to partner and staff feedback. We included new partnership objectives to better reflect and value the role of our partners.
Outcome 2: Securing sustainable infrastructure	
118 (32%) of people fully supported and 141 (38%) of people partly supported Outcome 2 objectives. Support for the 'infrastructure first' ambition and concern about housing growth. Clarify that housing and local planning is not in KCC's direct control. Recognise different issues in different parts of Kent (e.g. viability). Strengthen content on affordable housing, sustainable and flexible housing design and protecting Kent's natural environment and green spaces in development.	We clarified KCC and partner roles in this outcome and strengthened our response on housing growth to reflect the strength of comments of this issue. We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues, including respecting different solutions and needs for each area and added more content on affordable housing. We substantially improved the 'High quality design' section to better reflect older people and sustainability. We have included new partnership objectives to reflect the role of our partners and incorporate suggestions we received from partners in the consultation feedback.

You said	We did
Outcome 3: Connected transport and communities	
<p>108 (29%) of people fully supported and 152 (41%) of people partly supported Outcome 3 objectives. This outcome received the greatest number of comments during the consultation. Recognise the impact of the quality of the roads and congestion on Kent's residents and challenges of connectivity in rural areas. Strengthen content on lorry parking, buses, rail, integrated travel and sustainable travel including walking and cycling, linked to congestion, carbon reduction and air quality.</p>	<p>We clarified KCC and partner roles in this outcome. We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues, including being clear on the national, regional and Kent transport policy position. We added a new section on 'Tackling congestion'. We have separated out the 'Integrated travel' and 'Importance of bus travel' sections and substantially improved these to reflect the comments we received. We improved the renamed 'walking and cycling' section (previously active travel) and added more on sustainable transport and modal shifts. We added more specific KCC and partnership objectives.</p>
Outcome 4: A cleaner and greener Kent	
<p>121 (33%) of people fully supported and 149 (40%) of people partly supported Outcome 4 objectives. Strengthen content on the climate emergency, climate resilience and adaptation. Be clear about KCC's action and where there is joint work with partners on carbon reduction and air quality. Include more objectives on ecology and natural environment. Recognise the importance of litter and fly tipping enforcement, flooding and green business growth.</p>	<p>We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues. We separated out sections on 'Responding to the climate emergency and climate adaptation' and 'Climate resilience, with clearer descriptions of KCC and partnership actions, aligning this to consultation responses received on the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. We improved content on fly tipping, protecting the environment (including tree planting), biodiversity and flooding as a result of partner and resident feedback. We included new content on supporting green business and infrastructure. Comments on sustainability and climate adaptation also helped to improve Outcome 2.</p>
Outcome 5: Stronger and safer Kent communities	
<p>124 (33%) of people fully supported and 152 (41%) of people partly supported Outcome 5 objectives. Support for Civil Society, opportunities to bring different people together and road safety objectives. The important role of arts, sports and culture is missing. Recognise the role of cultural organisation partners. Strengthen content on community</p>	<p>We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues. We included a new section on 'Enjoying life in Kent' to emphasise the contribution of arts, sport, culture and heritage. We strengthened and updated the text to reflect the forthcoming Civil Society Strategy which is currently out for consultation. We improved the 'Feeling safe' and 'A joined up response'</p>

<i>You said</i>	<i>We did</i>
safety partnership working, visible presence, serious crime, doorstep crime and domestic abuse. Include more objectives that recognise the role and work of partners.	sections to reflect partner and staff feedback, including new partnership objectives based on suggestions from our partners.
Outcome 6: Opportunities for children and young people	
120 (33%) of people fully supported and 149 (40%) of people partly supported Outcome 6 objectives. Highlight importance of sufficient funding for education and children's services. Strengthen content on prevention, inclusive youth activities, sports, arts, culture and nature experiences for young people. Recognise work of schools and colleges in mental health and transition between children and adult mental health services. Recognise role of further and higher education partners and vocational and technical training.	We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues. We expanded the 'A county that works for all children' to be clearer about our preventative and advocacy role to champion children, young people and families, especially vulnerable students. We added new asks of Government on special educational needs reform and funding. We included new content on sports, arts, culture and wellness, recognising this contribution to children and young people's wellbeing. We improved content on funding, prevention, youth offer and mental health. We included new partnership objectives to reflect feedback from our partners and made our convening role in skills clearer.
Outcome 7: Quality health, care and support	
117 (32%) of people fully supported and 132 (36%) of people partly supported Outcome 7 objectives. Highlight importance of sufficient funding for social care and health infrastructure/capacity in local communities. Strengthen content on KCC's role in social care market, wider determinants of health, older people and support within communities. Recognise work with partners on the health and social care workforce.	We updated the text and objectives to respond to people's feedback on these important issues. We separated out sections on 'Sustainable Social Care' and 'Integrated health, care and support' to make this clearer. We added new content on workforce based on our partner feedback. We included more of the role of housing in health and wellbeing and our market shaping work with the independent sector. We added new partnership objectives, based on suggestions from our partners.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the 5 Year Plan will be recommended for approval at County Council on 19th March. The County Council papers will include full design copies of the 5 Year Plan and You Said, We Did document.
- 6.2 The 5 Year Plan will be launched on 30th March, with updated website content on Kent.gov, alongside our final agreed Budget. The launch will include the publication of a Resident Summary.

- 6.3 We are committed to continuing the conversation with residents, partners and staff on how we are delivering the 5 Year Plan, including an honest and open reflection of our progress. Our Kent Communications team have listened to the feedback from Kent residents and will progress further communication and engagement with residents.
- 6.4 We will continue work with our partners on shared objectives and discuss with our staff about how to make the plan real and meaningful for the frontline staff who do so much to support our residents and communities every day.
- 6.5 We committed in the 5 Year Plan to developing a framework for how we will measure success and impact of the plan, including public reporting. We will provide further details on this in due course, but we know it is important to have a strong evidence base and an honest reflection of our progress, including both quantitative and qualitative information.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendations are as follows:

Cabinet is asked to:

- (1) **Note** the findings of the engagement and consultation which have informed the changes to the 5 Year Plan, summarised in this report and set out in detail in the supporting '*You Said, We Did*' document.
- (2) **Note** the equalities considerations set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, which has been informed by the engagement and consultation process.
- (3) **Agree** to recommend to County Council that they approve '*Kent's Future, Our Priority*' as the new 5 Year Plan for Kent County Council.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 8.1 Appendices for this item include:
- Appendix A: '*Kent's Future, Our Priority*', Kent County Council's 5 Year Plan 2020-2025
 - Appendix B: '*Kent's Future, Our Priority*' 5 Year Plan Equality Impact Assessment
 - Appendix C: '*Kent's Future, Our Priority*' '*You Said, We Did*' – How your feedback has helped shape KCC's 5 Year Plan
- 8.2 Background papers for this item include the 5 Year Plan consultation draft (February 2020).

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‘Kent’s Future, Our Priority’

*Making Kent the best place to live, work, play, learn
and invest in*

Kent County Council’s 5 Year Plan 2020-25



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Leader's Foreword

The 5 Year Plan for Kent County Council (KCC) has been shaped by a conversation with our residents, the people of Kent. We opened it by speaking to people about their experience of living in different parts of the county. We wanted to understand what they value most about where they live and the challenges their local communities face.

Over the last seven months we have listened to young people, businesses, voluntary groups and public sector partners, including parish and town councils. This helped to crystallise our thinking and we have responded to the challenges you've raised in the development of the 5 Year Plan.

We heard what your most important issues are: infrastructure before housing growth; the quality of roads; public transport and the visible services that help determine the quality of life; responding to the climate emergency and tackling social isolation. We used this to shape our objectives for the next five years, so we are clear on what we need to focus on as a council and where we need to work in collaboration with our partners. Our **You Said, We Did** document shows how your voice has made a difference. Listening to our residents has been hugely valuable and we want to continue the conversation about how we deliver better outcomes for the people of Kent.

Kent is a unique county – with its distinctive geography spanning from the North Downs to the East Coast; rural countryside in the Weald to the urban areas of North Kent; traditional market towns and villages to planned garden communities at Otterpool and Ebbsfleet. We have a proud history from our historic city in Canterbury and Channel ports, to a vibrant, modern economy founded on thriving small and medium sized businesses. The 5 Year Plan recognises Kent's distinctive challenges and opportunities, with the aim of improving the quality of life for all Kent's residents.

Kent is shaped by its peninsular geography bordering all the opportunities – and challenges - of London and Europe. Following the UK's exit from the European Union, we will need to maintain and strengthen our important international trade and transport links, continue to manage the pressures on the county's transport network and support opportunities for smart borders. Our relationship to London is critical. We must not be an area of overspill driven by the additional pressures that being part of London's hinterland can have on our infrastructure and public services. Rather, we must use our proximity to the capital to our advantage to encourage businesses to invest in Kent and connect people to the opportunities that London offers.

Kent has some remarkable areas of prosperity and dynamism, including high growth in Ashford and North Kent, thriving market towns in West Kent and the cultural renewal of East Kent's coast. However we know that as a whole Kent still faces greater skills, income and productivity challenges than other parts of the South East. We want to ensure the whole of the county benefits from enterprise and investment. We want to work with partners to create high quality urban environments that feel safe, attractive and accessible.

However fundamentally Kent is still a rural county and this plan marks a renewed focus by KCC on the benefits and challenges of rural life. Kent's 'Garden of England' identity is now being reimagined

New photograph of the Leader in a community setting

in new forms and we want to celebrate the success of innovative rural industries and cutting-edge research and development in agriculture, food and drink production. At the same time, we must address the distinctive challenges that rural communities face, including connected transport, services and digital infrastructure.

Kent has experienced rapid housing growth in recent years and the pressures for this continue. The message from our residents, reflected in this plan, is 'Infrastructure First'. Growth without that investment damages the quality of life in Kent and is unacceptable. Our residents want the right infrastructure in place to support new and existing communities. Kent must benefit from high quality development, with the necessary education, transport and community infrastructure in place at right time.

We want to shape communities where people feel connected and not isolated. The voluntary, community and social enterprise sector play a tremendously important role in this so we are investing more in the great work they do at a local level. This is part of our broader commitment to prevention, which goes beyond individual services to what communities can do together as a whole.

A significant part of our budget and statutory responsibilities are rightly focused on protecting and supporting the most vulnerable and our services work together to help improve people's quality of life. These services are extremely important but they are sometimes invisible to large parts of the population. We want to increase the impact and visibility of the huge variety of ways we make a difference in local communities every day, including highways, youth workers, health visitors and community wardens.

The County Council is uniquely placed to understand Kent's overall needs and to set out a clear plan with a strong, positive vision for the county that reflects the people we represent, to partners and the Government. With a shared vision, our voice is stronger, and we can collectively stand up for Kent's best interests nationally. We cannot do this alone – we must work closely with our partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector to achieve great things for a great county.

We will work to deliver on those areas that are within our direct responsibility. But we can often act the county's best interests through shaping, influencing and working with others, including central Government, district, borough, parish and town councils, businesses, the voluntary and community sector and public sector partners. Tackling the climate emergency is a good example of where we take action within our direct control in our own estate and operations, use our influence with commercial operators to improve public transport and provide community leadership to work with residents, partners and businesses to make a meaningful difference. Where communities want to lead great work themselves, we want to support this to flourish and succeed.

As we deliver the 5 Year Plan we will measure how we will achieve the outcomes in a meaningful way, including continuing to engage with residents about their experiences. I am committed to reporting back to you on our progress in an open and transparent way.

Kent is already a county to be proud of. We want to work together over the next five years to make Kent the best place to live, work, play, learn and invest in.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Gough', written in a cursive style.

Roger Gough, Leader of Kent County Council

Kent County Council's 5 Year Plan Summary

We want to make Kent the best place to live, work, play, learn and invest in.



Kent is an ambitious and successful county, with high quality jobs, skilled workers, enterprising businesses and thriving urban and rural areas.



Kent communities have the right infrastructure at the right time as the county grows, including roads, school places, broadband and utilities.



Quality roads and pavements, better public transport and alternatives to car travel help people to travel easily and safely around Kent.



Kent's residents can take pride in their public spaces. The natural environment that makes Kent so special is protected and we are leading climate action.

We are working together with our partners to improve the quality of life for all Kent's residents.

Our residents, young people, staff, partners and businesses have helped to shape **7 outcomes to help improve life in Kent by 2025.**

Stronger and safer Kent communities



Kent's communities bring people together, so they feel involved and supported. Kent is a place where people feel and stay safe.

Opportunities for children and young people



Kent's children have the best start in life and families get the right help and support when they need it. Every young person in Kent gets the education, skills and experiences they need for a successful future

Quality health, care and support



Kent's partners work together to improve everyone's physical and mental health, supporting people to live well with quality local care when they need it.



Each chapter in the 5 Year Plan sets out how we will deliver each outcome.

Our 5 Year Plan Outcomes

We want to improve everyone’s quality of life in Kent.

The 5 year plan sets out:



Outcomes What we want to achieve to further improve the quality of life in Kent

Objectives What Kent County Council will do over the next 5 years to deliver better outcomes

Collaboration Working with our partners towards shared outcomes and objectives

Asks What we want to secure from Central Government in Kent’s best interests

Our outcomes keep us focused on what we need to do to deliver for all residents, communities and businesses. Kent residents have told us they want simple outcomes that they can understand and objectives that are clear about what we will do. The outcomes have been shaped around what they have told us is important for a better quality of life and to create vibrant places across Kent.

By listening to residents, staff and partners we have defined seven outcomes:

Our Outcomes			
Enterprise and investment 	Securing sustainable infrastructure 	Connected transport and communities 	A cleaner and greener Kent
Stronger and safer Kent communities 	Opportunities for children and young people 	Quality health, care and support 	

All the outcomes are inter-related and complement each other. There are also some cross-cutting themes that we’ve embedded into each outcome:

- Accessibility, fairness and opportunity
- Quality
- Sustainability
- Joined up thinking and action with our partners
- Delivering statutory responsibilities, including social care, education, public health and highways.

Delivering the 5 Year Plan

The 5 Year Plan is ambitious about **what** we want to achieve over the next 5 years, working together with our partners. We know that a single plan cannot explain all the complex issues that Kent's residents experience or set out all the detail of **how** this will be delivered. The necessary actions and improvements that will make a difference to people's lives in Kent will be achieved in many ways:

Our Strategic Delivery Plan

The Strategic Delivery Plan is the detailed plan for how we will deliver significant activities to respond to the 7 outcomes. It is a rolling plan we update every year to make sure we have the right activity happening in the council to achieve our objectives. It includes major contracts, capital programmes (building new schools, roads, property assets), transformational service changes, lobbying to national Government and strategy development. In 2020, we have identified 41 activities which will be the priority for our Cabinet Members and Chief Officers. Each activity supported by detailed monitoring by a named lead officer. Our staff report on these activities every 3 months to make sure we are on track to deliver successfully and so we can tackle any risks by taking action early. You can find out more about the Strategic Delivery Plan [here](#).

Our Budget

Whilst we developed the 5 Year Plan, people told us about their spending priorities and how it was important that the objectives could be delivered within our resources. We have to make difficult choices to manage our budget, but we have made additional money available in our 2020-21 budget to prioritise on achieving our outcomes and sustained our commitment to highways maintenance expenditure. This will lead to positive changes such as investing in more Community Wardens, delivering council tax savings for care leavers and investing in climate change action. We will ensure the 5 Year Plan objectives are considered in our budget development, so they are achievable within the funding available. You can find out more about our budget [here](#).

Value for money for Kent's residents

We are acutely aware of the fact that the money the council spends comes from the hard work and efforts of all Kent's residents and businesses, especially as council tax and business rates take up an increasing burden on household budgets and company overheads. So, whilst we are ambitious about what we can achieve for Kent, we also want to be honest and realistic about what we can afford to deliver within the funding available over the next 5 years. We will have to continue to make some difficult decisions but we want to use the 5 Year Plan to prioritise our investment in the things which are most important to our residents.

Our fundamental duty as a local authority is to deliver best value for Kent's residents and balance the budget, so our services are sustainable both now and into the future. We will continue to achieve this through strong budget management, with transparent decision-making and spending decisions which are clearly aligned to the priorities of our residents and identified local need.

Our Plans and Strategies

Each outcome in the 5 Year Plan signposts the detailed plans and strategies that will help put the outcomes into practice. You can read more on our [website](#). An example is the Local Transport Plan, which sets out the transport projects we are delivering across the county with partners that will improve our roads and ease congestion. Strategies help to put the right action in place to deliver our outcomes, for example our new Civil Society Strategy will create additional investment over the next

3 years to support the brilliant work community groups, charities and social enterprises do to connect people together and do good in their local area. Our progress on plans and strategies, including detailed action plans, is regularly reported in public [committees](#).

Our Commissioning

The council has a significant role in the market, given the extent of our commissioning of services with providers, contractors and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. Our commissioning standards help to ensure a focus on outcomes-based commissioning. Kent County Council has set a clear strategic direction on social value with a commitment to maximising community benefits through all commissioning activity that it undertakes. We are dedicated to considering social value in a relevant and proportional manner, from the earliest possible stage in the commissioning cycle and as a standard part of designing and specifying any KCC service.

Our Services

The 5 Year Plan is what unites our staff across the council to improve the quality of life for all the residents we are here to serve. Every service makes a contribution towards delivering better outcomes, from youth services to recycling centres, befriending services for older people to road maintenance. Each service in KCC also has its own **Operating Plan**, which sets out what KCC staff will do day to day to achieve our outcomes and objectives.

Our Partnerships

We cannot deliver the outcomes without working closely with our partners. KCC is involved in many joint projects and multi-agency operations where we work together to improve people's lives. For example, we are working with Health on a prevention action plan to tackle serious health issues in deprived communities, working with district, town and parish councils and commercial providers to improve the quality of local bus transport, and working with Medway Council, Kent Police and Health in new child safeguarding arrangements which protect the most vulnerable children from harm.

We want to work in close collaboration with local government in Kent, recognising the creative work with district, borough, parish and town councils. We have many shared ambitions and there is huge value to building on existing work to deliver better outcomes for the residents we all serve. We will work together to continue the work to progress the delivery of shared partnership objectives. You can find out more about our work with partners [here](#).

How will we know we are making progress?

During our consultation, people challenged us on whether the 5 Year Plan objectives are achievable and how we will measure our progress. By their nature, improving long term outcomes is difficult and complex to measure, not least because it is not only KCC's actions that will make a difference, but also those of individuals, communities, partners and businesses across Kent.

We are committed to being open and transparent about how the 5 Year Plan is being delivered, with public reporting on our progress being essential to ensure we are accountable to Kent residents. But we want to give a more meaningful view of progress than easy-to-measure 'tick box' indicators. That will be more challenging and take time to develop, but it is important that we reflect in a meaningful way what impact we are having and if we are making a difference.

Creating a meaningful way to measure the 5 Year Plan is a key priority for 2020. We wanted to first be clear that we are focusing on the right things by consulting on the outcomes and objectives, before getting into the detail of how they will be measured. We want to be creative about how we do this and think about how this fits with the performance framework for the council. The last section of the plan sets out our next steps on how we will achieve this.

Kent's strengths

Kent is a county to be proud of, with its unique history, geography, natural and cultural assets and vibrant economy. There are many positive aspects to quality of life in our distinctive communities.

- Kent's proximity to London means we can take advantage of being so well connected to all the vibrant employment, business and cultural opportunities of the Capital. Our convenient location for London is what attracts many people to want to live in the county, with many people choosing to balance commuting to London with a good quality of life with Kent's exceptional natural environment and community services.
- Our strategic rail connections serve major London stations and we are the only UK county with a High Speed rail line connecting East and North Kent to London St Pancras, and internationally at Ashford. There are significant opportunities for integrated rail and bus transport including the Crossrail to Ebbsfleet extension and the expansion of Fastrack services in North Kent and Dover.
- Kent's people are our strength and there is a strong sense of identity and community across the county as a whole and in Kent's diverse and distinctive urban and rural places, including traditional villages, coastal towns and modern conurbations. Kent is home to 3,011 active voluntary organisations and over 2,000 social enterprises, supporting brilliant work in local communities.
- Kent is a good place to raise a family with excellent education opportunities, including specialist vocational training and grammar schools. 91% of Kent's schools are rated good or outstanding.
- Kent and Medway attract 65 million visitors a year, bringing £3.8 billion into the Kent economy and supporting 77,000 jobs. 19% of all inward investors began as tourists. Kent's nationally recognised cultural organisations and venues play a vital role in transforming the streets, boroughs and neighbourhoods where people live. Kent has a wealth of historical sites and assets which are integral to the character of our towns and communities, including the unique heritage of the city of Canterbury.
- 11.8 million passengers pass through Dover Port a year, with 11 million Eurostar passenger journeys a year, with Ebbsfleet and Ashford providing fast access for journeys to mainland Europe.
- Kent is renowned as the 'Garden of England' and our iconic natural environment is a major strength. We have an abundance of green and open spaces for people to enjoy, including 350 miles of coastline with blue flag beaches, 4,827 miles of public rights of way and 12,480 hectares of publicly accessible green space. Kent's unique ecology and biodiversity is renowned with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the Kent Downs and High Weald and 98 sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Kent's 'Garden of England' reputation is now being reborn with Kent's internationally recognised and award-winning food and drink production and rural industries. Kent is leading cutting-edge innovation in viticulture and horticultural technology, including at East Malling Research, Swale's Kent Science Park and Thanet Earth.

- Kent's rural communities are an integral part of the county's identity, with 26% of Kent's residents living in rural areas which is 77% of the land area in Kent. Our rural areas are home to vibrant community organisations and projects. Rural businesses contribute billions to Kent's economy and are the base for innovative and entrepreneurial local businesses, with high rates of entrepreneurialism and self-employment.
- Kent will be home to new communities to be proud of, blending new housing with quality employment, schools, health care and culture and leisure opportunities. In North Kent, work on Ebbsfleet Garden City is already progressing to create one of the first 'Healthy New Towns' providing over 12,800 homes and 32,000 jobs. Set in the countryside close to the coastal town of Folkestone, there are plans in place for Otterpool Park to become a new Garden Town, with an impressive 50% green space in the development to complement 10,000 new homes with job opportunities, schools, shops, medical facilities and other community amenities.
- Kent's peninsular position means our road, rail and port facilities are vital to the resilience of the county and the UK's economy and productivity. Each year £122 billion of trade in goods goes through Dover and over £115 billion through the Channel Tunnel.
- Art and culture continue to be a driving force for transformation in East Kent, attracting significant investment into the county for regeneration. The success of Margate's Turner Contemporary has welcomed 3.2 million visitors and brought £70 million into the Kent economy and Ramsgate's Creative Sector adds £85 million to the local economy. The regeneration of coastal destinations includes Folkestone's Creative Quarter which has become a vibrant urban village for design, film, music, digital and art, leveraging new investment to revitalise the town centre and harbour. Creative industries are also producing new opportunities to regenerate urban environments in Ashford and Tunbridge Wells, with imaginative new plans to transform local places, introduce digital hotspots and create new jobs.
- Kent's thriving economy is founded on 90% micro enterprises (with less than 10 employees), with unemployment in Kent below the national average. There are 71,500 enterprises in Kent and Medway, choosing to locate here to benefit from our excellent logistics, cost-effective commercial property and a variety of innovation hubs and business parks. This includes the UK's most successful Enterprise Zone at Discovery Park in Sandwich, which is a leader in life sciences, hosted in ultra-modern research and development spaces.

Kent's challenges

As a growing county with a changing population, Kent also faces some unique demands and challenges. KCC has a strategic leadership role to play to stand up for the interests of our residents and businesses in order to address these challenges.

- 1,583,500 people currently live in Kent. Based on current trends, this is predicted to increase to 1,835,800 by 2038, a 16% increase. Rapid growth will require careful planning to ensure services have the capacity to meet future demand.
- Kent will have the third largest increase in number of households in the country between 2016 and 2041. There is around a £4 billion funding gap for essential infrastructure to support housing growth in Kent and Medway to 2031 and skills gaps in the construction sector and key trades. Across the South East region, housing affordability in Kent remains a challenge for local people, particularly in West Kent.
- Kent's population change is driven by an ageing population, with people living longer with increasingly complex needs. The number of people over 65 is forecast to increase by 57.5% and the number over 85 by 131% by 2036. There is also an increasing number of younger adults with complex needs who require integrated care and support.
- There are distinct challenges and differences between different parts of the county, particularly East and West Kent, rural and urban areas and coastal communities. These places all experience different economic, social and transport challenges, so we need both countywide and local solutions to respond to different needs.
- The Index of Multiple Deprivation sets measures to help understand deprivation patterns for larger areas. Out of 19 upper-tier local authorities in the South East, Kent is ranked within the 50% most deprived areas on all these measures. Thanet is ranked as the most deprived local authority in Kent, followed by Swale. While, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells rank as the two least deprived local authorities.
- Growing population pressures mean we need to take climate resilience seriously to effectively prepare and protect communities for the impact of events such as severe weather and flooding. Air quality is near or below national Air Quality Standards in 39 areas across Kent. Kent's electricity grid network is already significantly constrained which could inhibit future growth and use of low carbon technologies.
- Whilst our proximity to London brings many advantages, it also means that Kent experiences influences and pressures from in-migration from London and the placement of vulnerable families into Kent by London Authorities. These additional 'London' pressures on our public services when we are funded as a shire county mean we need different responses in parts of North and West Kent to ease the impact on local people. This can mean we can lose out on a fair share of Government funding, compared to London Boroughs which have very different needs.
- Due to our position as the gateway to Europe, Kent receives more Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children than other areas of the country, placing further pressure on children's social care services and budgets.

- By 2022-23 Kent will need to provide 11,500 additional primary school places and up to 20,000 additional secondary school places. We will also need to provide 1,400 additional places for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, where ongoing financial pressures add to the need to make significant improvements to services for children and families.
- Transport connectivity in Kent can be challenging, particularly rail connections and travel to work time for people moving across and within the county. This can be particularly challenging in some rural areas and a lack of public transport availability can impact feelings of social isolation.
- Kent experiences high volumes of traffic with a disproportionately higher volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles using its roads than other parts of the UK, which impacts our air quality. Each year 2.5 million road haulage vehicles pass through Dover Port and 1.7 million trucks are transported through the Channel Tunnel Shuttles. Freight volumes are predicted to increase further over the next decade.
- A sustainable long-term solution for lorry parking is required in order to prevent disruption when there are delays at Channel Ports and to accommodate almost 1,000 lorries a night that are parked in lay-bys, on verges and in other inappropriate locations across the county.
- Despite our progress in improving broadband provision across the county, some rural communities still have areas of 'market failure' for superfast broadband and present particular challenges to secure and implement investment for future mobile infrastructure. There will be a need to significantly increase digital skills training at all levels to take advantage of improvements in digital infrastructure.
- Youth unemployment is above the national average in six of Kent's districts, primarily in coastal communities. Skills levels in Kent are below the national average at all levels and significantly below the South East average, with skills gaps in specific industries including construction, creative and management. Kent is below the national average on the number of people qualified to degree level or above and the percentage of students moving on to higher education is lower in Kent than the national average.
- We need to be prepared for the longer-term implications of the UK's exit from the European Union. Kent has experienced disruptive yet essential improvement roadworks, prepared our highways response and increased capacity within Trading Standards services. We need to continue to work closely with partners to prepare for the future arrangements with investment in smart borders and potential changes in regulations for goods and services and transitions in funding arrangements.

What could impact the 5 Year Plan?

The 5 Year Plan needs to be reflective of how Kent and the wider operating environment is changing. As we start a new decade, we need to understand what could impact our plan and be ready to positively respond to this. Some examples of big issues that will impact Kent include:

Population and demographic change

By 2025, there will be 1.68 million people living in Kent. From 2020 to 2025 this is a population increase of 86,300 people (5.4% increase). Our roads, schools and community infrastructure will need to be ready to support this growth. Whilst the working age population (18-65 year olds) is only increasing by 3.8%, our ageing population (65-90+ year olds) is increasing by 11.1%. This means we need to think about how our infrastructure not only supports a bigger population but a population with changing needs. For example, the right community services as people live longer with more complex needs, more adults with disabilities need ongoing social care support and demand for services for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities increases.

National Government Policy

Following the General Election in December 2019, the Conservative Government has been returned with a stable majority and set a new programme for Government over the next 5 years, including the UK's exit from the European Union. They have set out major policy challenges including reforming social care, speeding up digital connectivity, investment in infrastructure and 'levelling up' opportunities for communities across the UK. The Government has also indicated they could reform public services and devolve more powers locally. We need to be ready to influence and stand up for Kent's interests and take advantage of new funding opportunities to ensure not only the Midlands and the North benefit, but communities across the whole of Kent.

Different funding arrangements for councils

After years of careful budget management, we will be examining the detail of how new funding arrangements will impact the council. This includes a new Spending Review, Fair Funding and Business Rate Reform. This will all impact how we manage the budget and affect Council Tax and spending priority decisions. We know there are still major financial pressures on social care and children's services, but we also need to consider how we invest any additional money in place based and community services which benefit all residents.

Climate change

The momentum on the climate change means residents now expect action on environmental issues, including climate resilience, air quality, renewable energy and plastics. We need to take an active community leadership role to accelerate our progress to meet the net zero carbon commitments we have made with partners, to help contribute to national climate action and resilience.

Digital and mobile technology

Digital and mobile technology continues to evolve and transform the way we live and work. We need to commit to supporting innovation and research that will empower and connect communities and increase productivity. Technology also has powerful potential to radically change the way we work within Kent County Council to become a more modern, efficient council.



Outcome 1: Enterprise and investment

Our ambition

Kent is a great place to live, work and invest, with high quality jobs, skilled workers, successful businesses and thriving urban and rural areas.

Ambitious people and places

Kent is an **ambitious county**. We want to promote aspiration, enterprise and innovation so that everyone can look forward to a bright and successful future. We want to increase **fairness** and access to opportunity, improving life outcomes for all our communities, from coastal communities and rural villages to urban estates.

Kent experiences challenges of low **skills and productivity**, with lower standards of living in comparison to other areas of the South East region. West Kent's proximity to London is an opportunity to build on the economic success of this area but also brings challenges including housing affordability. As a peninsular county, East Kent and rural areas can experience additional economic challenges associated with peripherality. We are ambitious about working with our partners to make a real difference on these issues and **accelerate business growth** across all of Kent, with a particular focus on our deprived communities.

KCC has a direct role in economic development but we also have a significant **convening role** to bring forward collective action with our partners on economic challenges, including our close collaboration with businesses and district and borough councils. For example, improving skills levels for the existing population is a shared ambition that we can make real progress towards through a new Enterprise and Productivity Strategy and all Age Skills Strategy for Kent.

Our collective response needs to focus on improving connectivity and accessibility through better connected transport and digital infrastructure. This will help to **reimagine places** and make Kent an attractive place to live and invest. This is demonstrated through the transformation of East Kent's coastal communities which has benefited from its connection to the High Speed rail network. Kent's traditional identity as the 'Garden of England' is being reborn with innovative rural businesses and better access to high speed broadband unlocking new opportunities for rural areas.

We will continue to work closely with our partners to understand shared challenges and help find the right solutions to promote **economic growth in local areas**. We will use our infrastructure and investment powers to support Local Planning Authorities to successfully implement their Local Plans and create thriving places. We value and will support the role Kent's businesses play in increasing Kent's economic growth and prosperity.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver the ambitions in the Enterprise and Productivity Strategy

Collaboration with our partners

- Support the delivery of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Industrial Strategy
- Use our economic development and regeneration role to work with district and borough councils to reimagine the potential of places across Kent
- Work with the business community to tackle productivity challenges

Devolution and public service reform

We believe there is real potential for the Government to **reform** fair funding for public services, particularly to address the disparities in the way county services are funded across the country. Kent's scale and successful track record of partnership working means we should exploit the potential opportunities of **devolution**, giving us more power and control in order to improve the lives of Kent's residents.

With our partners we will work together to define shared lobbying positions. For example, we will urge the Government to secure our fair share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, to help 'level up' economic growth across different areas in Kent and fund regeneration and infrastructure projects that will benefit all residents.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Leverage more national investment in Kent's regeneration and rural initiatives

Collaboration with our partners

- Undertake joint lobbying with district, borough, parish and town councils to stand up together for Kent
- Maximise funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to invest in local partnership priorities

Asks of Government

- Open up the opportunities of fair funding, public service reform and devolved powers to Kent, working together with partners in two-tier local government
- Devolve a fair allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to county areas not just the North and Midlands, so all places in Kent can benefit from the Government's 'levelling up' ambition

Sustaining Kent's town centres

We want to work with partners to create a vibrant future for our urban environments, with a compelling vision for the future of our **town centres and high streets** to respond to the challenge of online retail. We need to work together to bring in the right investment to transform the look and feel of Kent's town centres and high streets, which also helps people to feel safer in their local community.

There is **no 'one size fits all' solution** so we will work in partnership, we will find the right solutions to meet the needs of different places, from improving market towns, small retail areas and urban centres to regenerating seafronts and coastal towns. We want to work closely with district, borough, parish and town councils to ensure we reflect this local distinctiveness.

Working with businesses, district and borough councils, we will respond to the changing face of town centres by reusing empty buildings to provide a mix of business and residential spaces that are right for the local area. This includes bringing commercial spaces back to life through the **No Use Empty** scheme and developing cultural, digital and leisure opportunities in Kent's high streets so they can adapt and thrive as community spaces. Developing enterprise skills is an important part of skills training, particularly for young adults, to encourage start-ups in town centres. We want to work together to explore how to make it easier for people to travel to town centres for shopping and leisure and support our local businesses who play such an important role in the character of our High Streets.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Invest in commercial space to enhance the economic success of urban areas

Collaboration with our partners

- Deliver the No Use Empty Commercial scheme to bring empty properties in Kent's coastal towns back to life
- Establish a Kent High Street Commission with partners to transform town centre regeneration
- Work with Kent Police on shared intelligence to reduce crime and improve safety in town centres
- Work with partners including the Kent Foundation to develop enterprise skills to encourage start-ups in town centres

Asks of Government

- Invest greater funding from the national Future High Streets Fund in Kent's town centres

A great place to live, work and invest

Kent is already a great place to live and work, but we know there is more we can do to attract people and businesses to the county. We need to make the most of our advantageous location between London and Europe, alongside developing a skilled local workforce and excellent strategic infrastructure. Kent should be the county of choice for relocating businesses and **highly skilled workers**, a place where people want to stay or move to. Close working with Kent's district and borough councils is essential to deliver shared economic development and regeneration ambitions, with the right local solutions. We will explore how best to achieve collaboration on creating the right balance of housing, jobs and skills to meet the needs of local areas.

If we want people and businesses to locate in Kent, it is important that we work together with our partners to create the right choice, variety and quality of employment opportunities and the right mix of infrastructure to support growth. All jobs also need to be supported by a range of housing opportunities, including **affordable housing** which is a challenge across the South East but particularly important for young people. We appreciate the draw of London, but we want to shape thriving places where Kent's young people want to build their futures.

We need to play our part in making a success of **garden towns and communities** by supporting district and borough councils to achieve their Local Plan ambitions to match housing growth with quality employment opportunities and services, supporting public transport infrastructure and a commitment to sustainability. These are complex new developments, so we will do all we can to collaborate with district and borough councils in the planning process.

Attracting inward investment for **creative industries** and arts and cultural regeneration has been transformative in the Creative Quarters in East Kent's coastal towns. This acts as a catalyst to reimagine areas as great destinations to live and work and encourages new businesses to invest in Kent. We want to continue to support and progress our shared inward investment projects with the Arts Council to build on this success across Kent, including projects in Margate, Folkestone, Ashford, Tunbridge Wells and the Thames Estuary.

To encourage investment, we want to support district and borough councils to consider the balance of **commercial sites** within new housing developments and promote better quality business accommodation including **innovation hubs, creative clusters and business parks** within their Local Plans. Kings Hill in Mid Kent, the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone in East Kent and the forthcoming Otterpool Park development are leading examples of how the right investment and infrastructure

can unlock business opportunities, including social enterprises, digital, research and development businesses. We want to consider how we can expand Enterprise Zones to attract new businesses, transforming the future potential of specific areas.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Actively promote business parks and innovation hubs as the place to invest in Kent
- Provide specialist advice to local planning authorities to support sustainable development in garden towns and communities, including transport, ecology, minerals and waste, archaeology and education

Collaboration with our partners

- Contribute to the successful development of garden towns communities, including Ebbsfleet and Otterpool
- Working positively with Local Planning Authorities to identify the right infrastructure solutions for garden towns and communities
- Expand the potential of Tourism Zones to maximise Kent's tourism and leisure economy
- Deliver shared inward investment projects in priority areas across Kent with the Arts Council

Ask of Government

- Establish new Enterprise Zones in Kent, building on the success of the Discovery Park in East Kent

Skills for life

Some areas of Kent, including rural and coastal communities, face challenges with lower wages and skills levels, or **skills gaps** in local labour markets. We know moving from a Level 2+ to Level 3+ skilled job makes a real difference to people's aspirations and quality of life. Whilst we want to achieve an overall increase in skills levels in Kent, we need to be realistic about matching the right jobs and skills to the needs of the local labour market, including a continued need for essential skills such as care and agriculture following Brexit. We will support the work of Kent's colleges and training providers to upskill and retrain adults to develop the skills employers need, now and tomorrow. We will set out our long-term ambition in the **Enterprise and Productivity Strategy and All Age Skills Strategy** to create the right conditions to move towards a higher skill economy in Kent.

Kent's **further and higher education** institutions play an important role in bringing education and skills opportunities to people in the county and are significant employers in their own right. We want to work with them on lifelong learning and creating the right skills for the future.

KCC has always been passionate about promoting the opportunity of **apprenticeships and technical and vocational training**. There have been steady increases in the number of people using apprenticeships as a stepping-stone to fulfilling careers. We support the move towards higher level apprenticeships and want to ensure we are measuring the success and quality of apprenticeship opportunities. This needs to be promoted as an option not just for young people but for people of all ages. We value the skills and experience of **older workers** and want to encourage employers and voluntary organisations to retain and use their skills.

Kent businesses understand that apprenticeships are an important part of modern **career pathways** and a creative approach needs to be taken to protect and sensibly reinvest the Apprenticeship Levy within Kent. We want to work with our partners to make the system easier to navigate for employers and potential apprentices, including exploring Apprenticeship Hubs such as the successful model in West Kent.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Expand apprenticeships for all ages and abilities, including hard to reach groups
- Deliver an All Age Skills Strategy to improve skills levels across the county
- Redefine KCC's relationship with Kent's Further and Higher Education sector and businesses
- Champion vocational and technical training opportunities

Collaboration with our partners

- Deliver targeted programmes to improve Level 2+ to Level 3+ skills levels
- Tackle unemployment and close skills gaps in Kent's most deprived areas
- Work with providers of education and skills to develop shared priorities in the Skills Strategy
- Work with partners to develop opportunities to retrain and upskill people with skills that meet the needs of Kent businesses
- Support the Enterprise Adviser Network to provide quality careers advice and experiences
- Work with district and borough councils and businesses to improve access to apprenticeships

Asks of Government

- Be bold and creative about the devolution of adult skills powers and funding to local areas
- Give much greater local flexibility on the Apprenticeship Levy so the money can be reinvested in local areas and not recycled back to the Treasury

Quality jobs

We understand that **job security and stable employment** is important to people's health and wellbeing and their ability to support their family, live in their own home and spend quality time enjoying life. The key to this security is often raising people's skills levels. People in Kent deserve **quality employment** opportunities that value people's skills and create better income prospects for the future. We know what a difference skills and employment make to vulnerable people's life chances and how important it is to help them overcome boundaries to employment. For example securing employment helps to reduce **re-offending** and supports people with convictions to improve their lives and make a positive contribution to their local community.

We know that Kent has some productivity challenges, particularly in the more deprived parts of the county. Kent must be open for business and have a range of employment opportunities, including **high quality, high value jobs** to enable residents to both live and work locally. In order to help working families, we need the right **childcare** and school clubs in the right places in their community.

KCC is a significant employer with large and diverse supply chains. This means we have a role to play in supporting other employers in the county to develop quality job opportunities. As part of our commitment to equalities we will work to close gaps in employment rates in specific communities, for example in areas of deprivation, care leavers and for disabled adults.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Work with Inward Investment Services to attract employers with high skills jobs to invest in Kent
- Ensure there are good childcare facilities across Kent to support working parents

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with businesses to create good employment opportunities for all skills levels in Kent
- Attract and retain highly skilled people within Kent, with quality jobs for local people
- Work with partners to ensure jobs match the needs of the local economy and workforce

- Work with partners to overcome barriers that vulnerable people can experience in accessing employment

Backing Kent's businesses

Kent's businesses play a vital role in improving the quality of life and wellbeing for local people. We want to reset our relationship with the business community and recognise the role of micro, small and medium sized enterprises as the backbone of the Kent economy. Our economic development role means we can actively support business development and leverage our **role in the market**. For example, we spend £400 million on local social care businesses, so we have a role to support these businesses to grow and develop as part of a sustainable social care market throughout the County.

Kent businesses have told us that it is vital for businesses that there is the right **infrastructure** in place to support business growth, for example business space, broadband and transport connectivity and the right mix of housing and education opportunities to attract and retain the workforce. We need to consider what more we can do together to create the right conditions for business growth.

We want to encourage innovation by facilitating better access to **quality business support**, to support the sustainable growth and transition of micro, small and **social enterprises**, in a way which best meets their needs. We fully support **business mentoring** for businesses who want to diversify and expand, and encourage the business community to come together to support each other to succeed.

We will explore how learning from internationally successful cluster models could encourage innovation by bringing together businesses, technical and vocational education providers, higher education and research facilities at Universities. Enterprise Zones and innovation hubs will be an important part of the solution to connect businesses from different sectors together to improve innovation and productivity. We want to support **business improvement districts** which are developing projects to benefit businesses in a defined local area with a specific problem or need.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Work with the wider Kent business sector to better understand their needs and aspirations
- Improve KCC's connection with Chambers of Commerce and Business Improvement Districts
- Facilitate targeted support for micro and small businesses, including business support, start-up space, premises and transition funding
- Expand the role of libraries as business and digital skills accelerators

Collaboration with our partners

- Positively engage with the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, Cultural Transformation Board, Business Advisory Board and South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- Promote and advocate Kent business, working with our partners
- Promote business and social enterprise mentoring and coaching opportunities

Encouraging innovation and enterprise

Over the course of this 5 Year Plan, we recognise that there will be significant technology breakthroughs which will bring opportunities and challenges. These include future mobile technology, electric and autonomous vehicles, wider adoption of artificial intelligence, big data analytics, virtual reality and the Internet of Things. We will support Kent's businesses to be equipped to embrace these opportunities and be future ready.

Kent is a nationally and internationally recognised leader in sectors such as life sciences, viticulture and food production, with award-winning products and thriving local rural businesses. We want to expand Kent's entrepreneurial rural culture to enhance community enterprise in the **green and rural economy**. This includes developing entrepreneurial and digital skills which embrace new technology opportunities.

Innovation needs to be supported by digital connectivity, future mobile and broadband provision and upskilling to optimise the potential of new technology, whilst respecting Kent's natural and rural environment. We want to leverage additional national investment in '**smart countryside**', not just 'smart cities', by taking advantage of Kent's proximity to London as one of the world's largest digital economies. To do so we need to support the Government's Future Telecoms push for universal connectivity and lobby for a fair share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support rural innovation and tackle digital isolation.

Investment in digital technology will help to create more flexible work environments that meet the needs of employers and reflect societal shifts towards a greater work-life balance and diversity of employment, for example freelancers and the creative sector.

We want to encourage and nurture a **culture of innovation** within KCC and with our partners, including our local Universities. We want to use new technology to transform the way we deliver public services in more modern and exciting ways. We will bring our staff together to test new ideas, make better use of data and create new ways of working.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Develop a Rural Investment Delivery Plan to maximise external funding for Kent's rural economy
- Deliver a new KCC Technology Strategy to become a more modern and efficient Council

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with commercial providers to extend investment in future mobile and digital technology
- Work with Kent Police on innovation in artificial intelligence and big data analytics
- Develop entrepreneurial and digital skills training opportunities

Ask of Government

- Invest in research, development and digital connectivity to promote innovation

Enterprise and investment

- Smarter, Faster, Together: South East Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Strategy
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Strategy 2018-2023
- *South East Local Enterprise Partnership Industrial Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Skills Strategy (to be developed from 2020)*
- *Rural Strategy (to be developed from 2020)*



Outcome 2: Securing sustainable infrastructure



Our ambition

Kent communities have the right infrastructure at the right time as the county grows, including roads, school places, broadband and utilities

Infrastructure first

As a gateway peninsula close to London, Kent has always been a vibrant, continually evolving county. Whilst growth brings opportunities, it also causes significant infrastructure challenges as our demographics change and the population increases to 1,835,800 by 2038. There is a £4 billion gap in funding in Kent and Medway to deliver the **sustainable infrastructure** that communities need.

Kent's residents and businesses are rightly concerned about the pace of housing development and the pressure this places on local infrastructure. In particular, North and West Kent are experiencing the impact of **London growth pressures** on their communities. An '**infrastructure first**' approach is critical before further housing growth. We firmly believe that the delivery of ever-rising national housing targets without the right infrastructure is not right or acceptable for Kent. We must be increasingly ready to challenge development where this is not the case. We recognise the need for well-designed communities that are well-supported with sufficient investment to meet the unique needs and issues in different areas across Kent.

We need to work together to collectively determine the key pieces of infrastructure the county and local communities require and then stand up for Kent's interests at a regional and national level to secure them. Where possible, KCC will work closely with our partners to secure sufficient **forward funding** to meet Kent's immediate and future infrastructure needs and work together to address varying viability for housing development across the county.

Physical infrastructure needs to be complemented by the right public **service provision** to support quality of life, including essential transport, education, digital and health services. By working together to influence the planning process we will help to ensure the right **local service provision** such as school and nursery places, GP capacity and community, sports, arts and waste facilities.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Champion an 'infrastructure first' approach so housing growth is complemented by sufficient physical, economic, cultural and social infrastructure
- Deliver a 10 year capital programme, so we invest in the right education, highways and community projects that will benefit new and existing communities

Collaboration with our partners

- Secure funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership for essential local projects
- Work with partners in Kent and Medway to secure forward funding for the infrastructure to support new development

Ask of Government

- Prioritise the relationship with Kent and Medway, building on the strong track record of working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Homes England
- Deliver fair, sustainable funding from the Education Skills Funding Agency, to deliver the right schools and education

Supporting our partners in infrastructure and planning

Kent County Council has a statutory and strategic infrastructure duty which supports Local Planning Authorities. As we do not have direct responsibility for housing or local planning, it is vital that we work collaboratively and constructively with our district and borough council partners to help secure the right infrastructure for a growing county that takes account of the needs of local communities. Kent and Medway were the first multi-tier area nationally to agree a joint **Growth and Infrastructure Framework** and a **Housing Strategy**, which has supported us in taking a more strategic view of Kent's planning and infrastructure needs and underpinned a single, collaborative dialogue with Government.

We know this shared approach is successful and we want to expand on this by developing our robust evidence base to use as a collective lobbying tool to maximise external funding. Kent and Medway Leaders and Chief Executives have already agreed to come together to pursue a potential '**Infrastructure Proposition**' with the Government and the time is right to embed our work on this together.

Housing delivery in Kent is amongst the highest of all shire counties and we are building on established and successful joint working arrangements between partners in Kent and Medway. We want to support the creation of vibrant, well-designed communities and homes that people are proud to live in – Kent's residents deserve more than chasing national housing targets or bland housing developments.

We recognise how important the issue of affordable housing, including social housing and affordable rents, is for Kent's residents. We have worked with our partners in an Affordable Housing Select Committee to see how we can work better together to make a difference on this issue and this is reflected in the forthcoming Kent and Medway Housing Strategy. There needs to be a balance of **affordable housing** options and consideration of quality **housing density** schemes in urban areas, particularly in North, West and Mid Kent. It is important that we have a collective understanding of the impact of new housing growth on existing residents and the local community infrastructure, whilst prioritising availability for existing Kent communities so they are not priced out of the market.

This means we need to work closely with Central Government, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, and all Kent's Local Planning Authorities to secure sustainable infrastructure through the planning process. **National planning policies** are not always conducive to responding to local need and sometimes drive perverse incentives for housing development that do not support local authority partners and communities to work together, for example the fragmented approach to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Refresh the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Be an active member of Kent Housing Group, working collaboratively with Kent's housing sector
- Progress the Affordable Housing Select Committee action plan

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with partners in Kent and Medway to expand the Growth and Infrastructure Framework approach into a strategic overview and evidence base for joint lobbying to Government
- Work together with Kent district and borough councils and Medway Council towards an Infrastructure Proposition with Government
- Deliver our shared commitments in the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy

Ask of Government

- Secure an 'Infrastructure First' proposition for Kent and Medway, to leverage national investment in the infrastructure and quality housing the county needs
- Provide clarity on future arrangements for developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy, so we can speed up forward funding for community facilities
- Allow flexibilities in planning and developer contribution policies that can unlock the uplift in land value from planning permissions to raise investment for infrastructure

Working together to create well-designed communities

Despite these national challenges, within Kent we want to work more closely with our district and borough council partners to **help shape emerging Local Plans**, progress strategic planning applications and make full use of Developer Contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy, recognising the distinct arrangements in each local area. We support community and neighbourhood involvement in development decisions, including neighbourhood development plans and welcome the role of parish and town councils in promoting the resident and local community perspective in planning.

Local Plans need to consider population growth, the changing needs of our communities and future advances in technology. We will work with Local Planning Authorities to **maximise developer contributions** across Kent's new and existing communities, so all residents benefit from enhanced community facilities.

It can take too long to secure developer contributions to fund the infrastructure communities need. We need to find constructive ways to work with developers and the Government to speed up the process of securing **sufficient forward funding**. Where necessary, with our district and borough council partners, we will seek to engage developers and key stakeholders including Homes England to explore innovative new ways of securing the right infrastructure at the right time for local people.

Jointly with district and borough councils, we will continue to work collaboratively with developers on issues such as unblocking stalled sites particularly where viability is an issue and finding innovative ways to **discouraging land banking** where it still occurs. Together we will seek to distribute growth more fairly across the county, not just in the most commercially profitable sites. We will work with one Kent voice to **prioritise brownfield development** and balance residential and commercial development.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Update our approach and guidance on developer contributions (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy) to influence investment in infrastructure
- Using our role as a strategic authority to influence the accessibility and provision of infrastructure and public services and their link to housing developments within district and borough Local Plans
- Create stronger relationships with development corporations

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with district, borough, town and parish councils to maximise developer contributions for facilities that benefit the whole community
- Work with district, borough, town and parish councils through the Community Infrastructure Levy Boards to plan appropriate infrastructure for future growth

- Maximise opportunities for construction training opportunities in local building projects
- Work with town and parish councils and communities to champion neighbourhood planning
- Work with district and borough councils to prioritise brownfield sites
- Work with district and borough councils to balance residential and commercial development
- Undertake joint lobbying with district, borough, town and parish councils on land banking, to unlock housing, particularly affordable housing, across the county

High quality design

We want to challenge and motivate housing developers to deliver **high quality, sustainable housing** design and developments across the county, working through Local Plans and with the Local Planning Authorities. An essential part of quality design is building in safety and wellbeing as intrinsic elements of good planning. As the needs of our population changes, we want to work with key partners including district, borough, town and parish councils, Housing Associations and Registered Providers to create housing that is flexible. Homes should be built to lifetime standards to adapt to the needs of **different generations** and learn from international models on inter-generational living.

By understanding our demand forecast we can plan to deliver high quality Extra Care housing and accommodation solutions for an ageing population and increasing demand from working age adults with social care needs. Housing design and creative use of new technology including the Internet of Things, needs to support the needs of **older residents** so they can remain in their homes safely for as long as possible with minimal adaptations required. This needs to be complemented by wraparound services by health, social care and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector that support independence.

Good quality design is an opportunity to prevent anti-social behaviour and improve public safety in new and existing developments. We want to work with partners, including health and Kent Police to '**design out**' crime and 'design in' health, safety and wellbeing. The quality of people's home environment affects mental health, so we also want to influence good design to enhance emotional wellbeing.

We will collaborate with Local Planning Authorities on **green infrastructure** to promote climate resilience and adaptation in new development, with developments that deliver high levels of energy and water efficiency, sustainable travel options and new homes that are fit for the future. This will include ensuring the new Kent Design Guide promotes housing that is resource efficient, supports net zero emissions, protects biodiversity and creates quality green spaces in new housing developments. We must work together to ensure development preserves the character of the surrounding natural environment and safeguards the unique character of **rural** life.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Refresh the Kent Design Guide to influence good quality design in new housing developments, including appropriate highways standards
- Develop the right provision of extra care housing and accommodation for children, young people and adults to support people's changing social care needs

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with district and borough councils, Kent Police and health partners on how well-designed housing and communities can improve health, safety and wellbeing
- Develop a net zero strategic planning framework for Local Plans and key developments

- Develop opportunities for low carbon housing development with energy generation technology

'Future ready' infrastructure

Transport infrastructure needs to be sustainable and well-connected to support people's journeys to work and learn. We must respond to future modal shifts including smart infrastructure and flexible/remote working. We will work positively with utilities companies in their 20-30 year plans to support investment and improvement in **utilities** infrastructure (including energy, waste and water) to benefit both new and existing communities.

We want to respond to the Government's fast-paced shift towards universal connectivity by securing the maximum investment in Kent's future **digital infrastructure**. Our partnership work with the Government's Building Digital UK team has already brought faster broadband to over 138,000 Kent homes and businesses who would have otherwise been left with no, or slow, broadband. Further accelerating the implementation and adoption of superfast broadband and future mobile technology will promote innovation, productivity and digital inclusion for everyone.

In our economic development leadership role, we want to maximise market led investment in providing **'full fibre'** internet connection to homes and businesses, which allows for much faster internet speeds, including in rural areas that currently experience poor connectivity. We will actively work with the Government and commercial providers to minimise and address areas of market failure so everyone in Kent benefits. However, we understand the disruptive impacts that full fibre implementation can have on local communities and businesses, so we want to work with our partners to understand the complexities of delivering in Kent's rural and isolated areas.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver the £2.8 million Kent 'Top-Up Voucher' to help those communities and businesses in the hardest-to-connect locations get faster broadband, particularly supporting rural businesses
- Progress Kent's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme, to put in place the 'future ready' digital infrastructure and promote sustainable connectivity
- Develop a Kent Digital Infrastructure Plan to maximise national investment which meets the needs of Kent's distinctive communities.

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with Government and commercial providers to tackle areas of poor digital connectivity in Kent, as part of the Government's ambition for universal connectivity within the next 10 years.

Ask of Government

- Enhanced Government funding and accelerated roll out for digital, mobile and broadband infrastructure to support Kent's economic growth and digital innovation
- Recognise the added value of the role of local authorities in working with Government to secure sufficient resource for digital investment to meet the needs of local communities and businesses

Securing sustainable infrastructure

- [Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework](#)
- [Creating Quality Places Framework \(to be refreshed in 2020\)](#)
- [Kent Design Guide \(to be refreshed in 2020\)](#)
- [Kent and Medway Housing Strategy \(launched 2020\)](#)
- [Kent Broadband Programme](#)



Outcome 3: Connected transport and communities



Our ambition

Quality roads and pavements, better public transport and alternatives to car travel help people to travel easily and safely around Kent

Transport in Kent

Kent is England's most populated shire county, with a network of small towns and 73% rural land area, intersected by a nationally and internationally important strategic motorway and rail network. Transport **connectivity and accessibility**, both across and throughout Kent, is vital for the county and UK economy. Our road and rail transport connections to London are essential, with good transport connectivity necessary for Kent's businesses to operate and grow.

Although Kent County Council is not directly responsible for strategic motorways and major highways under the responsibility of Highways England or public transport such as rail and buses, our role in highways and transport planning and policy means we work very closely with national, regional and local partners and providers to improve transport connectivity across the county.

Following the UK's Exit from the European Union, investment in the quality of Kent's strategic rail and Channel **ports** infrastructure will be vital to support freight fluidity and ease of movement of goods which are the essence of a successful economy. Delivering high-profile strategic schemes in Kent's Local Transport Plan will provide resilient connections for passenger and freight traffic. We will work with national partners and businesses to support the development of '**smart borders**' and logistics, which avoid border friction using technological solutions, and ensure free-flowing trade whilst getting the best deal for Kent and Medway businesses and exporters. Our aim is for Kent to be a centre for excellence for this.

Kent's strategic position means we have close proximity to major international airports and ports. We continue to work with the **air and maritime** industries and our partners in Europe to encourage sustainable growth and acceptable airspace change and to support our Government's aim in achieving a low-carbon maritime sector. The area's inland and estuary waterways, including the River Thames, will play an important role in future modal shift to sustainable passenger modes for passengers and freight, helping to reduce emissions from roads.

Kent's strategic road network means that there are high levels of **freight** and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) travelling through the county. Essential upgrades and improvements to the road network will strengthen resilience and provide distinct routes for freight. Whilst this is vital to support the economy and logistics industries to resupply Kent businesses and residents on a daily basis, we understand the negative impact freight traffic and **lorry parking** can have on Kent's local communities. We will prioritise collective lobbying with our partners to secure appropriate funding and a joined-up, long term solution to these issues. This needs to include looking at enforcement and new technology options to divert lorries away from town centres and rural villages.

The **Transport for the South East** is submitting a proposal to Government to become a statutory body with devolved transport powers, which will include improving public transport. Kent County Council is a constituent authority in the Transport for the South East and will work collectively with partners to influence how critical transport infrastructure is prioritised and funded over the next few

years. We support the work to act as a unified voice to Government and take action on cross-cutting issues. We will work with our partners to develop and deliver an ambitious transport strategy which benefits the whole region, whilst also progressing our own Local Transport Plan to make real improvements at a local level, including opportunities to improve sustainable transport in Kent.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver priority projects in KCC's current Local Transport Plan
- Develop a new Local Transport Plan for Kent, which reflects Kent's transport priorities and the forthcoming Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy
- Create a stakeholder board to address maritime issues
- Progress the work of the KCC Member Group on HGVs and Lorry Parking
- Investigate the potential for HGV control zones to keep lorries away from residential areas

Collaboration with our partners

- Support the development and delivery of the Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy
- Work with national and local partners in the Brexit highways and freight management response to keep Kent moving following the UK's exit from the European Union
- Support opportunities for infrastructure for growth in cross-Channel rail freight sector to help reduce road carbon emissions
- Secure and gain approval for effective, fully funded transport strategies within district Local Plans to provide a programme of transport infrastructure required to deliver housing growth
- Work with partners to ensure there is appropriate local service provision for overnight lorry parking and driver rest facilities that are required on a day to day basis
- Work with partners on safe, secure lorry parking facilities to reduce cargo and fuel theft

Ask of Government

- Work with all partners in the Transport for the South East to devolve powers to improve local transport and integrated travel in the region
- Deliver a sustainable long term lorry parking solution for Kent
- Provide sufficient investment in smart border infrastructure
- Devolve further local enforcement powers including for yellow box junctions and HGVs

Quality highways

The quality and condition of our 5,400 miles of highways and 4,000 miles of footpaths is vital to our residents' safety and daily life, impacting people's everyday journeys and the accessibility of health, education and employment opportunities. When we were developing the 5 Year Plan, Kent residents told us that the **quality of highways, pavements and roadworks** really matter to them and is a high priority. People also told us about the impact that congestion and the availability of public transport has on their daily life, which is especially important for younger and older people.

The availability and safety of on-street **parking** is also a concern for residents, so we are working closely with district and borough councils to deliver the review of on-street parking management arrangements, that are currently delivered through partnership agreements.

We appreciate how disruptive **roadworks** and highways improvements can be for local communities. We want to make sure that we prioritise essential works and get the quality of repairs right first time. We will extend the lane rental scheme to charge utilities companies for roadworks, in order to encourage improved working practices by utilities companies and challenge permit application when road closures are requested to minimise disruption for local people and businesses. We want to

make a visible difference on improving Kent's highways using an intelligent approach to demonstrate better quality and well-maintained highways for all our residents.

We have already secured significant **investment** in Kent's highways, leveraging Government funding for highways improvements and delivering our **potholes** and carriageway patching programme. We are making the money go further by prioritising and targeting the areas that need it most, whilst responding to the ongoing challenge of investing in maintaining the overall condition of our highways and drainage across Kent. This needs to be part of a long term sustainability plan so that we make quality improvements that last and deliver good value for money for Kent residents.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver our Highways Capital Programme to improve the road infrastructure across Kent
- Deliver our highways asset management approach to improve quality, reduce costs and maximise capital funding from the Department for Transport
- Deliver a new commissioning model to secure best value in highways maintenance contracts
- Visibly improve the quality and condition of KCC controlled highways
- Deliver non-urgent pothole repairs and carriageway patching to a good quality, using local contractors wherever possible
- Manage the utility opening of road assets to limit the impact of roadworks and diversions
- Extend the lane rental scheme to charge utilities companies for roadworks
- Launch a targeted programme to improve the quality of Kent's pavements and footways
- Update the Kent Design Guide standards to make highways and pavements safer

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with district and borough councils to deliver the review of on-street parking management
- KCC Members will work with communities, district, borough, parish and town councils to develop local transport improvement projects
- Further develop Parish Highway Improvement Plans, including considering ringfenced funding for non-Parished urban centres
- Involve Joint Transportation Boards in prioritising local projects

Ask for Government

- Allocate a fair share of the Government's five-year spending commitment on highways infrastructure to deliver essential improvements and transport infrastructure projects in Kent and set a path for the financial sustainability and quality of our transport assets

Tackling congestion

Kent residents have told us how strongly they feel about levels of congestion and how this can impact their daily quality of life. Kent County Council has transport planning responsibilities which mean we can play a part with our partners to create positive improvements. This includes improving transport infrastructure, promoting integrated travel, public transport, walking and cycling, which will all help to ease congestion.

Levels of congestion will also be impacted by big shifts in technology that impact the way we live, work and travel, such as electric vehicles, emerging transport technologies and changing working patterns. It is a mixture of solutions which will help to make a real difference to the volumes of traffic and the county's air quality, including positive incentives and disincentives for change.

We welcome the Government's future policy direction towards investment in sustainable transport which will help to better connect rural communities and tackle congestion in urban areas. We want

to work closely with our partners to seize new national funding opportunities that will support electric buses, cycling infrastructure, demand responsive transport in rural areas and electric vehicles. We will pursue successful funding bids so Kent residents can benefit from new Government funding. This supports our own policy ambition by taking action now to create a positive blend of sustainable travel options which support residents and local businesses by keeping traffic moving more freely around the county.

We want to be creative about how we work locally with partners to use our transport, environment and economic development responsibilities to help make a difference. We will work positively with district and borough councils in new developments to ensure there is a good mix of transport options to serve those communities, including public transport options. We want to work closely with employers and Local Planning Authorities to think about how we promote commercial space in new developments to encourage opportunities to work local and invest in digital infrastructure to support more modern and flexible ways of working.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Consider how KCC's future policies can best support sustainable transport now and in the future
- Explore how positive incentives and disincentives can help to change how people travel

Collaboration with partners

- Work with partners to pursue new national funding opportunities for sustainable transport
- Work with district and borough councils on sustainable and accessible transport solutions to meet local need, including creative solutions for new developments and town centres
- Work with Local Planning Authorities to locate co-working spaces, small office rentals and small industrial units in new developments so more people can work local
- Work with businesses to encourage people to make more sustainable travel to work choices

Ask of Government

- Positively support Kent bids for new funding for sustainable transport investment to benefit urban and rural areas in the county

Integrated travel

We will work with our regional partners on **integrated transport** solutions to meet the needs of our growing population and Kent's commuters, including improving the capacity and frequency of **rail services**, to ease traffic congestion and support easier access to employment opportunities. We already have a strong shared voice on rail transport through working closely with our partners and we want to be ready to stand up together to secure further improvements for rail travel in Kent.

We are supporting our partners to come together to consider the future potential of bus transport, holding a Bus Summit in 2020. We are committed to expanding Kent's premier **Fastrack** bus rapid transport system in Ebbsfleet and working towards the introduction of a Dover Fastrack service. This flexible and reliable mode of transport will help to transform people's journeys for work and leisure and encourage connectivity between bus and rail services.

We recognise the Government's digital initiative to make it easier for people to find bus information, timetables and fares. We are working on new technology solutions with app creators and commercial operators that will make it easier for Kent's public transport users to access information on ticket types, ensuring they purchase the best value ticket for their needs. We will support this

move to go **digital** by promoting cross county tickets such as the Discovery ticket and the rail integration ticket, PlusBus.

Integrated travel is founded on quick, reliable travel connections, which allow people to make their daily journeys for work, leisure and appointments as easily as possible. This is especially important for residents without access to a car. We want to improve transport connections to Kent rail stations, with connections that are flexible enough to meet the needs of rail users. To support this we will review the potential for **Demand Responsive Transit** services in Kent towns, which is a flexible mode of transportation that adapts to passengers' requests to help people make seamless journeys.

We want to work with our partners to create quality local transport options, this is particularly important in rural areas and for the connectivity of our major towns such as Maidstone which are hubs for bus and rail travel. We want to continue to work positively with district and borough councils to improve integrated travel for local residents. We actively support the development of **community transport** across the county and will build on our partnership work with commercial operators and community groups to develop new and existing schemes, supported by our continued investment in capital grant initiatives.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Renew our Rail Action Plan for Kent to promote an integrated rail approach, including passenger and freight services, in readiness for KCC's response to the public consultation for next South Eastern passenger service contract
- Consider broader rail safety and wellbeing issues, including preventative action on County Lines and suicide prevention

Collaboration with partners

- Work with commercial operators to design digital solutions for public transport information
- Extend our work with district and borough councils and community groups to further improve community transport schemes and the quality of local public transport
- Hold annual Rail Summits to champion additional capacity, new routes and frequency in rail travel across Kent

The importance of bus travel

If we are to tackle congestion on Kent roads and achieve our zero carbon emissions commitments, then the bus needs to be at the heart of our public transport network. At a community level, access to **affordable, reliable and frequent** bus transport, is vitally important in people's daily lives - commuting to work, getting children to school, attending health and care appointments and accessing leisure opportunities. We understand how important bus travel is for young people, older people and people with disabilities.

We are trialling innovative **rural bus pilot** schemes with Kent Connect and Kent Feeder services, in addition to supporting over 150 bus routes, 250,000 concessionary travel passes for older and disabled people and 35,000 children to travel to school every day. We have also run **electric bus trials** in urban and rural locations. Following these trials we will look to introduce electric vehicles to Fastrack in Ebbsfleet from late 2021 and will work with our operators to roll out electric or other zero emission buses across Kent.

We will work with partners to develop a **bus strategy** to set out a 15 year road map for improving bus services in the county. This will bring together our work on concessionary bus passes, the 'Big

Conversation' rural bus service pilots and other 'transport when you need it' initiatives. This will identify the right bus solutions to tackle isolation and lack of connectivity in rural areas and encourage modal shift to bus travel in urban areas. This will help to address the congestion challenge, examine how the Kent bus fleet can be taken to zero emissions and help us create innovative changes in services to support a greater shift to bus travel.

Quality Bus Partnerships are a positive example of voluntary partnerships between KCC, district and borough councils and bus companies. We are committed to working together to encourage the use of bus transport to help people get around more easily and to reduce traffic congestion and emissions. We will consider how we can expand Quality Bus Partnerships to improve local bus travel. We will use the partnership powers in the Buses Act 2017, to develop closer partnerships with our operators. These partnerships will focus on how we can promote the use of bus travel through service developments, infrastructure and vehicle investments.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Develop a Bus Strategy to set long term actions for developing bus services in Kent
- Implement the outcome of the rural bus services pilots to provide sustainable transport solutions for Kent's rural communities
- Bid for government funding for electric vehicles, bus infrastructure improvements and Supabus networks.

Collaboration with partners

- Hold a Bus Summit to progress the delivery of the Bus Strategy with our partners
- Expand the use of Quality Bus Partnerships to improve local bus travel
- Work with commercial providers to secure improvements in the quality of public transport
- Explore options for the devolution of transport powers

Walking and cycling

Growing volumes of car traffic linked to housing growth means Kent residents are concerned about **air quality** and congestion. They want alternative travel options to play their part in improving the environment and help people make quicker, healthier journeys. Initiatives such as the Kent Connected website are helping people to make informed travel choices to make it easier to get from A to B and to be more sustainable through **active travel** options, which include public transport, walking and cycling. This has additional benefits of reducing travel costs and improving people's health and mental wellbeing such as walking or cycling to school contributing to reducing childhood obesity. These options need to be safe and accessible for all residents, including disabled people.

We will promote walking, cycling and public transport options as viable and safe travel alternatives through our Active Travel Strategy, which is delivering a series of targeted improvements by 2021. We want to work with partners to explore how dedicated cycle lanes, bus lanes and walking routes be part of a mix of solutions to speed up journeys and make travel safer.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Build on the integration of transport information to help support informed travel choices
- Deliver the Active Travel Strategy targets to increase the use of sustainable travel options
- Create safer cycle routes with segregated lanes and dedicated walking routes
- Promote car sharing in new developments to improve air quality

Collaboration with partners

- Develop and adopt cycling and walking strategies with every district and borough council in Kent and with Medway Council
- Work with employers on active travel options in people's journeys to work

Connected communities

Connected communities is all about opportunities to bring people together, including from different ages, backgrounds, faiths and places. Kent County Council delivers valued services which support thriving communities, for example our Community Wardens who look out for vulnerable and isolated people and help people to feel included and connected.

We also have a convening role to support the fantastic work of partners, charities, community groups, volunteers and carers who create positive opportunities at a local level. We want to work together with our partners to tackle **social isolation** and support both **personal and community resilience**. Every community in Kent is different, so we want to be supportive of locally-led solutions that suit the distinctive needs of urban and rural areas.

Accessible, inclusive public services that meet people's needs and the way they lead their lives are essential to quality of life. The importance of a **consistently accessible offer of services across the county** was a key theme which emerged from our conversations with Kent residents. In such a large and diverse county, people felt it was important that there were **fair opportunities** for everyone and that we need to address the challenges of connectivity in rural areas. Residents told us some examples of where opportunities can feel unequal which we will address so everyone can benefit from all the county has to offer, for example the cost of transport can be a barrier to people taking up apprenticeship and job opportunities.

We want to be innovative and creative about how we maximise the use of **community assets** such as libraries, children's centres and cultural and leisure spaces. These civic amenities play an important role in providing places for people to come together to learn, play and enjoy new experiences. This enhances and enriches our daily lives, supports people to live well and creates the conditions for civil society to thrive in Kent.

Connected communities need well-planned community infrastructure that is supported by **integrated transport** and **digital innovation**, to promote easier access to public services. This is especially important for vulnerable people or those without access to cars. This means we need better public transport and digital infrastructure so people can travel to health and care services, access skills and employment opportunities and young people can more easily access activities they enjoy.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Support voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations to utilise digital infrastructure
- Deliver the Social Isolation Action plan
- Create opportunities for social inclusion through the Adult Social Care Strategy
- Maximise the role of libraries in connecting communities
- Be creative about how we use KCC's community assets and facilities to bring people together
- Invest in greater flexibility in the time of day disabled people can use concessionary travel to help them get to work

Collaboration with partners

- Develop new approaches to modernise community facilities and civic amenities
- Work with our partners to invest in shared spaces where people meet and enjoy activities

- Work with health partners to ensure new health facilities are supported by integrated transport

Connected transport and communities

- Local Transport Plan
- Our Approach to Highways Asset Management
- Active Travel Strategy
- Cycling Strategies
- Freight Action Plan
- Rail Action Plan *(to be refreshed in 2020)*
- Bus Strategy *(to be developed from 2020)*



Outcome 4: A cleaner and greener Kent



Our ambition

Kent's residents can take pride in their public spaces. The natural environment that makes Kent so special is protected and we are leading climate action

A quality public realm

Kent is a unique county with distinct and diverse places. People identify strongly with their local sense of place and want to feel proud of the communities they live in. Our residents feel strongly that we need to protect these spaces by looking after the **quality, maintenance and cleanliness of our physical environment**, especially town centres, local streets, beaches, public rights of way and green spaces. The quality of the public realm is important and the environment has a positive effect on residents' wellbeing and feelings of safety.

We already work collaboratively with partners to make a difference at community level through a joined-up response on issues such as recycling, air quality, litter and graffiti. Our Trading Standards services share intelligence with partners to crack down on fly tipping offenders and assist in bringing prosecutions. We want to explore how we can work even better together and provide the resources to make visible improvements at a local level.

KCC has already invested £250,000 to reduce the level of **fly tipping** in Kent, building on the close work already undertaken with district and borough councils, Kent Police and other partners through the Kent Resource Partnership. This will assist district and borough councils to undertake further enforcement, improve communications between all partners involved and better inform both householders and businesses of their responsibilities.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Explore opportunities to enhance local capacity to tackle litter in Kent's communities
- Keep our rights of way well-maintained to improve the look and feel of our public spaces

Collaboration with our partners

- Maximise joint working with district, borough, parish and town councils to improve the quality of Kent's public realm
- Implement the Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan working with the Kent Resource Partnership, district and borough councils and Kent Police
- Create a joint operational taskforce for fly tipping to tackle both commercial and domestic waste and target fly tipping hot spots
- Bringing together partners including Revenue and Customs, Local Planning Authorities and Kent Police in a cohesive partnership to tackle waste crime
- Work together with health, district and borough council partners to promote safe, child friendly green spaces and encourage families and carers to use these

Investing in waste management

We work in partnership with the 12 district and borough councils in Kent to find the most sustainable solution to dispose of Kent's household waste. We are committed to responsible **waste management and waste reduction**, with 99% of Kent's waste already recycled or recovered for energy. We are planning further work with partners to improve our waste and recycling services.

As the waste planning authority for Kent, we plan for future waste management capacity, allocating land to put in place **waste infrastructure** to support growing communities. We are undertaking a review of Household Waste Recycling Centres and Waste Transfer Stations to determine the capacity and facilities needed across the county and secure the necessary investment. This involves working closely alongside Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans and neighbourhood plans to ensure that this essential development is well planned with local communities.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver the Kent Waste Programme to transform waste management and critical contracts

Collaboration with our partners

- Maximise developer contributions for waste infrastructure
- Work with the business community to reuse waste

Ask of Government

- Deliver legislative change in sustainable waste management, with clear roles and appropriate funding for local waste authorities

Protecting Kent's environment

The **quality of Kent's natural and historic environment** is one of the outstanding features of the county. It is part of what makes living in the county so special and attractive to residents and visitors. Our spectacular green spaces, coastline, woodlands and wetlands are an essential part of people's quality of life, health and **wellbeing**.

Kent residents and visitors value being able to enjoy all the county has to offer, and feel that a strength of the county is the abundance of **green and open spaces**. Kent's network of public rights of way, country parks and our leadership of environmental projects helps to protect our natural assets and make these accessible for everyone. This supports tourism, work-life balance, being active and provides quality spaces for people to spend time together.

Our environmental responsibilities mean that we recognise our contribution to global and local challenges, working alongside partners and residents. It is vital we work together to **protect the environment for future generations**. We want to ensure Kent's unique environment, ecology and biodiversity is recognised, protected and enhanced.

We want to work with our partners to focus on Biodiversity Net Gain, an approach to development which leaves biodiversity in a better state than it was before, which supports the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. We are fully committed to supporting collective action on biodiversity in Kent and Medway through the Kent Nature Partnership's **Biodiversity Strategy**. This sets clear goals and targets for the restoration and revival of Kent's wildlife and objectives for how to better connect people with the natural environment and the benefits this brings.

We know environmental issues are a high priority for Kent's young people and we want to work with young people to develop a proactive social media campaign on environmental action, including targeted use of social media channels, blogs and vlogs.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Deliver the actions in the Kent Environment Strategy
- Promote country parks and public rights of way as an asset for our communities
- Deliver the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Deliver the Plan B: Pollinator Action Plan to enhance our ecological diversity
- Adopt and implement the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans
- Work with the Kent Youth County Council and other young people to develop an environment communications and engagement campaign aimed at young people

Collaboration with our partners

- Deliver the shared targets in the Kent Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Strategy
- Work with farmers, landowners and food producers on protecting pollinators
- Support Natural England's England Coast Path for the South East Region and access to the coast path

Ask of Government

- Accelerate the Government response to the 25 Year Environment Plan
- Ensure that new environmental legislation and regulations uphold and enhance our commitment to a quality environment once the UK leaves the European Union

Responding to the climate emergency and progressing climate adaptation

Sustainability underpins all other outcomes, so we have a community leadership role in the delivery of the Kent Environment Strategy to take action to address environmental challenges and opportunities. Kent County Council has formally recognised the UK Environment and **Climate Emergency**.

Our focus is on mitigating and adapting to climate change by delivering clean and resilient growth, generating renewable energy and taking 'no regrets' action to achieve **net zero carbon emissions by 2050**. This will involve shared commitments with partners and leading by example within Kent County Council to improve sustainability and energy efficiency.

Our response will be three-fold. Firstly we will take **action in our own estate and operations**. We have already achieved our five-year target to reduce emissions from our properties and services two years early. We are exploring how we can go further on climate adaptation for our own property estate, including the potential of new technology for smart assets to improve the efficiency of our buildings. We will bring forward plans with clear targets and milestones to achieve net zero emissions in the shortest possible time and intend to convene a Select Committee on Climate Change.

Secondly, we will use our **influence** on issues such as sustainable transport to support modal shifts and take action with partners and providers to develop innovative options for public transport, walking and cycling. Thirdly, we have a **community leadership** role to provide information, advice and expertise, so residents, partners and businesses can take their own action to reduce their carbon emissions and improve air quality. To support this, we are undertaking a Kent Climate Risk and Impact Assessment to inform the development of a Kent climate change adaptation plan to make a positive difference. Together this will form our contribution to achieve the zero emissions target for the whole of Kent and Medway by 2050.

We appreciate the importance of climate adaptation, which also helps to build our climate resilience. We need to manage resources well, including improving **water and energy conservation**

and creating a sustainable water resource for future generations. We want to promote **retrofitting** of existing buildings to adapt to better environmental standards. Energy efficiency measures and changing behaviours can help to reduce the emissions associated with wasted heat and lower energy bills.

We want to work with Local Planning Authorities and developers to ensure new developments **design in sustainability**, including efficient insulation, water efficiency and electric charging points for cars. The surrounding environment of new developments also needs to support climate resilience and enhance the natural environment by incorporating high quality green space, planting trees and hedges and making roadside verges better for pollinators.

We appreciate how much **air quality** matters for Kent residents in terms of the environmental agenda, health and wellbeing and the impact in local communities. Working with our partners to improve air quality is a priority for the council. We are working closely together with our partners to accelerate change through a Kent and Medway **Energy and Low Emissions Strategy**, which will be launched in 2020. The strategy will be supported by joint actions which are being developed with district and borough councils in Kent and Medway Council to deliver our shared ambition.

We are committed to working together with partners, residents and businesses to tackle environmental issues and encouraging changes in working patterns that support sustainable travel. Practical ways we can help include encouraging more tree planting, working with our supply chain to reduce their environmental impact, greater provision of electric charging points and promoting public transport, walking and cycling. We all need to play our part in achieving net zero emissions for Kent, including recycling, reducing food waste and supporting local businesses and the take up of their local products which have less food miles.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Deliver KCC's accelerated target of net zero emissions and climate adaptation for our services, trading companies and the KCC property estate
- Deliver an action plan for the KCC estate to enhance electric vehicle charging points, solar energy and water saving
- Deliver KCC's targets to increase renewable energy, improve energy efficiency and air quality
- Undertake a Kent Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment
- Undertake a KCC Select Committee on Climate Change and deliver the resulting action plan
- Plant one tree for every resident, to reduce carbon and enhance the natural environment
- Deliver priority actions for the Kent Environment Strategy Cross Party Member Working Group, including considering the right type and location for tree planting across Kent
- Promote environmental standards and carbon neutrality in our commissioning and supply chains
- Promote the use of electric charging points for cars, including in rural areas and schools
- Use the update of the Kent Design Guide to promote sustainable, resilient development

Collaboration with partners

- Work with partners across Kent and Medway to reach our shared commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050
- Support businesses and residents to help reach our zero emissions by 2050 target
- Deliver the Kent and Medway Climate Change Adaptation Plan
- Leverage funding to improve energy efficiency in homes across Kent, lowering people's energy costs and tackling fuel poverty
- Support Low Carbon Across the South East projects to help businesses adapt to climate change
- Deliver the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy actions

- Support the delivery of other partnership air quality strategies and clean air plans
- Lead by example to encourage people to grow, eat, buy, sell and employ locally
- Improve the quality of urban environments, including tree and hedge planting and green spaces
- Support the delivery of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership Clean Growth programme and Energy Strategy
- Support the development of a task group focused on local water management plans

Ask of Government

- Accelerate the UK's national climate emergency response
- Deliver a comprehensive national climate adaptation programme
- Increase grant funding for carbon neutral schemes and climate adaptation

Climate resilience

We have a direct role to play in supporting residents, communities and businesses to develop **climate resilience**. This is about effective planning and response to extreme weather events, such as cold, heat and flooding. Extreme and severe weather events impact infrastructure, homes, communities and the delivery of services, affecting both rural and urban areas. Taking action on climate resilience has additional benefits such as a decrease in congestion, health benefits from better air quality and increased outdoor activity, and improvements to our natural environment.

Many communities in Kent are vulnerable to **flooding** and coastal erosion. We are committed to using all our direct powers, supporting partnership responsibilities and securing sufficient Government funding to protect residents and businesses from the impacts of flooding. By working with our partners to make the right investment and planning decisions to secure sustainable growth we will help to ensure that infrastructure is resilient to flooding and coastal change.

We will proactively work with our partners on flood risk management and response, including working with Local Planning Authorities to encourage responsible development that protects flood plains. We want to promote a joined-up response to **drainage**, influencing the provision of effective drainage within new development as a material consideration in planning decisions, to further enhance resilience to extreme weather events.

We will support the delivery of the Environment Agency's future Flood Strategy. We welcome the move towards natural flood risk management, which uses a mixture of natural based solutions and recovery networks to protect areas at risk of flooding.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Champion the need for climate resilience and flooding to be considered in planning for new developments
- Deliver KCC's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Flood Response Plan

Collaboration with our partners

- Support the delivery of the Environment Agency's future Flood Strategy and future funding bids
- Work with the Environment Agency to explore and develop new standards for flood and coastal resilience

Ask of Government

- Provide greater flexibility in Government investment in flood management schemes

Supporting Kent's rural and green economy

Our **rural communities** are an intrinsic part of Kent's identity. We are determined to protect and defend our unique 'Garden of England' heritage whilst actively promoting the regeneration and vitality of our rural areas. We want to maximise investment in **digital connectivity** to unlock the potential of rural businesses and encourage rural community action and entrepreneurship so communities can create solutions to meet their needs.

We have strong relationships with businesses to promote growth in the **green economy** and make the most of new green technology opportunities. We want to build on this ambition and do all we can with our partners to incentivise green business growth and green infrastructure and skills development. A sustainable environment means Kent will benefit from a competitive, innovative and resilient economy.

The scale of our purchasing power in local markets means we can lead the way in taking environmental considerations into account in the **social value** of our commissioning, ensuring our specifications prioritise businesses which are moving towards being carbon neutral. We actively want to support businesses who have strong green credentials and which act in an environmentally responsible way.

Offshore wind and other renewables are a growth area of Kent and Medway's green economy, which maximises the potential of our expansive coastline and other natural resources. This industry is a significant contributor to the Kent economy and we want to support the expansion of Kent-based companies in the renewable energy sector and create quality employment for local people.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Develop a Rural Investment Delivery Plan, as part of a wider Rural Strategy to protect and maximise innovation in rural areas
- Develop a long term Low Carbon Economy Growth Strategy

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with Local Carbon Kent and Low Carbon South East to promote the green economy
- Encourage businesses to use green technology in their operations and logistics, including biogas and electric vehicles

Ask of Government

- Commit to a Government Sector Deal on offshore wind
- Provide incentives for growth of green businesses and development of green technology

A cleaner and greener Kent

- [Kent Environment Strategy](#)
- [Kent Country Parks Strategy](#)
- [Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan](#)
- [Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Flood Response Plan](#)
- [Rights of Way Improvement Plan](#)
- [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans](#)



- *Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Kent Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Strategy (launched 2020)*



Outcome 5: Stronger and safer Kent communities

Our ambition

Kent's communities bring people together, so they feel involved and supported. Kent is a place where people feel and stay safe

Supporting strong communities

Strong communities are essential foundations of quality of life, vitally important for people to feel connected to the place they live in and feel safe in their local area. We want everyone to live in a community that they feel part of, where people work together to solve problems and play their part in supporting members of the community when they need help. Many partners in Kent play a valued role in supporting communities to come together and we are committed to working with district, borough, parish and town councils, Police, fire and health and the voluntary and community sector, to help make this happen.

We want to ensure all our services work together to make Kent a great place to live. **Kent County Council already works every day in every community in Kent** – including through our Community Wardens, Children's Centres, youth services and adult social care services, supporting people where they live. We want to make this vital work more visible, so people know that we are there to help.

We are already making good progress, for example we are a pilot area for the Government-funded 'Breaking Barriers' project to improve wellbeing and delivering our Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy which demonstrates how community services can support people to live well. However, we know there is still more we can do to join up better within the council and with our partners, to take more effective action to support and strengthen communities.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Recognise and celebrate the day to day work of our staff in local communities
- Deliver local 'Breaking Barriers' projects and other community-based wellbeing initiatives
- Deliver the Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy, as anchor points within communities
- Develop the wider library offer for vulnerable and isolated people

Enjoying life in Kent

Kent is a fantastic place to live, with a stunning natural environment, a wealth of history, arts and culture to appreciate and enjoy. This has been the standout feature of regeneration in East Kent's coastal communities, including the Creative Quarter in Folkestone and Margate Old Town. Culture is a key driver for the prosperity of the county and the creative economy is one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK. We want to continue to leverage investment in **arts and culture**, creating experiences that people of all ages can enjoy, that attract visitors and residents to explore new aspects of all Kent has to offer. We will work with our partners to protect and preserve Kent's unique **heritage and historical assets**, which are an important part of the distinctive local character of the county.

We know that people's leisure time is valuable to relax and enjoy activities with friends and family. **Sport, leisure and community activities** are important to bring people together from a diverse range of ages, faiths and backgrounds. We want to support community activities that people can enjoy locally, targeting our grant funding to make these sustainable and encouraging innovative new ideas to thrive and succeed.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Invest in cultural infrastructure where there is proven potential for growth and prosperity
- Support cultural and digital activity that increases community engagement
- Continue to support sports in Kent schools, as a vital part of an active childhood
- Invest in community-led sports, arts and leisure opportunities in local areas

Collaboration with partners

- Work together to protect Kent's unique heritage and historic sites, including conservation areas and Heritage Action Zones
- Progress shared arts and culture projects with our partners, including the Arts Council
- Showcase Kent's reputation as a creative county locally, nationally and internationally
- Develop Kent's tourism offer, to grow the visitor economy

A stronger Civil Society

We are developing a **Civil Society Strategy** to create a stronger relationship with the vibrant Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Sector that operates for social good, enhancing our communities and the lives of our residents. Our relationship with the social sector must go beyond simply those that we commission services with - the majority of organisations have no financial relationship with the council but are embedded in our communities and shapes the places we live. We want to support these organisations to continue to do great things within their communities and allow them to flourish.

We want to engage with the diverse range of organisations, including registered charities, community and resident groups, social enterprises and active individuals within our communities. We know it is these organisations that help to build connected communities and make a valuable contribution to Kent's economy. A strong civil society is central to the identity of 'place'.

We will ensure we create the right environment for strong, cohesive and resilient communities to thrive and help each other, driven by a strong sense of **social responsibility**. Our relationship with civil society and the support we provide will help to facilitate innovative local action, support organisations to grow and respond to the needs of communities.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver KCC's Civil Society Strategy
- Develop a new support offer for the social sector, including grass-roots community activities
- Develop a new model to enhance the role of Members in championing their local communities.

Collaboration with our partners

- Working together to ensure the social sector has the capacity to meet the needs of communities
- Actively support district, borough, parish and town councils, cultural organisations and community groups who play an active and important role within their local community
- Support the delivery of the Kent Association of Local Council's 5 Year Plan

Ask of Government

- Provide sustainable funding to counties to deliver the aims of the national Civil Society Strategy

Investing in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector

Kent has a diverse and thriving VCSE sector, with a total income of £397.7 million in active voluntary organisations. We understand there are challenges for the sector including to secure the funding they need to remain independent, sustainable and resilient. Representatives of the sector have also told us that they would value more opportunities to **collaborate** with other organisations to achieve their goals and to be able to communicate more widely about what they can offer.

To support the sector we need to increase **access to blended funding** (including grants, crowdfunding and social loans) and create opportunities for networking with other VCSE organisations, businesses and KCC. VCSE organisations have told us that accessing **business support** and expertise in order to grow and develop can be a challenge. We will work with the sector and with our partners and local businesses to allow them to more easily access affordable expert advice and support.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Develop a new business support offer for VCSE organisations
- Create an ongoing and open dialogue with the VCSE sector
- Expand our commitment to provide networking opportunities for the VCSE sector
- Transform our grant funding, including exploring crowdfunding and new commissioning models

Collaboration with our partners

- Renew our relationship with the social sector to recognise the diversity of VCSE organisations
- Work together to advocate the VCSE sector and value their contribution to the local economy

Supporting rural communities

Kent's rural communities have a strong sense of identity and community, with a diverse range of community led activities and groups. We want to support and encourage this **community action**, where rural communities are coming up with innovative ideas of what works best for their local area.

However, we know that rural areas can also experience challenges in terms of isolation, accessibility of public services, availability of public transport and speed of broadband. We want to consider how KCC services can better support rural areas, for example supporting small rural schools and delivering social care in isolated areas where there can be difficult employment issues. We need to work with our partners to tackle some of the unique community safety issues that may impact landowners, businesses and residents. We will develop an ambitious **Rural Strategy** to address these challenges, empower rural communities and better support rural life in Kent.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Develop an ambitious new Rural Strategy, to better support rural life and access to services
- Support community action and enterprise in Kent's rural communities
- Tackle rural safety issues which are important to local communities

Ask of Government

- Support the work of Parish Councils in rural communities

Ask of Government

- Enhance national funding programmes to support community action in rural communities

Feeling safe

We know that Kent is a safe county to live in. We have statutory duties to safeguard the vulnerable and reduce crime and disorder, working with our partners at countywide, community and neighbourhood levels to help people **feel secure and safe**. Our partnership efforts are focused on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, substance misuse, domestic abuse, road safety, suicide prevention and developing community resilience.

We understand the importance of a visible presence to help people feel safe in their community. We are investing in expanding the capacity of our **Community Wardens and volunteer warden schemes**. Community Wardens play a vital role promoting community cohesion and preventing people from feeling lonely and isolated.

The important local intelligence that Community Wardens provide means we understand the distinctive challenges in Kent's communities from rural villages to urban town centres. This is part of our wider work with a wide range of frontline staff who work in local communities, such as Trading Standards, to bring together intelligence to protect people from issues such as scams, doorstep crime and unsafe goods. We want to join up our **enforcement** intelligence with partners to provide more targeted support to help people feel safer in their local environment.

We are committed to delivering shared priorities through the Kent Community Safety Partnership. The joint **Kent Community Safety Team** brings together staff from Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and KCC to promote joined-up working, working with local teams to provide a visible deterrent for crime and anti-social behaviour. We continue to work closely with local Community Safety Partnerships, district and borough councils, Police Community Support Officers, Community Wardens and Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company at a district level to complement the work of the county partnership – the combined work of these partnerships and delivery of shared priorities within our plans has great potential.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Invest in KCC's capacity in the Kent Community Safety Team
- Invest in restoring and strengthening the capacity of Community Wardens
- Enhance the Community Warden Volunteer Scheme
- Extend the roll out of Community Wardens in urban areas
- Take action and share intelligence on doorstep crime, with a leading role for Trading Standards

Collaboration with our partners

- Deliver the shared action plan for the Kent Community Safety Agreement
- Support the delivery of shared priorities in district Community Safety Plans and the Police and Crime Commissioner's 'Safer in Kent' Plan
- Create a joint partnership campaign to tackle perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Kent Police to enhance resources for a visible community safety presence in town centres
- Work with Kent Police to protect older and vulnerable people from fraud and cyber crime
- Explore with Kent Police, Universities and other local authorities the potential for predictive analytics to identify causes and new challenges in crime and public safety

- Work with the providers of probation services on effective rehabilitation to reduce re-offending
- Work with the Port of London Authority, Royal National Lifeboat Institution, HM Coastguard and emergency services on water safety and life-saving equipment for waterside developments

A joined-up response

We work collaboratively with national and local partners to keep Kent a safe place to live, promoting a **'joint multi-agency task force'** approach in Margate and supporting a targeted operational response where required on serious issues such as gangs and county lines and underlying causes such as substance misuse and isolation. We want to do more to support partners to come together in a joined-up community response to work together on key issues.

We are joining forces with the Police and Crime Commissioner and statutory partners to deliver local projects on issues such as victim support, reducing re-offending and mental health. We also support the implementation of **multi-agency operations** across the county to tackle violence, substance misuse and keep vulnerable people safe in the night-time economy.

Our multi-agency response to **gangs, youth violence and knife crime** targets our activities to disrupt and enforce as well as support gang members and those affected by gangs. We work together on preventative support for vulnerable adolescents experiencing or at risk from isolation, trauma and exploitation and take action where this occurs in the county. These are complex issues which can have a devastating impact on victims, their families and whole communities. We are joining up work with partners to create local interventions that make a real difference and impact in local communities, including Violence Reduction Units and innovative work in North Kent and Medway on tackle serious youth violence.

We have worked closely with partners to develop a new multi-agency strategy to deliver appropriate responses to people affected by **domestic abuse** in Kent and Medway. This is not only an important community safety issue; it has wider impacts on communities and individual future life chances. We want to tackle wider challenges that can be underlying factors in domestic abuse such as education, housing, physical and mental health and employment. By working together more effectively we can pool our resources and improve our response to domestic abuse.

We have a lead role in delivering the **Prevent** Strategy in Kent, working with Police, health and district and borough councils. We will continue to protect vulnerable children, young people and adults from being drawn into terrorism, minimising the threat of extremism and radicalisation and keeping our county and the people in it safe.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Recommit and prioritise KCC's role in supporting Margate's Multi-Agency Task Force
- Learn from what has worked in the North Kent and Medway pilot on youth violence
- Deliver the action plan for the KCC Knife Crime Select Committee
- Effective sharing of information and data to protect against serious and organised crime
- Develop a task force model in target areas needing a multi-agency problem solving approach

Collaboration with partners

- Work with partners to better co-ordinate and target community-based resources
- Support Kent and Medway's new approach to understanding and managing adolescent risk
- Support Kent Police in their expansion of Violence Reduction Units
- Contribute to achieving the priorities in the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy

- Support multi-agency operational responses on gangs, violence, extremism and knife crime

Ask of Government

- Provide adequate funding to local authorities for statutory responsibilities for domestic abuse

Safeguarding

One of our core purposes as a council is to work with partners to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse, harm or neglect. In a statutory leadership role, we've worked collaboratively to introduce new shared **children's safeguarding** partnership arrangements in Kent and Medway, to help protect the most vulnerable. We now need to use this to accelerate better joined up working with statutory partners with a 'shared and equal duty' to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable children and young people.

We also protect **vulnerable adults** at risk of harm, whether this is at home, in the community or in care settings. Making Safeguarding Personal is an essential part of all our work. We engage people in conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control, working with our partners to improve their quality of life, wellbeing and safety. For both adults and children, we review cases to see how we can improve the quality and consistency of our practice to keep people safe from harm.

Collaboration with partners

- Progress targeted work with Health and Police through the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership and Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board

Safer journeys

The growing volume of car traffic in the county impacts on how safe Kent's residents feel on their daily journeys. It is essential that the quality of our roads and pavements supports everyone to travel safely. We want to tackle speeding and improve road safety, particularly in rural areas and around Kent's schools.

We want to do more to create a cohesive rural road network, which promotes safety and avoids traffic congestion in towns and villages. We will work with partners to address issues such as the quality of **pavements**, parking allocation in new developments and **on-street parking** which affect people's feeling of **safety and accessibility**, especially for those with disabilities and young children.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver new road safety interventions to address speeding in rural towns and villages
- Investigate the use of road safety cameras in specific circumstances to reduce speeding
- Investigate the introduction of 20mph speed limits by schools during school arrival and pick up

Collaboration with partners

- Refresh the Casualty Reduction Strategy to make journeys safer in Kent
- Support enforcement work by Kent Police and the Kent and Medway Camera Safety Partnership

Stronger and safer Kent communities

- Kent Cultural Strategy
- Voluntary and Community Sector Policy



- Social Isolation and Loneliness Select Committee Report
- Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy
- Kent Community Safety Agreement
- Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Kent Multi-Agency Children's Safeguarding Partnership Frameworks
- Casualty Reduction Strategy (*to be refreshed in 2020*)
- *Civil Society Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Adult Social Care and Health Strategy (launched 2021)*

Outcome 6: Opportunities for children and young people



Our ambition

Kent's children have the best start in life and families get the right help and support when they need it. Every young person in Kent gets the education, skills and experiences they need for a successful future

A county that works for all children

We want children and young people in Kent to have the best possible future. Our vision is that all Kent children should feel safe, secure, loved, fulfilled, happy and optimistic. Our **statutory responsibilities** mean we play an important role in providing quality school places, giving children the healthiest start in life and protecting vulnerable children and families from harm. We need **sufficient funding** from the Government to support high quality services for children and young people, including early years, social care, mental health and special education needs and disability.

As the education landscape continues to evolve with the move towards academisation and free schools, a key role for the local authority is to **champion children, young people, parents and families**. Kent County Council is absolutely committed to this role, particularly to advocate for early help and preventative support for vulnerable students. We work closely with those at risk of exclusion or isolation, those in elective home education and our fair access offer helps to provide the right wrap-around support within the education and children's services system. We need to continue to listen to students and families and work with schools, academies, early help and children's social care services to provide more integrated support for families through our Change for Kent Children programme.

Kent is a great place to grow up, with excellent schools providing high quality education, fun and fulfilling things to do and a broad range of opportunities for the future. We know there are also areas where we need to do more for our children and young people, including to support those with special educational needs and disabilities to live a good life and reach their potential. The mental and emotional health and wellbeing of our children and young people is a priority for the council and our partners and we will do more to support them to be **resilient**.

We know that wellness is a priority for Kent's young people and is an important part of an active, healthy lifestyle. We recognise the role **sports, physical activity and outdoor spaces** play in providing new opportunities for young people and to encourage healthy choices, so we want to continue our work with partners to create a positive range of activities for young people. **Arts, music and culture** opportunities are also essential in equipping young people for life, fostering creativity for the future.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Raise awareness of the work we do to support children and young people in local communities
- Champion vulnerable students and their families so they get the education support they need
- Involve children, young people and families in the design and delivery of services
- Promote opportunities for children and young people to connect with nature, arts and culture

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with the VCSE sector, public sector partners and businesses to provide safe places for young people to enjoy positive activities, including outdoor space to learn and play
- Work with Sport England's Active Partnerships and district sports trusts, local children's partnerships and leisure centres to provide opportunities for young people to be active

Ask of Government

- Deliver sustainable, fair funding models for children's social care, public health, mental health and disability services
- Give substance to the role of the local authority in championing children and families within the education and children's services system

The best start in life

Improving children's health and wellbeing begins by giving every child the best start in life. This starts from adopting a healthy lifestyle during and after pregnancy, with our **health visiting** services visiting 99% of babies within 30 days of birth and providing over 67,500 checks a year. Parents and carers, of course, play the most important role in the development of resilient, more confident and physically and emotionally healthy children, but we are there to provide additional support where this is needed. The quality of **housing** and accommodation is also essential to a good start in life and we wish to work with our partners on the role of housing to help improve wellbeing and support children and young people to reach their potential.

The **early years** are critical, so it is important that we do all we can to work with families to prepare children to be ready for school. We are working to improve the take up of quality early education places for targeted two year olds and ensuring greater numbers of children achieve a good level of educational, cultural and social development to narrow the achievement gap.

KCC has a statutory duty to improve the health of the population, which includes health and measurement checks for school age children. One in five primary school children in Kent are obese or overweight, so we work with parents and children to set **healthy habits for life** around healthy eating, physical activity and nutrition. In partnership with health, we are targeting our work with children living in deprived areas, those with learning disabilities, autism, those in care and care leavers.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Deliver Public Health action plans to give children and young people the best start in life
- Ensure more children benefit from the uptake from high quality early education, particularly disadvantaged two year olds
- Continue to deliver early years libraries activities and the successful Summer Reading Challenge

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with early years providers to ensure children are school ready
- Work with partners on suitable, safe accommodation for children and young people

Prevention and early help for children and families

We know that our residents and staff highly value preventative services, which bring together all the outcomes which underpin a good quality of life for children, young people and their families. We work closely with our partners to enable children and families to get the right support they need to

improve their outcomes and life chances. We are re-shaping services by **listening** to our children and families and learning from what works both locally and nationally.

Our **Change for Kent Children** programme joins up services to bring together one highly effective offer of early help and statutory social work. The focus is on prevention, which is vital to improve outcomes, support family resilience and avoid issues escalating to the point where people need more complex interventions. Our new **Adolescent Service** will be an important part of targeting support for vulnerable young people, including those at risk of exclusion, isolation and exploitation, in a better, more integrated way. We will also progress a multi-agency response with partners such as Kent Police to divert young people who are at additional risk of offending, youth violence or involvement with gangs and county lines.

We will always protect the children who are in our care, and we are ambitious for their futures. Our **corporate parenting** responsibilities for children and young people in our care and care leavers provide a clear shared commitment with our partners to keep them safe. Our ambition is to be the best Corporate Parent we can be and what any parent should to promote the safety, health and welfare of their child.

As with many counties, the demand for children's social care and disability services is growing, but Kent's position as a gateway county and proximity to London means we can experience additional pressures such as the placement of vulnerable children and families from other authorities. To deliver our statutory duties for Kent's growing communities we need sufficient and **sustainable funding** to secure the right education, social care, public health and disabilities provision to meet our current and future needs.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Progress the Change for Kent Children programme, integrating services to better support families
- Learn from best practice in prevention and early help
- Developing the Kent Academy to provide professional development for staff working to support children, young people and adults
- Promote our corporate parenting responsibilities for children in care and care leavers
- Improve stability for children in care by expanding in-house and provider placement options

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with partners to provide one clear route for children and families to get help from all the services they need in one place
- Explore more integrated ways of supporting children and families experiencing issues with mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse
- Work with Kent Police to target work with young people at risk of offending or exploitation
- Challenge London Boroughs on the inappropriate placement of vulnerable children in Kent

Quality education

Kent's residents highly value the excellent quality of education in Kent's schools, which open up opportunities for children and young people. We have a strong track record over the last 7 years in improving the quality of primary education, but we know we need to do even more to close the **achievement gap** for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, particularly at Key Stage 4.

We want to ensure that there are **good and outstanding school places** available for everyone, in every part of the county. As the county continues to grow, we need an appropriate supply of good

school places and to work with our education partners to ensure families have a good **choice of education and training options** in their local area, including free schools.

We will continue to work with the Department for Education to secure **adequate funding** and clarity on future funding to allow us to effectively plan ahead. We also want to ensure there is sufficient funding to keep our school buildings safe and well-maintained for the future.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Raise school standards and closing the gap for vulnerable groups at all Key Stages
- Targeted work to further close the attainment gap for vulnerable groups at Key Stage 4
- Deliver the Education Commissioning Plan to meet the requirements of future demand for school places
- Make the right level of capital investment in our schools and children's social care estate so we can keep Kent's schools safe, warm and dry and create the right facilities for the future
- Improve education outcomes through our The Education People company

Ask of Government

- Provide sufficient funding for school place provision and quality education buildings, so Kent has the right facilities for the future

Action on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We are committed to working in partnership to make the necessary improvements for children and young people with SEND and their families. Following the result of our **Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection**, we are focusing on designing better, more inclusive services to improve the quality of services for children and young people with SEND. We recognise that all too often the experience of SEND young people and their families has been poor. We have been progressing our SEND action plan to make rapid improvements, supported by investment across KCC and health services.

All key partners involved in offering services to children with SEND are committed to making the improvements required and to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to do this. We are equally determined to change the way we work with families, moving rapidly to a greater openness, engagement and where appropriate, genuine co-production.

We have now integrated the Children with Disabilities Team with our wider Children, Young People and Education services, to join up services and better support children and young people with disabilities, their families and carers. The team is reviewing the experience of **neurodevelopmental services** (including autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) to better support those with complex needs.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Deliver rapid improvements in our action plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Transform services for children with disabilities and neurodevelopmental conditions as part of the Change for Kent Children programme

Ask of Government

- Provide sufficient High Needs funding to support better services for children and young people with SEND
- Lead significant change in the whole SEND system, in response to the national SEND review, in addition to delivering a sustainable funding model

Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

We want every child in Kent to have the emotional resilience to deal with challenges and reach their potential. The **mental health** of children and young people is a priority for KCC and we want to enhance emotional and mental health support services including those based in schools and colleges. We welcome working with Kent Police and health partners to identify children and young people who are in need of additional or specialist mental health support.

KCC is successfully delivering the **HeadStart** Kent programme which aims to help young people cope better when faced with difficult circumstances in their lives, preventing them from experiencing common mental health problems. As the programme completes in 2020, we will consider how to sustain and roll-out the resilience learning to all children and young people across Kent.

Where children and young people do experience mental health problems, we want to ensure that they receive the right support at the right time. We will commission high quality mental health services for children and young people and ensure that they have the capacity to meet demand to avoid delays in receiving support. Our children's and adults services are working closely together to help make a smoother transition and continuity of support for young people needing mental health services as they reach adulthood.

KCC's 5 Year Objectives

- Complete the £10 million Headstart programme
- Use the learning from the Headstart programme to enhance resilience and wellbeing across Kent
- Expand emotional and mental health support in schools
- Effectively commission high quality and timely child and adolescent mental health services

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with education partners to develop support for mental health in schools and colleges
- Work with Kent Police's proposed Schools' Officers and Community Safety Units to identify children and young people who need additional or specialist mental health support

A countywide youth offer

We know that our residents want a consistent county-wide offer of positive opportunities for young people. We want to enable an ambitious **youth offer** that is accessible for all young people, but also targets resources for young people in deprived areas or who may experience social isolation. We already support open access youth services and district early help hubs, which are available for all young people across Kent. We have made additional investment in street-based youth work, targeted at hard to reach young people in every district in Kent. We want to better enable community led activities, further invest in the youth offer at a local level and maximise developer contributions to create modern youth facilities. We will consider the national review of youth provision and talk to youth work professionals and young people to explore what investment is needed to best support our ambition.

We highly value the **preventative impact** that youth services, sport, culture, nature and leisure can provide in tackling social problems such as anti-social behaviour and reducing youth offending. We will work with our partners to ensure that the youth offer is inclusive and open to those who would benefit most from new opportunities, which might not otherwise be accessible to them.

We want to work with district, borough, parish and town councils and the VCSE Sector to increase the number of safe places for young people to undertake positive activities within their community. Some of the most creative and successful activities for young people are **led by communities themselves** – they know what works best for their local area. Where communities want to lead activities for a broader range of young people, we want to support them to find the right funding to make this sustainable and successful.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Recommissioning the Early Help Children and Young People's offer within Kent
- Develop an ambitious and creative youth offer to maximise opportunities for young people
- Invest in expanding street-based youth work in every district in Kent, targeted at hard to reach young people
- Target preventative services for children and young people who are most in need

Collaboration with our partners

- Work with district, borough, parish and town councils to bring in additional developer contributions for community and youth facilities
- Work with Kent Youth County Council on priority campaigns for young people

Opportunities for the future

Developing **skills for life** starts at a young age. We have a convening role in skills and want to work collaboratively with schools, the further and higher education sector and Kent businesses to help young people find the right skills and career opportunities that meet their needs. We will start the conversation about the opportunities that are open to children and young people far earlier in primary and secondary education.

We will continue to promote relevant **apprenticeships, technical and vocational training** to provide a choice of high-quality training options that suit the interests and ambitions of all young people. We want to open up opportunities for young people to develop skills to take on vital jobs in health and social care, which can be rewarding and fulfilling careers and help to close some of the sector's workforce gaps.

We want to create more opportunities to build the confidence, resilience and sense of ambition amongst young people, so they have brighter hopes and aspirations for the future. We want to ensure that all young people have the right **work-related, creative and social skills**, such as communication and leadership skills, to fulfil their potential.

Once they have developed the right skills, we want to encourage young people to stay in the county and build a positive future in Kent. To do so we need to work together to ensure they can use their skills to access quality jobs and make sure there are affordable housing options available for local people.

With our corporate parenting role it is important that we do not just focus on education but do all we can to support care leavers to have access to **affordable housing** and accommodation as they progress to working life. We want to explore how we can use Council Tax discounts for care leavers to give them a head start in their adult life.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Deliver our 16+ Review and All Age Skills Strategy to examine education, training and career pathways for young people

- Promote opportunities for young people to pursue a career in health and social care
- Introduce Council Tax discounts for care leavers
- Maximise the Apprenticeship Levy to promote career pathways for young people

Collaboration with our partners

- Promote social, communication and resilience skills for young people to help them access job opportunities and achieve their potential
- Work closely with further and higher education partners, particularly to encourage young people from different backgrounds to pursue education and training opportunities
- Support district and borough growth projects that create opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Support initiatives that enable primary school children to have experiences of technical and vocational education, at an earlier age
- Provide the right advice on affordable housing options for care leavers

Opportunities for children and young people

- Children, Young People and Education Vision and Priorities for Improvement
- Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision
- Early Years and Childcare Strategy (*to be refreshed in 2020*)
- Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners
- Strategy for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy
- 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy



Outcome 7: Quality health, care and support



Our ambition

Kent's partners work together to improve everyone's physical and mental health, supporting people to live well with quality local care when they need it

Promoting health and wellbeing

We want to support a happy and healthy society in Kent, with good health and wellbeing at every stage of life. Our statutory public health duties mean we have a leadership role to encourage **personal and community responsibility** for health and wellness throughout people's lives. We want to improve and protect the health of everyone in Kent and reduce health inequalities to close the gap in outcomes for different communities across the county, going further and faster to improve outcomes in our most deprived areas.

We are passionate about actively improving the **wider determinants of health** across Kent's whole population. Put simply people are healthy when they have a good start in life, reach their full potential and have control over their lives. This includes a healthy standard of living, quality housing, good jobs and working conditions, engaging in supportive communities and access to quality green spaces.

Our focus on prevention helps people feel and stay well and helps to tackle **social isolation and loneliness** at all ages across Kent's communities. Our role runs from providing the best start in life through maternal health services, health visiting and children's centres, to promoting wellbeing as the foundation of workforce productivity, and supporting ageing well. **Health checks** are important to spot problems early and support people with good advice to live a healthier lifestyle.

We cannot do this alone, we need to work closely with the NHS, district, borough, town and parish councils, and the VCSE sector for the benefit of all Kent's residents. An important part of our partnership working is with local planning authorities in the role of housing in supporting and addressing health and care needs, particularly housing provision for older people. Health and wellbeing spans all our outcomes and the work of all these organisations – we need to be ambitious about making progress to **improve the health of the whole population**.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Develop a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy to reduce health inequalities across Kent
- Deliver two local community pilots on 'Starting Well, Living Well and Ageing Well'
- Deliver a countywide programme of health checks
- Progress Public Health Action Plans and campaigns to support our statutory responsibilities

Collaboration with our partners

- Support the NHS 5 Year Plan workstreams, including Mental Health, Workforce and Prevention
- In our Public Health role support health partners to deliver the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Prevention Strategy and Action Plan to tackle health inequalities
- Use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and the Case for Change as the evidence base for commissioning and service interventions
- Continue the work with district and borough councils to make the best use of the Public Health Grant and deliver local health and wellbeing projects

- Progress our work on '6 Ways to Wellbeing' to improve the health of Kent's population
- Work with partners to support active participation in arts and culture to enhance wellbeing
- Creative work with district and borough councils to share what works to promote healthy living
- Work with local planning authorities on the role of housing and infrastructure to support health and care needs
- Work with parish and town councils on community-based health and wellbeing projects
- Develop a shared evidence base of what good looks like to inform future prevention work

Ask of Government

- Continue to prioritise national funding for prevention

Sustainable social care

Alongside our ambition to support wellbeing and independence, we will never lose sight of our **statutory duties** to support and safeguard the most vulnerable in our society with quality social care and family support services. This includes the full spectrum of services from support in communities to help people stay independent, to specialist residential nursing care. We strive to deliver the best services we can with the resources available.

Yet to effectively deliver our statutory responsibilities, the Government needs to ensure that social care and public health services are **adequately and sustainably funded**. The way these services are funded must be fair to all the people who need them. We work closely with our partners to stand up for Kent's interests with Government when we need to respond to legislative and funding pressures.

Kent County Council commissions hundreds of millions of pounds of social care support in local communities, including residential, nursing and care homes. It is part of our statutory responsibility to provide a **sufficient social care market** to deliver quality services for local people. Within Kent we must promote **choice** through a diverse social care market, working with a range of independent and VCSE sector providers. We want to promote **social value** in the way we commission children's, adults and public health services. This means we make a conscious effort to ensure that any external services we purchase are positively contributing to the long-term wellbeing and resilience of individuals, communities and society in general.

A key challenge for sustainable social care is the right **workforce**. We are working closely with our partners on shared health and social care workforce ambitions to make Kent a great place to live, work and learn. We have a joint workforce strategy to address our workforce challenges, create career pathways across health and social care services and do all we can to support and develop our staff.

We will continue to actively lobby the Government to provide clarity on the long-term model for **adult social care**. We will continue to champion the needs of self-funders to retain more of their hard-earned assets for their families.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Work creatively with a range of social care providers, including care businesses, social enterprises and charities, to develop a more sustainable social care market
- Progress our learning and development hub work to increase the number of outstanding quality ratings from the Care Quality Commission
- Renew our national campaign offer to recruit and retain staff in the social care sector

Collaboration with our partners

- Deliver the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership Workforce Transformation Strategy

Ask of Government

- Provide clarity on how social care and public health will be adequately and sustainably funded by delivering the Social Care Green Paper
- Deliver sustainable, fair funding models for social care, public health, mental health and disability services

Integrated health, care and support

Being able to access **local health care services** is essential to everyone's quality of life in Kent and being able to get a GP appointment and hospital care when it is needed is a high priority for our residents. Although this isn't within Kent County Council's direct responsibility, we work with our NHS partners to plan for the right health and care infrastructure to meet the needs of our communities, including areas with housing growth and where people's needs are changing and they want better support closer to home in their local area.

KCC is a partner to the developing Kent and Medway **Integrated Care System (ICS)**, supporting the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership's 5 Year Strategic Delivery Plan to transform health and care services. The changing landscape in the health sector means we want to make some changes to how we are organised to enable us to provide better and more joined-up services. As a partner to the ICS we are working more closely than ever with our health colleagues to ensure we are bringing together the full potential of our organisations to improve outcomes for all our residents. By working closely with the independent sector there is a tremendous opportunity to maximise resource, service and budgets across health and social care. Integrated systems allow for approaches at scale but we should work together to ensure we do not lose the focus on local need.

Local Care models will be an important part of the future solution in Kent to provide high quality, proactive, coordinated care that is easier to access and will enable people to live independently for as long as possible in their home setting. We are supporting the Local Care model by providing professional expertise for multi-disciplinary teams and Primary Care Networks, (GPs and GP practices working together with other GPs and with local professionals in their community) to promote choice about where, when and how people access services. This will help to give people better healthcare options, with improved access to expert services in their local area.

We continue to work closely with the VCSE Sector and GP practices to deliver **care navigation and social prescribing** as positive options to help people to stay well and play an active role in their community. This complements our wider work on **connected communities** to help older and vulnerable people be engaged in positive activities in their local community.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Develop our care navigator model so people can easily access support in their local community
- Expand our approach on social prescribing, including place-based public health initiatives
- Clearly communicate KCC's role as a key partner to the Integrated Care System

Collaboration with our partners

- Continue our work with partners to provide one clear route for adults with mental health, social care or health needs to get help from all the services they need in one place

- Support the development of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System, including the development of a Kent-wide clinical commissioning group, integrated care partnerships and primary care networks
- Support the delivery of the NHS Long Term Plan and Local 5 Year Plan workstreams
- Develop Local Care models to create responsive health and social care services within local communities, working with health and VCSE sector partners

Ask of Government

- Clarify the role of local authorities in health transformation, in a way that respects our unique governance arrangements, statutory responsibilities and funding models
- Provide sufficient funding for health and social care services in local areas

Quality support in Kent's communities

We focus on **promoting independence** and **person-centred care**, whatever the setting. When people have health or social care needs, they need quality care, at the right time, in the right place, preferably at home or in their local community.

We want to help people live independent and fulfilling lives in their own homes and communities by using **digital innovation and technology**. Our Adult Social Care 'Being Digital' Strategy will be fundamental to delivering changes to modernise our services and embrace the opportunities of technology to complement more traditional forms of care and support. Technology will not be a replacement for in-person care and we need to be careful it does not exclude vulnerable people, but we believe it can bring improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and help improve the quality of care. New developments such as garden towns and communities are positive opportunities to develop digital and technology support for independent living.

Community services need the right capacity to support those with complex long-term issues, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, older people and adults who may find it harder to access help, for example those needing mental health, substance misuse or homelessness support. In particular, we know that **homelessness** is a challenge in many areas of Kent and we are part of a multi-agency action on this issue, with partners including district and borough councils, substance misuse charities and providers of probation services. We want to work with partners to put a more cohesive offer of support in place to meet people's needs and play an active role in prevention.

The role of **carers** (including young carers) is fundamental to support people to enjoy life at home, access activities in their local communities and live independently for longer. Carers are the backbone of our society and are highly valued for the vital work they do. We need to make it easier for carers to access the **information, advice and guidance** they need, by embracing digital innovation. We need to make sure that carers have high quality support and respite care to protect their resilience and wellbeing as they continue to care for loved ones.

KCC's 5 Year objectives

- Create an ambitious new Adult Social Care Strategy by 2021
- Develop an integrated model of support for carers, including provision of respite services
- Develop a new KCC Technology Strategy to progress opportunities for digital innovation

Collaboration with partners

- Look at ways of mapping community groups and organisations to help match people with social prescribing opportunities
- Join up services for vulnerable people in our communities, including homelessness, addiction and communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and hepatitis
- Work with the Business Advisory Board and Chambers of Commerce to develop a Business Carers Pledge to support carers in the workforce

Mental health and emotional wellbeing

KCC directly manages adult social care mental health services with an ambition to transform the quality of support. Our **'Live Well Kent'** services connect to local VCSE sector organisations that promote emotional wellbeing, to help people to become more independent and confident, meet new people, get better skills or find a job. From 2020, new innovation grants will support local groups to deliver creative ways for young people aged 17-25 to develop resilience, learn new skills and to enhance physical wellbeing. The partnership is providing a more consistent offer for mental and emotional health and wellbeing services across Kent, promoting independence and preventative interventions to keep people well in their community.

When people need more support, locally based **Community Mental Health Teams** are delivering integrated and targeted support within communities, bringing together multi-agency partners to enhance social inclusion and work consistently together when people are in crisis. We want to improve the quality of local mental health support, including through the integration of mental health into Local Care arrangements across Kent and Medway, with strong relationships between different professionals helping us to work better together to support people when they need it most.

Promoting **mental wellbeing** will continue to be a priority. We will work together to reduce deaths by suicide and continue to support prevention and access to help such as through our 'Release-The-Pressure' campaign.

Every person with **dementia**, their carers and families should be supported to live well, be as independent as possible and receive high quality, compassionate care from diagnosis through to end of life care. We will continue to champion Dementia Friendly Communities, which means promoting positive activities in local communities so people with dementia, and others including people with learning disabilities, mental health and autism, feel supported and less isolated. We will work to deliver the right support in all care settings, whether home, hospital or care home.

KCC's 5 year objectives

- Promote Dementia Friendly Communities across Kent
- Target support for people living with dementia, their families and carers in specific communities
- Increase mental health awareness through networking opportunities, campaigns and training

Collaboration with partners

- Work with the NHS on the Mental Health Matters 365 hotline, 'Release the Pressure' campaign and 'safe havens' to provide support to people outside of core hours
- Work with partners including health and Kent Police on crisis care for people experiencing acute mental health problems to make sure we work together to respond in the right way

Ask of Government

- Provide further investment in local mental health services

Quality health, care and support

- Your Life, Your Wellbeing
- Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) 5 Year Plan
- Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Prevention Strategy
- Kent and Medway Joint Strategic Needs Assessment/Case for Change
- Being Digital Strategy



How will we measure success?

We need a clear way to know if we are making progress on our outcomes and objectives over the next five years.

Measuring long-term outcomes can be difficult to do, especially when individuals, communities and partners all play a part in making a difference to outcomes, not just the work of Kent County Council. But it is essential that we have a deeper understanding of what progress we are making and why, to help keep us on track throughout the next five years and make necessary improvements.

We need to understand our direction of travel and take a more rounded, discursive view of our outcomes. This will need to balance **quantitative** data (including performance monitoring) with **qualitative** data (including resident and service user surveys, workshops and focus groups) so we can evaluate and explain our progress on the 5 Year Plan.

We are committed to developing a transparent and open **framework to measure the 5 Year Plan**, with oversight and challenge from Elected Members, who represent Kent's residents. We want to share what we are doing and talk about the changes we are making. It is important to understand the difference we are making in different parts of the county and to challenge ourselves if there are things we need to do to make better progress for the county as a whole.

We appreciate how wide-ranging the scope of the 5 Year Plan is, which is necessary to respond to the issues that residents, communities, businesses and partners think are important. We do not want to create an industry of complicated measures, instead we want to consider how we **prioritise areas for immediate action** to meaningfully assess our progress in the short term and draw together a balanced **summary of progress against each outcome** so we keep a line of sight on our direction of travel overall.

What evidence will we need?

Traditional 'input' and 'output' **performance indicators** can be a helpful, tangible way to track progress over time. They provide evidence about trends over time to help assess our direction of travel. We will consider how we best use KCC's performance framework, including our Quarterly Performance Report, to closely monitor performance within our services with indicators that provide important insight into demand and budgets. However, with the 5 Year Plan we want to go a step further from measuring outputs and really understand the impact we are having on **outcomes** across Kent and at a local level.

Whilst we developed the 5 Year Plan, we listened to how our residents feel about their local public services and how they think things could be improved. Many have given their support to continue to be involved, which we welcome. We believe it is important to keep talking to people to understand how their experiences and perceptions change over time. We are committed to using qualitative approaches to create a deeper understanding of how changes feel from a **Kent resident perspective**.

Our frontline services are closest to understanding what impact we are having in local communities and their role in making a difference to both residents and service users. We will need to draw on

service user engagement and use their service information to value the contribution of individual services and projects.

We want to provide best value for Kent residents, so it will also be important to understand how our **budget** and investment in capital projects contributes to achieving better outcomes. We will use this to inform how we target additional spending on our priorities.

Outcomes also need to reflect the contribution of our **partners**. We will work together to see how we can bring different data together to create a more rounded view of progress across Kent.

What evidence will we need?

We want to develop a framework to draw together all this evidence to tell a compelling story of how the 5 Year Plan is helping to improve quality of life in Kent. This supports the Government's idea of a '**Public Value Framework**' which is a way of demonstrating how public spending improves people's lives and wellbeing. This will help us to be efficient and effective and make us accountable to Kent's residents and communities.

Developing the framework will be a priority in 2020, but we will need to take our time to get it right and consider how we best use:



Outcomes Based Budgeting

Understanding what impact our investment and funding has on improving outcomes



Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring

Progress on significant programmes, projects, contracts and change activity



Community Needs Assessment

Understanding our evidence base and identifying a baseline to measure against



Quantitative Data

Evidencing changes and trends in key performance indicators over time



Qualitative Data

Engaging with residents and service users to better understand their experience, attitudes, perceptions and how things are changing in local communities



Logic Models

Evaluating how things are changing and understanding why this is

Detailed Plans and Strategies

Our plans and strategies set out the detailed actions that will help to deliver our outcomes.

Strategic Delivery Plan

The [Strategic Delivery Plan](#) is a rolling plan that is refreshed every year. It sets out the top activities KCC will focus on each year to deliver each outcome and to modernise the council.



Enterprise and investment

- Smarter, Faster, Together: South East Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Strategy
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Strategy 2018-2023
- *South East Local Enterprise Partnership Industrial Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Skills Strategy (to be developed from 2020)*
- *Rural Strategy (to be developed from 2020)*



Securing sustainable infrastructure

- Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- *Creating Quality Places Framework (to be refreshed in 2020)*
- *Kent Design Guide (to be refreshed in 2020)*
- *Kent and Medway Housing Strategy (launched 2020)*
- Kent Broadband Programme



Connected transport and communities

- Local Transport Plan
- Our Approach to Highways Asset Management
- Active Travel Strategy
- Cycling Strategies
- Freight Action Plan
- *Rail Action Plan (to be refreshed in 2020)*
- *Bus Strategy (to be developed from 2020)*



A cleaner and greener Kent

- Kent Environment Strategy
- Kent Country Parks Strategy
- Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Flood Response Plan
- Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans
- *Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Kent Nature Partnership's Biodiversity Strategy (launched 2020)*



Stronger and safer Kent communities



- Kent Cultural Strategy
- Voluntary and Community Sector Policy
- Social Isolation and Loneliness Select Committee Report
- Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy
- Kent Community Safety Agreement
- Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Kent Multi-Agency Children's Safeguarding Partnership Frameworks
- Casualty Reduction Strategy (*to be refreshed in 2020*)
- *Civil Society Strategy (launched 2020)*
- *Adult Social Care and Health Strategy (launched 2021)*

Opportunities for children and young people



- Children, Young People and Education Vision and Priorities for Improvement
- Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision
- Early Years and Childcare Strategy (*to be refreshed in 2020*)
- Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners
- Strategy for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy
- 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy

Quality health, care and support



- Your Life, Your Wellbeing
- Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) 5 Year Plan
- Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Prevention Strategy
- Kent and Medway Joint Strategic Needs Assessment/Case for Change
- Being Digital Strategy

Find out more

You can find out more about our work on the 5 Year Plan, including supporting documents and accessible versions on our website.

www.kent.gov.uk/5yearplan

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**Kent County Council
Equality Analysis/ Impact Assessment (EqIA)**

Directorate/ Service: Strategic and Corporate Services / Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance

Name of decision, policy, procedure, project or service: Development of the 5 Year Plan (Strategic Statement) 2020-2025

Responsible Owner/ Senior Officer: David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance

Version: Final

Author: Jenny Dixon-Sherreard, Policy Advisor
Reviewed by Serine Annan-Veitch, Policy Advisor (Feb 2020)

Pathway of Equality Analysis: Director (July and November 2019), CMT and Cabinet Members approval of the consultation draft (Dec 2019), Cabinet approval of final draft (Mar 2020), County Council (Mar 2020).

Summary and recommendations of equality analysis/impact assessment.

Context

Kent County Council has developed a series of strategic statements (corporate vision/ five year plan) which set out the Council's outcomes, priorities and approach for the medium term. The Strategic Statement is a whole Council policy and part of the formal Policy Framework in the Constitution. It is aligned with financial strategy and influences strategy, policy, business and performance frameworks for the Council. It is intended to influence how we deliver better outcomes for all residents, businesses and communities in Kent.

The previous Strategic Statement (*'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes' – KCC's Strategic Statement 2015-2020*) ended in March 2020. In May/June 2019, Corporate Management Team (CMT), Cabinet Members and Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee endorsed the approach to develop a new Strategic Statement (which is called the 5 Year Plan) for approval by County Council in March 2020.

This equality analysis has been developed and reviewed throughout the drafting, early resident engagement and formal consultation process.

Aims and Objectives

The 5 Year Plan is both outward looking (what's important to achieve for people in Kent) and drives activity within and across the Council. It is based on a range of views from stakeholders about what's important to their quality of life in Kent, taking into account relative priorities and perspectives on spending priorities and value for money.

Updated 21/02/2020

The structure and approach of the 5 Year Plan has been shaped by both early engagement and through formal consultation processes. A 'You Said, We Did' document, has been developed to help show how both the early engagement and formal consultation feedback has shaped and led to the final 5 Year Plan – this is an important part of valuing and respecting people's contributions. This feedback has helped to inform Cabinet to agree a final document, for decision by County Council in March 2020.

The 5 Year Plan identifies priorities and commitments. It does not set out the detail of how we deliver, design and commission services. Instead it will influence the Strategic Delivery Plan (whole council business plan) and refresh underpinning strategy and policy documents.

Summary of equality impact

Kent County Council's 5 Year Plan influences what we want to achieve for all people in Kent. As it addresses what is important in public service delivery to people's quality of life in terms of living, working and enjoying life in Kent, it impacts our staff, service users, and residents.

It is a high-level strategic document that is intended to be ambitious and positive about improving outcomes and quality of life for everyone within the county. Therefore, it has county-wide application and will have county-wide impacts. There are no negative/adverse impacts on protected groups directly related to the strategy. There is the potential for the 5 Year Plan to have a positive impact on people from all of the protected characteristic groups through aiming to improve their quality of life.

The joint project team and CMT leadership will set the expectation that any specific proposals or changes arising from the delivery of the 5 Year Plan will be subject to equality analysis and consideration of equality impacts.

Adverse Equality Impact Rating Low

Attestation

I have read and paid due regard to the Equality Analysis/Impact Assessment concerning the development of the 5 Year Plan. I agree with the risk rating and the actions to mitigate any adverse impact(s) that has /have been identified.

Director

Signed: 

Name: David Whittle

Job Title: Director of Strategy, Policy,
Relationships and Corporate Assurance
Updated 21/02/2020

Date: 20/02/2020

February 2020

DMT Member

Signed: 

Name: David Whittle

Job Title: Director of Strategy, Policy,
Relationships and Corporate Assurance

Date: 20/02/2020

(Approved via email)

Updated 21/02/2020

Part 1 Screening

Could this policy, procedure, project or service, or any proposed changes to it, affect any Protected Group (listed below) less favourably (negatively) than others in Kent? Could this policy, procedure, project or service promote equal opportunities for this group?

Protected Group	Please provide a <u>brief</u> commentary on your findings. Fuller analysis should be undertaken in Part 2.			
	High negative impact EqIA	Medium negative impact Screen	Low negative impact Evidence	High/Medium/Low Positive Impact Evidence
Age	No	No	The 5 Year Plan is a positive vision for what we want to do to improve people's quality of life in Kent. There is no evidence of any negative impacts. Any initiatives or changes proposed to deliver the outcomes and objectives in the 5 Year Plan will be subject to individual equality impact assessment and action as needed.	The 5 Year Plan sets out outcomes and objectives that promote equality for people with all protected characteristics and promote relations between groups. A number of equality considerations that could improve quality of life for people with protected characteristics have been identified and have been fed into the drafting of the 5 Year Plan.
Disability	No	No		
Sex	No	No		
Gender identity/ Transgender	No	No		
Race	No	No		
Religion and Belief	No	No		
Sexual Orientation	No	No		
Pregnancy and Maternity	No	No		
Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No	No		
Carer's Responsibilities	No	No		

Part 2

Equality Analysis /Impact Assessment

Protected groups

Early engagement feedback identified a number of equality considerations that may impact on some people from protected characteristic groups, as set out in the analysis below. These considerations have formed part of the evidence base on which the consultation draft of the 5 Year Plan was developed.

The formal consultation gave the opportunity for respondents to comment both on the draft 5 Year Plan and the draft Equality Impact Assessment. The draft 5 Year Plan has been amended to reflect this. Feedback from this process is detailed below.

Information and Data used to carry out your assessment

Kent Residents - See '[Facts and Figures](#)' on KCC's website for information about Kent's residents.

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged?

Early engagement

Early engagement with stakeholders took place between August and November 2019 through a combination of workshops, meetings and online forms. Below are the stakeholder groups that were engaged with:

- Residents
- Kent Youth County Council (KYCC)
- Young Adult Council for looked after children
- KCC Members
- KCC staff
- VCSE sector
- Businesses
- Parish Councils
- Public Sector partners

Formal consultation

The formal consultation ran from the 6 January to 17 February 2020. This involved an online consultation/survey open to all residents, staff and wider stakeholders and targeted emails to key stakeholders to encourage online participation. Kent.gov and KNet was used to promote the consultation.

Updated 21/02/2020

A stakeholder map and full details of the approach are available in the Joint Project Engagement and Communication Plan, which was approved by CMT on 25th June 2019.

Analysis – Early Engagement

Early engagement has been detailed and qualitative and has provided a large amount of information which has been recorded, analysed and has been used to draft the 5 Year Plan. Headlines of the findings from each stakeholder group are provided below:

Resident Quality of Life themes	Resident Spending Priorities
Accessibility of local services (including transport connectivity) Development and growth (including sustainable infrastructure) Quality of public services (including quality of public spaces) Opportunities for young people Security/safety within communities	Highways Education and youth services Environment Public protection Older people social care Children’s social care
Staff Quality of Life themes	Staff Spending Priorities
Prevention (incl. adult and children’s social care, families and health) Resilient communities (incl. community action and volunteering) Environment (incl. climate change) Accessibility of services (incl. variation in service provision across Kent)	Education and youth services Environment Regeneration & economic development Children’s social care Older people social care
Young People Quality of Life themes	Young People Spending Priorities
Affordable housing Protecting the environment Wellness and wellbeing Training and job opportunities Quality education	Environment Regeneration & economic development Transport Education and youth services Waste
Business themes	VCSE themes
Relationship with FE Sector ‘Learner led’ skills pathways Apprenticeships Transition support for SME’s Town centre regeneration Wellbeing in productivity	Access to funding Financial sustainability Access to business support Digital skills Networking opportunities

Updated 21/02/2020

Public Sector themes	Local Council themes
Community safety Transport and parking Infrastructure and housing Environment and waste Street scene Healthy communities and Local Care	Transport Planning Health and wellbeing Partnership Community safety Appetite for joint local projects

Some specific equality considerations were raised during the consultation as below.

Residents:

- Some residents reported not feeling safe in their communities and referred to tensions between different groups of the community including young people and adults. Creating the opportunity for people from different protected groups to get on is part of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Residents talked about problems with access to and reliability of public transport, particularly buses. Older people, women, disabled people and carers are more likely to use bus services and so lack of access to buses may have a particular impact on their quality of life.
- Residents talked about access to health and adult social care services, both from the point of view of physically accessing these through roads and public transport, and also having sufficient services available to meet need. Access to these services is likely to have a greater impact on quality of life for people with disabilities, older people and carers who are more likely to need them.
- Residents felt that more support for people with mental health problems is needed. Mental illness is recognised within the protected characteristic under disability.
- Residents talked about access to youth services and opportunities for children and young people. As well as age, youth services need to be accessible for young people of different races, ethnicities, sexual orientations and for transgender people.
- A small number of residents talked about homelessness and housing and felt that young people were finding it harder to access housing than others.
- One of the main ways in which residents would like KCC to work in the future is to engage more with them around activities and decisions. This would need to be done in a way that supports people from all protected characteristic groups to be involved. There is an opportunity to find out more about groups of people with protected characteristics that we do not currently have information about.

Updated 21/02/2020

Young people

- KYCC members also felt that improved access to youth services and opportunities would benefit young people and the wider community.
- Community cohesion and personal safety was raised, with some KYCC members reporting personal experience of violence. Young people wanted to see more action by public sector partners to make residents feel safe. They also talked about intergenerational division between young people and older people.
- KYCC members felt that there is inequality across the county in the quality of teaching, access to facilities and opportunities provided by schools' transport which young people may be more reliant on.
- They felt that isolation caused by problems accessing services and opportunities can have an impact on mental health and wanted to see more early help and prevention for people with mental health problems.
- KYCC talked about the importance of supporting young carers.
- Members of the Young Adults Council think that young people who are care leavers could be more adversely affected by a shortage of affordable housing in the county than other people. This may also be a greater challenge for disabled young children.
- Members of the Young Adults Council think that children's social care services should be prioritised and improved so that children who need these services are able to have the same chances for their future as other children.
- From the responses to the online form for young people, some respondents wanted to see improvements to support for children with special educational needs and disabilities and improvements in the process for Education, Health and Care Plans.
- Some respondents also felt there should be more support for young carers.

KCC Members

- Members have prioritised improving public transport and particularly buses to provide a more comprehensive service, which could benefit older people, women, disabled people and carers who are more likely to use bus services.
- Members reported that people are uncertain about health and care transformation in Kent, which could affect older and disabled people more significantly as they are likely to use health and care services.
- Members want to continue to call on Government to ensure that adult social care is adequately and fairly funded, which could benefit older and disabled people who are more likely to use adult social care services.
- Members feel that more Extra Care housing is needed to meet the needs of elderly and disabled people.
- There is a need to provide good support for carers, particularly to give them breaks from caring responsibilities.

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- Mental health is a key priority and a 'happy and healthy society' should be reflected in the outcomes in order to prevent mental health problems and support those who develop them. Mental illness is recognised as a disability.
- KCC should act on social isolation and loneliness, which may affect some protected groups disproportionately.
- Children and young people need to be more visible in the outcomes.
- Members would like to see a more ambitious and creative youth offer to support children and young people.
- Members would also like to see enhanced skills provision to support children and young people and help them reach their potential.
- Intergenerational relations are important in communities.
- Childcare is required near new developments to support parents to work, as well as childcare to support shift workers. This could support people with caring responsibilities.

KCC Staff

- Staff also stressed the importance of support for people with mental health needs.
- Staff reported that placement of residents from London into Kent is impacting on community cohesion (part of the Public Sector Equality Duty as above).
- Feeling safe in communities was raised as important – people from some protected characteristic groups may require more or different support to be and feel safe.
- Adult social care is a priority for staff and should be personalised, high quality and provide choice – older and disabled people and carers are more likely to need these services.
- Support for carers was raised as an important priority.
- Support for children, especially in vulnerable circumstances, was raised as a priority and staff would like to see more early help/prevention in this area.
- Staff talked about the accessibility of services and cited inequities in reaching out to disadvantaged groups, rural/urban differences and the need to continue providing a range of methods for people to access services to meet needs.
- Staff highlighted the importance of making services available to people who are not physically mobile (which may include older and disabled people) and how such service provision is valued.
- Staff felt there is a need to prioritise support around domestic abuse – women, LGB people and some ethnic groups are more likely to experience domestic abuse.
- Staff felt there is a need for clear communication and early engagement that can be understood by and is accessible to all (potential differential impact on disabled people and those from BAME groups.)

Updated 21/02/2020

VCSE

- Most comments from the VCSE were about how to support them to develop as organisations and provide their services; they did not mention specific equality considerations.

Businesses

- Businesses would like to see more effective career advice and support including from primary school age to help children and young people understand career opportunities and raise their aspirations.
- Women in business are reporting difficulties with access to finance – there are perceived and real barriers for women in SMEs trying to grow beyond microbusinesses.

Parish Councils (Kent Association of Local Councils)

- Representatives raised a lack of activities and opportunities for young people.
- Representatives talked about lack of public transport – both the negative impact for young people and others who are reliant on public transport, and also the positive impact of work to provide small buses in rural areas which is helping particularly older people make journeys.
- Infrastructure problems in rural areas such as lack of broadband could affect accessibility for some groups e.g. for disabled people and impact on learning and opportunities for young people.
- Representatives cited the success of walking and social clubs to tackle social isolation which could benefit older people, disabled people and others more likely to be isolated.
- There was significant support for Community Wardens who make a positive impact for some groups at more risk of anti-social behaviour and social isolation.
- Representatives had concerns over gypsy and traveller sites and felt needs were not being planned for.

Analysis - Formal consultation

The formal consultation process ran from the 6 January until the 17 February. The consultation was advertised through local press, through social media, through Kent.gov, Kelsi and directorate newsletters, through libraries and Gateways, Healthwatch, using KNet and internal advertising screens. We also directly emailed:

- those who had been involved informal consultation including residents (where consent had been given), the Kent Youth Council, the young adults Virtual Schools Kent Council,
- those on the consultation directory
- those on the equalities directory

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- Kent Council Leaders
- Medway Council Leader
- STP Partnership Board
- District Council Chief Executives
- The Chief Constable
- Fire and Rescue
- MPs
- Kent Association of Local Councils
- The Police and Crime Commissioner
- NHS acute trusts and SE Ambulance trust
- Trade Unions
- VCS representatives
- The Community Safety Partnership
- Business representatives
- KCC Members

The majority of respondents learned about the consultation from a direct email, followed by those finding out through Kent.gov.

There were 421 responses to the formal consultation. Below is a breakdown of the types of respondents:

Kent resident	207
KCC employee	127
Representative of a local community group or resident's association	8
Educational establishment	3
Parish/town/borough district in an official capacity	7
Parish, district or County Councillor	14
A Kent business owner	4
On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)	28
As a resident of somewhere else	1
Other	22

248 respondents provided information about themselves.

Of those who were willing to give details on their demographics 118 were men and 124 were women. 242 are the same gender as birth, 1 person is not and 4 prefer not to say.

We had the most responses from people aged between 35 and 59. A breakdown is below.

0-15	1
16-24	6
24-34	20

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35-49	57
50-59	60
60-64	31
65-74	51
75-84	16
85+	1
Prefer not to say	5

For those who gave their ethnic group the majority were white English.

White English	203
White Scottish	1
White Irish	1
White other	20
Mixed, White and Asian	2
Black or Black British: African	1
Black or Black British: Other	2
Prefer not to say	15

31 respondents who gave their details consider themselves disabled under the Equalities Act 2010, 209 do not and 6 preferred not to say.

Details of the type of impairment are given in the graph below.

Physical impairment	15
Sensory impairment	4
Long standing illness	18
Mental health condition	3
Other	2

Of those who gave their information, 28 people were carers.

93 people have a religion or belief. 84 respondents are Christian, 8 as Other, 2 are Muslim and 1 is Buddhist.

207 respondents are heterosexual, 6 are gay men, 2 are bi/bisexual, 3 are other and 25 preferred not to say.

We have produced a 'You Said, We Did' document that explains the feedback that we received on the draft plan and how we have responded.

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Responses which link to protected characteristics

Below is a summary of responses linking to protected characteristics.

Comment	Response
There should be more inclusion of older people within the strategy (8 responses)	We have included more commitments to supporting older people throughout the plan. This includes supporting employers to use the skills of older workers, influencing housing design so older people can stay in their homes, acknowledging the importance of public transport for older people and commitments to help older people stay connected and active in their communities.
Public transport, poor public transport disproportionately affects older or younger people, or those with a disability who are more reliant on public transport (4 responses)	We have acknowledged this in the outcome <i>Connected transport and communities</i> . We have committed to working with bus companies to improve the reliability and frequency of services so people can more easily use public transport to get where they need to go.
KCC should become better with data and have a better understanding of who uses services (1 response)	We will develop a framework to measure our progress in achieving the outcomes in the plan, and this will include making the best use of data about the people who use our services and their experiences.
More reference to transgender people within the document (1 response)	It is not possible to reference every protected characteristic group specifically in the broad 5 Year Plan, but these comments have been fed into the development of KCC's new equality objectives and will be taken into account as we plan and manage the delivery of our services.
More engagement of the faith sector, importance of faith and interfaith communities and support to minority groups	We have emailed the interfaith groups we are aware of to invite them to respond to the consultation. We have referenced the importance of providing opportunities for people from different ages, faiths and backgrounds to come together through community activities.
More reference to the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community within the document (2 responses)	It is not possible to reference every protected characteristic group specifically in the broad 5 Year Plan, but these comments have been fed into the development of KCC's new equality objectives and will be taken into account as we plan and manage the delivery of our services.
Include an assessment of ethnic minorities use of children and family	This suggestion has been passed to the relevant KCC departments to consider.

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support services (1 response)	
More support for disabled residents at home (1 response)	We have included commitments in the <i>Quality health, care and support</i> outcome about continuing to provide a choice of quality care options to meet people's needs including in their own homes.
Access to green space can be seen as an equality issue (1 response)	We have included commitments in the outcome <i>A cleaner and greener Kent</i> about continuing to ensure that everyone can access and enjoy Kent's natural environment. KCC services including Country Parks and Public Rights of Way take action to ensure that green spaces can be accessed by people from protected characteristic groups. This comment has been passed to the relevant KCC departments and will be taken into account as we plan and manage the delivery of our services.
The accessibility of the strategy i.e. brail/audio or different languages.(1 response)	Alternative formats or languages can be requested from alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 42 15 53 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 42 15 53). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.
Cycle routes: safe routes for disabled cyclists. Taking into account the needs of vulnerable road users (4 responses)	We have added wording into the outcome <i>Connected transport and communities</i> to acknowledge that active travel options including walking and cycling need to be safe and accessible for all residents, including disabled people. This comment has been passed to the relevant KCC departments and will be taken into account as we plan and manage the delivery of our services.
Recognising the barriers that client groups may experience to taking part in decisions about their health care, for example older people being unable to use apps/technology (1 response)	We have added wording in the outcome <i>Quality, health, care and support</i> to explain that while we will make use of technology to improve social care services, we will do this in a way that is careful not to exclude vulnerable people. We have continued to commit to person-centred care, which is based around the individual abilities and needs of the person. This comment has been passed to the relevant KCC departments and will be taken into account as we plan and manage the delivery of our services.
Wellness and wellbeing have been identified by young people as important but this is not included with reference to young people within the draft strategy/ importance of exercise	We have added more on wellness and wellbeing to the outcome <i>Opportunities for children and young people</i> . This includes the importance of having an active, healthy lifestyle for children and young people including through sports, arts and culture opportunities.

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for young people (2 responses)	
The need to recognise the specific requirements of disadvantaged communities.	We have committed to conducting equality analysis on individual initiatives and activities that will deliver the outcomes and objectives in the 5 Year Plan so we can understand the specific requirements of people who may be affected.

Adverse Impact:

There is not expected to be any adverse impact as a result of the 5 Year Plan. Individual initiatives, activities and changes that are planned in order to implement the outcomes and objectives that the 5 Year Plan sets out will be subject to equality impact assessment and action taken where necessary.

Positive Impact:

Engagement and consultation has raised many equality considerations over a wide range of issues that affect quality of life, as set out in the analysis above. The 5 Year Plan sets out outcomes and objectives that aim to address some of the issues and promote equality and relations between groups of people.

JUDGEMENT

- **No major change** - no potential for discrimination and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken
- **Adjust and continue** - adjust to remove barriers or better promote equality
- **Continue the policy** - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity. Set out the justifications: there is no justification for direct discrimination; and indirect discrimination will need to be justified according to the legal requirements.
- **Stop and remove the policy** – policy shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination it must be stopped and removed or changed

Internal Action Required YES

While there is no evidence that there will be any adverse impacts and opportunities for positive impacts have been identified and written into the 5 Year Plan, there are a small number of ongoing actions that we will commit to in order to ensure that equalities considerations continue to be taken into account. Actions are set out in the table below.

Updated 21/02/2020

Equality Impact Analysis/Assessment Action Plan

Protected Characteristic	Issues identified	Action to be taken	Expected outcomes	Owner	Timescale	Cost implications
All	Not yet identified	Equality analysis to take place on any activities or changes initiated to deliver the outcomes and objectives in the 5 Year Plan, and necessary actions taken.	Individual EqIAs on any proposed changes or new initiatives.	Joint Project Team and CMT	After Mar 2020	None
All	Issues identified during engagement and consultation on the 5 Year Plan as set out in the analysis above.	The 5 Year Plan and the equalities issues raised during engagement and consultation on it will inform the update to KCC's equalities objectives.	Revised equalities outcomes will take into account the feedback on equalities issues received during engagement and consultation.	Corporate Equalities Lead	Summer 2020	None

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Have the actions been included in your business/ service plan?

Yes

Updated 21/02/2020

This document is available in other formats. Please contact
 Jenny.dixon-sherreard@kent.gov.uk or telephone on 03000 416598

‘Kent’s Future, Our Priority’

You Said, We Did

*How your feedback has shaped Kent County Council’s
5 Year Plan 2020-2025*

Cabinet version for 2nd March 2020



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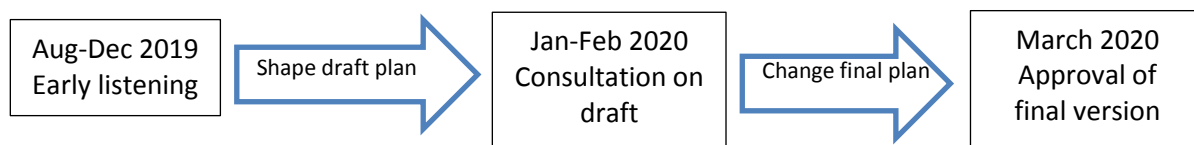
Page 29 – How we will measure success

How people have shaped the ‘Kent’s Future, Our Priority’ 5 Year Plan

Kent’s Future, Our Priority sets out what Kent County Council wants to achieve for all residents over the next five years. It is approved by the County Council in March 2020.

We want *Kent’s Future, Our Priority* to make a real difference to improving quality of life in Kent. To achieve this, we have worked to make sure that it has been shaped by the views, experiences and priorities of people in Kent. We started talking to people about what is important to them from Summer 2019, before we started developing the plan. These conversations informed our thinking from the beginning. After we had put together an initial draft, we held a consultation to give people another opportunity to tell us what they thought and help us improve the final version.

Over six months, we have heard from hundreds of people, who gave us thousands of useful comments that have shaped *Your Future, Our Priority*.



These are the groups of people we have talked to in our early listening phase and invited to respond to our formal consultation:



Early listening – what people told us about their quality of life and priorities

During our early listening phase, we talked to people to understand what makes the biggest difference to quality of life in Kent and what KCC services people would like to see most money spent on.

Kent residents

We held detailed workshops with residents who live in Kent. We included people from every district/borough area in the county and made sure that we had a mix of people of different ages, genders, ethnicities, working status and some people with disabilities to reflect Kent’s population. 121 people took part in three workshops in different parts of the county during September 2019.

What makes the biggest difference to quality of life?



Blue	Travelling around the county 34%
Purple	Housing growth 25%
Red	Quality of public spaces 22%
Cyan	Opportunities for young people 10%
Green	Feeling safe 9%

Being able to travel around the county more easily to get to work, school and appointments was the issue that people talked about most when thinking about what would make the biggest difference to quality of life.

People would also like to know that when new houses are built, the right infrastructure for the community will come with it, including roads, health services and school places.

Residents care about the places they live in, and the maintenance and cleanliness of the local area as well as the quality of the environment makes a difference to quality of life.

What are your top spending priorities?



We asked residents to decide which KCC services should be prioritised for spending, bearing in mind that the budget needs to be split across all services. Top priorities were highways and education and youth services.

Blue	Highways 49%
Red	Education and young services 41%
Green	Environment 38%
Purple	Public protection 38%
Cyan	Older people social care 38%

Young people in Kent

We ran a quick poll on our website between September and November 2019 for young people (aged 16 to 25) to complete. We promoted this through our staff and partners who work with young people and social media. We wanted to understand what issues are most important to young people now and what they think will be most important to them in the next five years. 19 young people completed the poll online and a further 27 completed a paper copy. We also ran exercises at meetings of Kent Youth County Council (with young people aged between 11 and 18) and at the Young Adult Council which is made up of young people aged 16 to 25 who have experience of the care system.

Young people - most important to you and your life now



Blue	Wellness and wellbeing 22%
Red	Protecting the environment 22%
Green	Availability of affordable housing 9%
Purple	Being digital and connected 17%

These are the most important issues now for the young people who completed the poll. Looking ahead to 5 years' time, the availability of affordable housing and protecting the environment becomes even more important.

Members of Kent Youth County Council and the Young Adults Council prioritised the same issues. These were wellness and wellbeing including mental health, the environment and education and youth services and transport services. Members of the Young Adult Council most highly prioritised children's social care to give all children the best possible start in life.

Kent businesses

We ran a quick poll on our website between September and November 2019 for representatives of Kent businesses to complete and promoted this through business networks. We wanted to understand what issues are most important to businesses and what would support them to develop over the next 3-5 years. 12 responses were received. We also held a discussion with Business Advisory Board and looked at business and economic development plans and priorities for Kent.

Which of these themes is most important to your business/organisation?



Green	Level of skills, apprenticeships and vacancies 33%
Red	Facilities to support your business 25%
Blue	A location to do business and invest in 17%
Purple	Business advice and access to funding 17%
Cyan	Opportunities for entrepreneurship 8%

Businesses who completed the online poll identified the level of skills available to them as the most important issue. They identified facilities to support them as second most important and this includes business space, transport and broadband connectivity, housing and education. When asked what would help support their organisation over the next 3-5 years, 47% felt that access to training to upskill employees would help most. While around a quarter of respondents indicated that access to business support and loans would help them most, a large number also chose this as the thing that would help least.

Other business representatives we spoke to agreed that getting the right workforce with the right skills is most important to them, including through apprenticeships. They also prioritised help for small and medium sized businesses to grow, regeneration of town centres and improving wellbeing as this improves productivity. Some very useful specific issues and suggestions came out of our conversations with businesses that we will take forward in our forthcoming Enterprise and Productivity Strategy.

Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector

We ran a quick poll on our website between September and November 2019 for representatives of VCSE organisations in Kent to complete and we promoted this through VCSE networks. We wanted

to understand what issues are most important to the sector and what would support them to develop in the future. 23 responses were received. We also held discussions at VCSE networking events and looked at the sector’s priorities for the future.

Which of these themes is most important to VCSE organisations in Kent?



Respondents from the VCSE felt that opportunities to access different funding models was most important to them (61%). When asked what would support their organisation in the future, over 40% said that access to funding opportunities like grants and loans is most important, as well as professional support to develop their organisation (24%) and support to develop their digital infrastructure and skills (22%). Some respondents said that more opportunities to promote what they do would help them.

	Opportunities to access different funding models 61%
	Collaboration and engagement 22%
	Support to reduce back office costs and increase digital 13%
	Access to training and resources to support development 4%

Other VCSE representatives we spoke to said that their priorities are being able to access funding, access to business support to help them operate efficiently and grow, support in developing digital skills and opportunities to network and learn from other organisations. Lots of useful suggestions and issues came out of our conversations with VCSE organisations and are being taken forward in our forthcoming Civil Society Strategy.

Public sector partners

Throughout our early consultation, we have spoken to our partners in other public sector organisations in Kent, including district and borough councils, town and parish councils and health. We have looked at their priorities for the future, and the issues that they are hearing are important for the people they serve.

Overall, **district and borough councils** in Kent are prioritising community safety, transport and parking, infrastructure and housing and environment and street scene.

We held a workshop with all the Area Committee Chairs from Kent Association of Local Councils (speaking on behalf of Kent’s **parish and town councils**) in October 2019 who told us what they hear from people at a very local level across Kent. They told us that transport, planning and development, health and well-being and safety were important issues that affect people’s quality of life.

Our **health partners** are prioritising healthy and resilient people and communities and providing care close to home. They felt that the draft outcomes linked well with what they need to do to deliver the NHS 5 Year Plan in Kent.

KCC Elected Members

As well as formal meetings with our Cabinet and Elected Members, we held a workshop for all Members in November 2019 to ask them about their priorities and the issues they hear most about from the residents, businesses and organisations they speak to.

Top priorities for Members were:

- Developing an ‘infrastructure first’ approach to ensure new housing is well supported
- Maintaining roads in good condition
- Ensuring people can access public transport where and when they need it
- Leading the protection of the environment and improvement of air quality
- Supporting carers who look after family and friends
- Pressing for a fair funding system for adults’ and children’s social care
- Improving mental health
- Tackling social isolation and loneliness
- Encouraging people and communities to support each other and do more for themselves
- Supporting rural areas to feel safe and prosperous
- Developing people’s skills and improving job opportunities
- Supporting businesses to grow

Members felt that a specific priority for children and young people was needed, and this was added to the draft plan as a result. We followed up the workshop with a survey to ask Members to identify objectives that would help to deliver the outcomes, and the feedback received was used to draft the objectives in the draft plan. In total 32 of KCC’s members attended the workshop or completed the survey.

KCC staff

We have involved our staff during the early listening phase. We held a workshop in September with 32 managers from KCC’s services to understand what they and their staff hear and experience every day working with people in Kent. We followed this up with an online form, so all staff had the opportunity to be involved. We wanted to know what makes the biggest difference to quality of life and what they think the priorities should be.

Staff – what would make the biggest difference to quality of life in Kent?



	Prevention and early help 20%
	Environment 15%
	Accessibility of local services 13%
	Employment 12%
	Housing growth and infrastructure 11%

Staff felt that what would make the biggest difference to quality of life for people in Kent is taking early action to prevent people’s problems from becoming worse and needing more help later on. Staff also prioritised the environment and being able to travel around the county to access services and opportunities.

We also asked staff what their spending priorities are for KCC services. Most prioritised spending on education and youth services first (23% ranked this highest priority) followed by environment (22%), regeneration and economic development (19%), children’s social care (18%) and older people’s social care (18%).

How the outcomes developed

From everything we heard during our early listening phase, common themes emerged that lots of people felt were important to quality of life in Kent and should be priorities.

Most important

- Being able to travel around the county
- Quality environment
- Sustainable infrastructure
- Opportunities for young people

Other important issues

- Ambitious people and businesses
- Places to be proud of
- Services and opportunities accessible for everyone
- Resilient communities
- Feeling well
- Feeling safe

From these themes we developed the draft outcomes for the consultation. We brought some of the themes together where this made sense in order to create a deliverable number of outcomes.

The outcomes changed during the early engagement phase as people told us what they thought. For example, initially we did not have an outcome specifically for children and young people; references to children and young people were spread through the other outcomes. Several people told us this meant that outcomes for children and young people did not come through clearly enough. As a result, we added the outcome 'Opportunities for children and young people' in the draft so that everything about this important outcome is clearly together in one place.

The seven draft outcomes in the consultation draft were:

1. Enterprise and investment
2. Securing sustainable infrastructure
3. Connected transport and communities
4. A cleaner and greener Kent
5. Stronger and safer communities
6. Opportunities for children and young people
7. Quality health, care and support

Consultation

We consulted on the draft plan from 6th January to 17th February 2020. We shared the draft plan on our website and made paper copies available where needed. We also produced an Easy Read version for people with learning disabilities and large print and audio versions were available on the website.

We encouraged as many people as possible to complete a questionnaire (online or paper copy) to tell us what they thought of the draft. This included a question about whether the draft outcomes reflected what is important to the respondent's quality of life, whether the objectives are correct and the opportunity to comment the draft generally.

We promoted the consultation widely through targeted emails, our website, on social media, posters in libraries and Gateways and internally with our elected Members and staff.

Responses

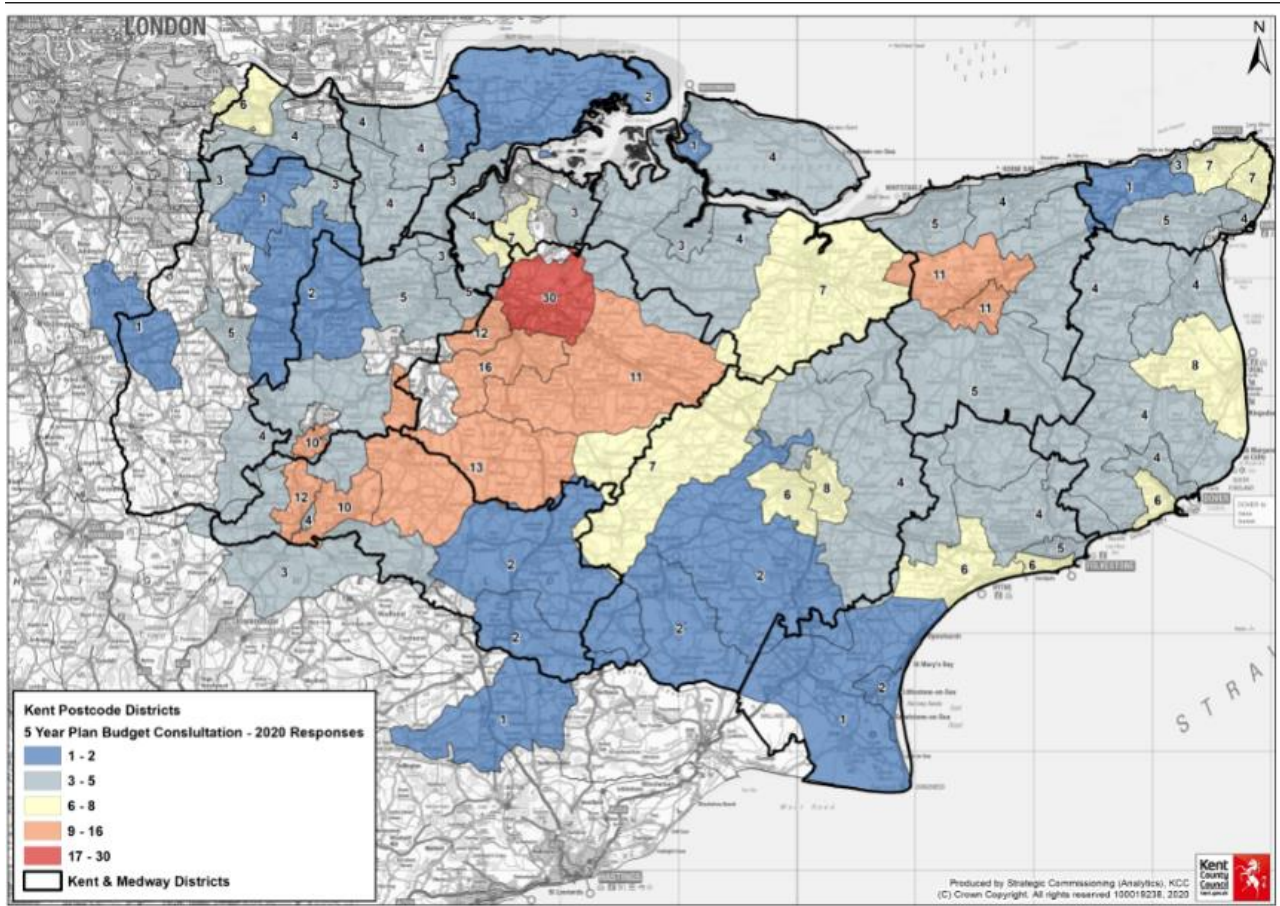
We received 422 consultation responses. This table shows the types of responses we received.

Respondent type	Responses
Kent resident	208
KCC staff	127
Charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS)	28
Other (including Parish and Town Councils and other partners)	22
Parish, District or County Councillor	14
Local community group or resident association	8
District, Borough and City Councils	7
Educational establishment	3
A Kent business owner	4
As a resident of somewhere else	1

Of those who gave demographic information about themselves, 118 respondents were men and 124 were women. We had the most responses from people aged between 35 and 59. A breakdown is below.

Age	Responses
0-15	1
16-24	6
24-34	20
35-49	57
50-59	60
60-64	31
65-74	51
75-84	16
85+	1
Prefer not to say	5

We received responses from across Kent, although the highest response rate came from Maidstone, which reflects the number of staff who completed the questionnaire based in KCC offices.



You Said, We Did – key changes following the consultation

Below we have explained what people said and what we did as a result to improve the 5 Year Plan document, following all the consultation feedback we received.

Title

You said

Most people thought that this was a good title. The title should be less personal and focused on the community and it should be more specific to Kent.

We did

88% of respondents liked the draft title 'Your Future, Our Priority'. We agree that the title should be about Kent as a whole. We have changed the title to 'Kent's Future, Our Priority'.

General comments on the draft plan

You said

The outcomes are the right things to focus on and will have a positive impact on quality of life.

KCC needs to be clear how it will deliver the plan and if it has the capacity to do this, given funding restraints.

We did

We have kept the outcome titles and what they cover the same as in the draft, as most people liked them.

We have included a new section early on in the plan to explain this. We have made the objectives within each outcome clearer and more action focused and signposted detailed plans and strategies. It is important that the 5 Year

	Plan is realistic, so our 2020-21 budget has made available additional investment for the spending priorities identified in the 5 Year Plan. KCC has a wide range of responsibilities and by setting out what we want to achieve in the plan we will be able to prioritise our activity and resources.
Progress needs to be clearly measurable.	We will develop meaningful ways to measure our progress and we will make this publicly available. We have explained this more clearly at the start of the document and expanded the section at the end called <i>How will we measure success?</i>
KCC should engage with residents more and involve them in delivering the plan.	We agree and we want to continue to hear from residents. Listening to residents about their experiences will be an important part of measuring our progress in delivering the outcomes and prioritising what we need to deliver.
The plan is hard to understand, uses jargon and is too long.	The plan covers a large range of issues which people felt were important to include. We have simplified language and removed jargon where possible. We know that not everyone will want to read the full plan, so we have produced a short Residents Summary in plain language and will have a 'plan on a page' summary.
The outcomes should be in a different order – the ones about the environment and supporting people should be first.	We have carefully considered this. The outcomes are about different parts of life in Kent, and each are as important as each other. We have explained this more clearly in the introduction. We think this order is the most logical way we can explain the outcomes in a way that flows from one topic to another, so we haven't changed this.
More context is needed about things that will be important for Kent over the next five years.	We have included a section at the start of the plan called <i>What could affect the 5 year plan?</i> which outlines major changes such as national Government policy, climate change and digital technology. We have also updated the 'Kent's Strengths and Challenges' sections to provide additional context.
KCC needs to be honest about things that are not in their direct control	We agree it is important to be clear about the direct role of the council, where we have a convening role or the issues are the responsibilities of other partners and providers. We have updated the text to make this clearer, including on housing, local planning, transport, highways, rail and buses.

Comments on the Equality impact assessment

You said	We did
There should be more in the plan on supporting older people.	We have included more commitments to supporting older people throughout the plan. This includes supporting employers to use the skills of older workers, influencing housing design so it is flexible and adaptable so older people can stay in their homes, encourage 'lifetime' homes and extra care housing. We acknowledge the importance of public transport for older people and commitments to help older people stay connected and active in their communities, so we have improved our text to reflect this.
Younger, older and disabled people	We have acknowledged this in the outcome <i>Connected</i>

are more reliant on public transport, particularly buses, so are affected more if these services are not accessible and reliable.	<i>transport and communities</i> . We have committed to working with bus companies to improve the reliability and frequency of services so people can more easily use public transport to get where they need to go.
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We also received some comments about particular groups of people and particular services. These were too specific to reflect in this broad 5 Year Plan. They will be shared with the relevant KCC departments so they can be taken into account when planning and delivering our services. The full equality impact assessment for *Kent's Future, Our Priority* is on our website.

Comments on the draft outcomes

57% (219) of people agreed that the outcomes reflect what is important to their quality of life and 36% (137) felt that the outcomes partly reflect what is important to quality of life. Only 6% (22) respondents felt that they do not.

The sections below explain how each of the seven outcomes in *Kent's Future, Our Priority* have been developed based on what people told us during early listening and during the consultation.

We have strengthened and made substantive changes to the 5 Year Plan document as a result of the comments we received during the consultation. This included:

- **Updating the text** in all the outcomes to make our role clearer and value our collaborative work with partners. We've also added new text where people identified gaps.
- **Moving the objectives** next to the relevant part of the text, to make it clearer and easier to see what actions we will take to respond to the opportunities and challenges that are in the plan
- **Simplifying the objectives**, so it is clearer what action we will take within KCC, with partners and with Government
- **Adding new objectives** to respond to issues people felt were important or to include suggestions made by our partners.



Outcome 1: Enterprise and investment

Early listening

Residents told us that having stable and secure employment was an important factor in their quality of life, allowing them to support their family and do things they enjoy. **KCC staff, young people** and **KCC's elected Members** would like to see good quality, higher skilled employment opportunities in Kent. **We have included commitments to work together with our partners to attract companies into Kent that will offer good quality employment.**

"My top one is salary...quality of life for me is what we [my family] do at weekends, choice of things to do, having free time"

West Kent Resident,
Male, 35-54 years

To make the county a great place to live and work, people also need affordable housing. This was the top priority for **young people** looking ahead to their futures, and for many other people we heard from. **We will work with our partners including district and borough councils to ensure that people can access housing that is affordable for them.** This will also be a key theme in the new Kent and Medway Housing Strategy. We also heard from **residents** how important it is that they can find childcare to support them to work and **we have included an objective to ensure there are good childcare facilities within new developments.**

"We need skills coming through and young people coming forward"

Kent business
representative

Kent's businesses need the right employees with the right skills to help them succeed and grow. They told us that they would most value training to upskill employees to help their business develop. **We will develop an all age Skills Strategy, including promoting vocational and technical training opportunities. We will also work to improve the relationship between businesses and further education colleges to match skills and business needs.**

Kent's businesses also told us that more support is needed for small and medium sized enterprises when they are ready to grow into larger businesses. **We have included objectives to facilitate targeted business support, start-up space, premises and transition funding for small businesses.** **Businesses** need the right infrastructure to support their growth, including business space and good broadband connections. **We will work with partners to make this happen.**

Residents, young people and **businesses** told us how important town centres are to how a place looks and feels and to the success of local businesses. **We discussed this with Cabinet Members and Chief Officers, and this is something we want to focus on with partners, including setting up a High Street Commission.**

"We need a compelling vision for town centre regeneration"

Kent business
representative

Fairness and ensuring access to opportunities for everyone is important to **residents** and **young people**. **Representatives of Parish Councils** wanted to ensure that people and businesses in rural communities are not disadvantaged by their remote location. **We have included in this outcome commitments to tackle skills shortages and support business and enterprise in deprived communities, and included objectives to work with technology providers on broadband and mobile coverage to keep rural areas connected.**

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?

Yes – 37% (135) , In part – 38% (138), No – 10% (36), Don't know – 16% (57)

You said	We did
More is needed on the skills and productivity challenges that Kent faces and what will be done to improve this	We have expanded the 'Ambitious people and places' section to provide more context about challenges in different parts of Kent and to be clearer about our direct and convening role in economic development and skills.
More needs to be done to attract businesses to locate in Kent and provide good jobs, including improving roads and making sure childcare facilities are available for working parents.	We have included an objective to work with Inward Investment Services to attract employers with high skills jobs to locate in Kent. We have acknowledged in the plan that we need the right mix of infrastructure to support growth and there are lots of commitments in the <i>Securing Sustainable Infrastructure</i> outcome on how we will do this. We have strengthened our commitment to ensure there are good childcare facilities across Kent to support working parents. We have added more on business improvement districts, innovation hubs and enterprise zones.
More is needed on culture and the role of creative industries in making Kent a great place to live, work and invest	We agree and have included a new section to highlight the valuable work with our partners to attract more inward investment in Kent's creative industries, including opportunities for digital and cultural regeneration beyond East Kent's coast and into places across Kent such as Tunbridge Wells and Ashford.
Businesses need support to develop the skills of their workforce. Young people need good careers advice and to develop the skills that are needed for local jobs, including through good apprenticeship opportunities.	We agree that this is an important issue. We have a section on <i>Skills for Life</i> in the <i>Enterprise and Investment</i> outcome, and we improved this section have clarified our objectives to further improve skills levels across the county. In the <i>Opportunities for Children and Young People</i> outcome, we have updated our objectives on skills and career development for young people, including vocational and technical qualification. We have made clear that quality apprenticeships should be available for all ages and abilities including 'hard to reach' groups.
Lifelong learning is important, and people's skills need to stay relevant. We need to use the skills of older people.	In the <i>Skills for Life</i> section we have talked about the importance of valuing the skills and experience of older workers and encouraging employers and voluntary organisations to retain and use their skills. We will develop a Skills Strategy that will include lifelong learning at all ages.
High streets and town centres need more support to be successful and attractive. More should be done to reduce the number of empty shops and buildings and encourage mixed use of buildings in high streets.	We have strengthened the <i>Sustaining Kent's Town Centres</i> section to explain how we want to make it easier for people to travel to town centres and support local businesses in our high streets. We will continue to deliver the successful 'No Use Empty' commercial scheme to turn empty properties back into premises for local businesses.
KCC need to be clear on their role in garden towns and communities	We have updated our section on garden towns and communities and included more detail on how we will provide specialist advice to support our partners to develop successful places.

Outcome 2: Securing sustainable infrastructure



Early listening

Some **residents** told us they are concerned that new houses being built will lead to more congestion on roads, create a shortage of school places and make it harder to access services like getting a GP appointment. Representatives of **parish and town councils and KCC's elected Members** told us that they would like to see infrastructure in place before housing growth.

"How is the county going to handle all these people?"

North/Mid Kent Resident, Male
35-54 years

This is why we have included a commitment to take an 'infrastructure first' approach, working with our partners and Government. We will also update our approach and guidance on developer contributions to help get the funding needed.

"There's a balance between having enough housing for a growing population and having the infrastructure and preserving what we have."

North/Mid Kent Resident,
Male, 18-34 years

KCC's elected Members and staff and representatives of **Parish Councils** felt that the current systems for planning and funding new housing and infrastructure needs to work faster and more efficiently.

This is why we have committed to use our role to influence planning and secure funding in advance so that housing growth benefits Kent's communities instead of restricting them. We have included specific commitments like the use of brownfield sites for building because Parish Councils and KCC Members felt this is important.

Protecting Kent's environment and unique identity was a priority for lots of people we spoke to, including **residents, young people** and representatives of **parish and town councils**. **We have committed to championing high quality design in new homes and the need for climate resilience and flooding to be considered as part of planning for new developments.**

Businesses, VCSE organisations and KCC Members agreed that having access to fast and reliable broadband is a priority. It can help children and adults gain skills, support businesses to grow, tackle isolation and reduce the need for people to travel.

"Infrastructure is the key to quality of life, if we got that one thing right, we'd be achieving an awful lot."

Kent Association of Local Councils (Parish and Town Councils) Area Committee Chair

We have included a number of objectives to deliver superfast broadband and mobile coverage and data in all parts of Kent.

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 32% (118), In part – 38% (141), No – 19% (71), Don't know – 11% (40)

You said	We did
<p>The high levels of house building in Kent could damage Kent's unique and rural character. A more strategic overview of development is needed and local residents and communities need to be involved in new development decisions.</p>	<p>We strengthened our position on housing growth to respond to people's concerns and clarified our role in relation to housing and planning. We have been clear about our commitment to work with Local Planning Authorities and Parish and Town Councils to create well-designed communities through their Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans. We have committed to working with partners to prioritise brownfield development in the county. The new Kent Design Guide will influence the design of new developments to help preserve the character of surrounding rural areas, protect green spaces and the natural environment.</p>
<p>Infrastructure (roads, utilities, broadband, schools, shops, community and leisure facilities) must be in place first before new housing. This must also benefit people in existing houses. Developers need to contribute to the costs of this.</p>	<p>A clear focus for this outcome is our 'Infrastructure first' approach. We will be ready to challenge development where there is not the appropriate infrastructure to support housing growth. We agree that maximising developer contributions is an important issue – we have committed more clearly to refreshing our guidance on developer contributions and will work more closely with district, borough, town and parish councils to ensure developer contributions benefit the whole community. In other outcomes we have included objectives about using developer contributions for waste infrastructure, schools and youth facilities.</p>
<p>Houses in Kent need to be affordable for Kent residents and more social housing should be available.</p>	<p>We have included an objective to jointly lobby with district, borough, town and parish councils for more affordable housing. In the section <i>Supporting our partners on infrastructure and planning</i> we have committed to run a Select Committee on affordable housing, working with our partners to make a difference on this issue. We have acknowledged the importance of affordable housing for young people, particularly care leavers.</p>
<p>The design of houses must be environmentally suitable and energy efficient. Homes need to meet our needs now and in the future, as we live and work differently and as people age.</p>	<p>We have updated the <i>High quality design</i> section to be clear that we will work with partners to create housing that is flexible and adaptable for different generations. Through the new Kent Design Guide, we will encourage housing that is resource efficient and supports net zero emissions. We have added objectives on supporting low carbon housing development and a net zero strategic planning framework for Local Plans.</p>

Outcome 3: Connected transport and communities



Early listening

Residents told us that when it is difficult to get around the county due to traffic congestion, this makes day-to-day life harder. **Residents** would also like to see roads and pavements maintained in better condition. **We have included objectives around improving the condition of roads and pavements including repairing potholes and to work with partners and Government to make major improvements to highways networks.**

“We must get the basics of highways maintenance right, people become disengaged if we don’t deliver this.”

KCC elected Member

Residents and **KCC staff** and **parish and town council representatives** were concerned about the impact that traffic congestion has on air quality in the county and would like to see better options for greener and active travel. **We have included commitments to deliver active travel alternatives, create safer cycling routes and promote behaviour change.** **KCC’s elected Members** and **representatives of parish and town councils** were also concerned about the impact of lorry parking and **we have committed to progress work on HGVs and lorry parking.**

Being able to access reliable, frequent and affordable public transport was a priority for **residents, young people, KCC’s elected Members and staff and representatives of parish and town councils.** **Young people** told us that public transport is vital in allowing them to access learning, work opportunities and prevent them from becoming isolated. **Representatives of parish and town councils** felt that a good public transport system could help deliver all the other outcomes, including safety, social inclusion, air quality and protecting the environment.

“Within my role I’ve seen how crucial transport is to social support in maintaining independence and accessing services.”

KCC member of staff

We have committed to create a coordinated public transport network, promote an integrated rail approach and hold a Bus Summit to identify opportunities for positive action on bus transport across the county.

“I think on the whole it has a good sense of community as a county, but there are lots of different communities and there isn’t anything in place for people to get to know each other. It just keeps people divided and separate.”

East Kent resident, Female, 18-34 years

Some **residents** told us that they think Kent’s communities are strong, but having more groups and spaces for people to come together would help them feel less isolated and safer. **KCC’s elected Members** and **representatives of parish and town councils** think that people and communities could be supported to be more resilient and do more to help themselves and each other.

We have included objectives to make better use of community buildings like libraries to help bring people together and tackle social isolation.

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 29% (108), In part – 41% (152), No – 20% (74), Don't know – 10% (37)

You said

We did

<p>Buses and trains are very important to life in Kent. Buses can be unreliable, and the routes and timetables do not always offer a realistic alternative to travelling by car. More buses should be electric to reduce carbon emissions.</p>	<p>We have been clearer about our role in bus and rail travel, even though we are not directly responsible we work closely with partners and providers to make improvements in Kent. We added a new section on <i>The importance of bus travel</i> which sets out numerous ways that we will support improved bus travel in Kent, including the expansion of the Fastrack bus service, cross-county ticketing and introducing more electric buses, including bidding for Government funding. We have committed to reviewing the potential for Demand Responsive Transit in towns. We have invested more money so that disabled people can use their concessionary bus pass at different times of the day to help them get to work. We will explore options to lobby for new powers to improve public transport, including buses.</p>
<p>Trains are expensive and can be overcrowded and do not always offer good connections to London and other places in some parts of Kent.</p>	<p>In addition to our existing commitment to refresh the Rail Action Plan and hold a Rail Summit, we have significantly expanded our section on <i>Integrated travel</i> including specific commitments to influence the next South Eastern Trains passenger service contract to improve the capacity and frequency of rail services. We have included new content on improving transport connections for rail users.</p>
<p>Roads and pavements need to be in better condition and potholes are a concern for motorists and cyclists.</p>	<p>We have clarified the objectives in our <i>Quality highways</i> section to explain how we will maintain and improve roads and pavements.</p>
<p>Congestion makes it hard to get around the county and impacts on everyday life. This will get worse as more houses are built. Congestion can make air quality worse.</p>	<p>We have heard to how important congestion issues are to Kent residents. We have included a new section on <i>Tackling congestion</i> to set out the mixture of solutions we will take with residents and partners to make a positive difference.</p>
<p>Our transport networks are not well connected, making it difficult to get where we need to go, including from rural areas.</p>	<p>In our <i>Transport in Kent</i> section we have explained how we will work with Transport for the South East to prioritise improvements to critical transport infrastructure and deliver priority projects in our own Local Transport Plan. We have updated the section on <i>Connected communities</i> to emphasise how important it is to have good transport to access services across the county, especially for vulnerable people and younger people.</p>
<p>Lorries cause problems in local areas including damage to roads, congestion, pollution, public safety and litter. They need appropriate places to park.</p>	<p>We have updated our section on lorries to respond to partner feedback, including more partnership objectives to work together to tackle these issues. In addition to the existing commitments to reduce the impact of freight traffic and lorry parking on Kent's communities, we have included a specific action to look at enforcement options to divert lorries away from town centres and rural villages.</p>

<p>It should be easier and safer for people to travel by walking and cycling – this is good for people’s health and wellbeing and for the environment.</p>	<p>We renamed the Active Travel section <i>Walking and cycling</i> to make this clearer. We have added more detail on how we will promote alternative travel options including walking and cycling. We have promoted the Kent Connected website that makes it easier for people to find information on walking and cycling routes and been more specific about delivering our Active Travel Strategy targets by 2021. We included a new objective to work with employers to encourage active travel options for their employees to get to work.</p>
<p>We need to support people to use more sustainable transport options including electric vehicles.</p>	<p>Leading by example, we will deliver an action plan for KCC properties to enhance the number of electric vehicle charging points. We will promote the provision of electric vehicle charging points in rural areas and schools and work with partners to encourage this in new developments. Under the <i>Cleaner and Greener Kent</i> outcome, we will encourage businesses to use biogas and electric vehicles.</p>

We received the most comments about this outcome, particularly on buses, congestion, walking, and cycling. Some comments were around transport issues or suggestions in a specific local area. These will be shared to the relevant KCC department to inform ongoing planning of our services and road improvements.

Outcome 4: A cleaner and greener Kent



Early listening

Residents are proud of where they live, and **residents and young people** want their communities to be free from problems like litter, graffiti and fly tipping which make them feel less positive about their local area. **Representatives of Parish Councils** thought there was potential for more joined up reporting and operational response between local authorities to tackle fly tipping, litter, graffiti and the street scene environment.

“If a place looks good, it feels good, and you gain pride from living in that place.”

Young person, Kent Youth County Council (aged 11-18)

We have committed to work with our partners on these issues, including launching a taskforce on fly tipping and targeting fly tipping hotspots.

“I live near the beach. I really like that – there are lots of green open spaces. Those sorts of things are quite important to me”

East Kent Resident, Male, 55+ years

Kent’s natural environment of green and open spaces is one of the things that **residents** love about living in Kent, and they want to protect it. **Businesses** recognised that having an attractive place to live is good for wellbeing which is important for productivity. **KCC staff** feel that protecting the environment should underpin everything we do. **We will take active leadership of the environment agenda, deliver actions in the Environment Strategy and ask Government to work faster to tackle the UK’s climate emergency.**

Young people would like to see more action around climate change, including becoming carbon neutral. Air quality is a big concern for **residents, KCC’s elected Members and representatives of Parish Councils.**

“There is massive expectation that we show leadership on tackling the climate emergency”

KCC member of staff

We will deliver our target for net zero emissions and climate adaptation for the KCC estate and encourage Kent’s households and businesses to move towards low emissions too. We will plant a tree for every resident in Kent to improve air quality, and will work with Kent Youth County Council on an environment campaign to let young people know how they can help.

Climate resilience was also a priority for **representatives of Parish Councils and KCC’s elected Members**, particularly around protecting communities from flooding and preventing flood risk in new developments. **We will undertake a climate change risk assessment for the county and deliver flood response plans.**

Representatives of Parish Councils and KCC’s elected Members are keen to protect Kent’s unique rural communities and want to ensure that people living in rural areas feel connected and safe. **We have committed to developing a Rural Investment Delivery Plan to protect and maximise innovation in rural areas.**

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 33% (121), In part – 40% (149), No – 19% (70), Don't know – 8% (31)

You said	We did
<p>The climate emergency must be central to the plan and we need quicker and more ambitious action including on achieving zero emissions.</p>	<p>We have listened to how important people feel this issue is. We have included a specific section on <i>Responding to the climate emergency and climate adaptation</i> and strengthened our text and objectives. We have included more detail about KCC and partnership actions to achieve net zero carbon emissions. We have committed to undertake a Select Committee on climate change and deliver the actions it identifies. We have included an objective to deliver a Kent and Medway Climate Change Adaptation Plan and have a separate section on <i>Climate resilience</i>. We have also strengthened sections on sustainability in <i>Securing Sustainable Infrastructure and Connected Transport and Communities</i> and included objectives.</p>
<p>Air quality is a concern and there should be more action to improve it. More trees should be planted to help.</p>	<p>We have acknowledged that air quality is a very important issue for residents. We have included new joint actions with district and borough councils and Medway Council to deliver the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. We have committed to planting more trees, of the right type and in the right location across the county.</p>
<p>KCC should do more to support the environment in your own estate and in the way you operate day to day.</p>	<p>We will lead by example in our own estate and working practices. We have included specific objectives to deliver an accelerated target of net zero emissions and climate adaptation for our services, trading companies and property estate. We will deliver KCC targets to increase renewable energy, improve energy efficiency and air quality, publishing clear plans and milestones to show how we will achieve this.</p>
<p>Biodiversity is important. We need to protect Kent's green spaces and wildlife, particularly where development is happening.</p>	<p>We have updated the section on <i>Protecting Kent's environment</i> and clarified the environmental objectives. We have talked about how we will ensure Kent's unique environment, ecology and biodiversity is recognised, protected and enhanced. We have included new objectives to support action to leave the biodiversity of development sites in a better state than it was before. We have also improved our sections on protecting green spaces, rural and natural environments as part of high quality design in <i>Securing Sustainable Infrastructure</i>.</p>
<p>Flooding poses risks to residents, businesses and communities. Action on flooding needs to be considered in planning and more natural solutions are needed.</p>	<p>We have separated out a section on <i>Climate resilience</i>, expanding this to be clear about our role in helping communities and businesses prepare for severe and extreme weather and to explain our role in flooding. We have listened to our partners feedback and improved this section to include their ideas about actions we will take to influence the planning process and support more natural flood risk management solutions. We have also talked about the important role of drainage, to help play a role in flood resilience.</p>
<p>Litter and fly tipping make the county feel less attractive and more action is needed to address this. There are concerns about the capacity of household</p>	<p>We have clarified the objectives in the section <i>A quality public realm</i> and recognised that the cleanliness of beaches is also important to Kent residents. We had already committed to investing £250,000 to reduce the level of fly tipping. The section on <i>Investing in waste management</i> includes an objective to maximise developer contributions for waste infrastructure as communities grow and new</p>

<p>waste recycling centres and charging for disposal of some waste.</p>	<p>objectives to transform waste management and work with the business community to reuse waste. We acknowledge the concerns about charging for waste disposal at household waste recycling centres, but this remains the council's policy position based on previous consultation on this.</p>
<p>In rural areas it is harder to access services and there is a lack of public transport. In some areas this is being made worse by new housing development.</p>	<p>In the <i>Connected transport and communities</i> outcome, we have talked about our rural bus pilot schemes and electric bus trials in rural locations to improve public transport connections. We have made commitments to support rural communities in the outcome <i>Stronger and safer communities</i> to overcome the challenges they face in terms of isolation, accessibility of public services, availability of public transport and speed of broadband. We are developing a Rural Strategy to agree how we can address these issues.</p>

Outcome 5: Stronger and safer Kent communities



Early listening

Residents identified security and safety as one of the top issues that impacts on quality of life and people told us they sometimes feel unsafe in public spaces. **Young people** also felt community safety issues were important and **KCC staff** recognised that we have a leadership role to play in helping people feel safe in their communities.

“I want to feel safe when I leave the house, and my teenage son to be able to go out and not to worry about if he’ll be ok”

West Kent Resident,
Female, 55+ years

As a result, we will set up taskforces with partners to bring quick results on problems like gangs, drugs and knife crime. We will launch a joint campaign with Kent Police and District Councils to tackle perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour.

“Our community would be devastated to lose our Community Warden; he is a lifeline for a lot of people”.

Kent Association of Local Councils Area Committee Chair

Representatives of Parish Councils and some KCC elected Members value the role of Community Wardens to deter crime and antisocial behaviour and support the community.

We have included an objective to invest in strengthening the capacity of Community Wardens and volunteer Wardens across the county.

Being safe when travelling on Kent’s roads and pavements is important to **residents** and **young people**. **KCC’s elected Members** and **representatives of parish and town councils** had concerns about the safety of Kent’s rural roads. **We have included objectives to deliver new road safety interventions to address speeding in rural towns and villages and investigate other ways to reduce speeding where this is a problem and around schools.**

Residents, KCC’s elected Members and representatives of parish and town councils told us about the strong sense of identity in Kent’s rural areas. People felt that rural areas face particular challenges, including around transport, job opportunities and feeling isolated. **We have committed to developing an ambitious new Rural Strategy, to unlock the potential of our rural communities, better support rural life and improve access to public services.**

“I actually live in a really nice area where there’s lots of open spaces, there’s community centres, there’s a local village community.”

East Kent resident, Female,
35-54 years

Residents think there is a greater role for the voluntary and community sector in providing support for vulnerable residents. **Kent’s voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector** would value support with accessing funding and business support to help them operate efficiently and grow, support in developing digital skills and opportunities to network and learn from other organisations.

We have included objectives to provide funding, business support and networking opportunities for VCSE organisations, and we will transform the funding arrangements we have with the sector.

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 33% (124), In part – 41% (152), No – 14% (51), Don't know – 12% (45)

You said

We did

<p>Being able to take part in arts, culture, sports and leisure activities makes a big difference to quality of life and there should be more support for this. Local heritage and historic buildings are part of what makes places distinctive.</p>	<p>We have added a new section on <i>Enjoying life in Kent</i> and included new objectives to help more people take part in these activities, including investing in community-led sports, arts and leisure opportunities. We have recognised that Kent's unique culture and heritage is an important part of the character of local areas and culture also plays an important economic contribution to reimagine local places.</p>
<p>Kent's communities are becoming more diverse. There need to be opportunities for people from different backgrounds to come together to avoid tensions and make people feel included.</p>	<p>In the new section <i>Enjoying life in Kent</i>, we have emphasised how important sport, leisure and community activities are to bring people together from a diverse range of ages, faiths and backgrounds. We have included a new objective about investing in community-led activities in local areas.</p>
<p>A strong civil society is a good thing. Voluntary and community groups do important work and KCC should work with and support them.</p>	<p>We have updated the sections on <i>A stronger civil society</i> and <i>Investing in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector</i> to reflect the new support offer we intend to develop through the forthcoming Civil Society Strategy, which is currently out for consultation. We've also talked about how we support with those organisations who do not have a financial or commissioning relationship with KCC but do great work in their local community.</p>
<p>There are concerns about crime and people want to feel safe. Visible presence of Police Officers and Community Wardens in communities can help.</p>	<p>We had already committed to invest in more Community Wardens in our local areas and we have acknowledged their important role in preventing people from becoming isolated. While it is not in our direct control to increase police capacity, we have committed to work with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Kent Police to enhance a visible presence in communities and support the work of local Community Safety Units.</p>
<p>Violence, knife crime, gangs and doorstep crime all have a big impact on victims and local communities. KCC needs to do more with partners to help tackle these issues.</p>	<p>We have strengthened and improved the <i>Feeling safe</i> and <i>A joined up response</i> sections to reflect partner and staff feedback, including new partnership objectives based on suggestions from our partners. We've talked more about how community safety and other enforcement services work together to keep people safe.</p>
<p>Domestic abuse and safeguarding are important issues and more needs to be said on this in the plan</p>	<p>We agree so we have strengthened and improved these sections, to say more about our multi-agency work with partners. We have included new content on both children's and adults safeguarding which is an important statutory responsibility for the council.</p>

Outcome 6: Opportunities for children and young people



Early listening

Residents, young people and KCC staff highly rated the importance of giving young people the best start in life through the high-quality education that is provided in Kent. **We have included objectives to continue to raise school standards and work with our partners to ensure that school places are available when they are needed in the right places for our growing population.**

“Education gives you a foundation for everything in life, giving you a chance to build resilience to cope”

Young person from Young Adult Council

We know that we need to make rapid improvements for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and their families, and **Residents** have told us about the importance of this. **We have included commitments to do this.**

Young people would like greater choice in the training and education opportunities that they can access, wherever they live in Kent and **Kent’s businesses and KCC staff** see the need for better and earlier careers advice. **KCC’s elected Members and representatives of Parish Councils** felt it was also important for young people to develop social skills and resilience. **We have included commitments to review the current provision for education, training and career pathways at 16+ and influence where funding is spent. We will promote the development of social, communication and resilience skills for young people.**

“There need to be more options for 14-16 year-olds, to keep them out of trouble and keep them active...Maybe KCC can be doing more for young people, like more community projects...”
North/Mid Kent resident,
Female, 35-54 years

Residents are particularly concerned about the safety of young adults and valued the preventative impact of positive activities for them. **Young people** are passionate about the need for free and low-cost spaces for young people such as youth clubs and youth hubs and felt that providing these spaces would help to reduce gang activity, drug-use and crime levels amongst young people. **As a result, we have committed to developing an ambitious countywide youth offer, working with communities where they want to offer opportunities and activities for young people.**

Young people with experience of the care system from the Young Adults Council told us how important it is that children are given the right support while they are growing up so they can have the best chances in their adult life. **KCC’s staff** highly prioritise preventative work and early help, particularly for children and families, to act before problems become worse. **We have included commitments to progress the Change for Children programme to better support children and families and work with partners to make sure families get joined-up help.**

“Early Help interventions can help resolve issues before they escalate and become real problems.”

KCC member of staff

Young people, residents and KCC’s elected Members emphasised the importance of improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our children and young people and providing fast effective support if they start to experience mental health problems. **We will continue to work with schools on helping children and young people cope with difficulties to try and prevent mental health problems. We will ensure there are high quality child and adolescent mental health services available to help children and young people who need them without delay.**

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 33% (120), In part – 40% (149), No – 13% (48), Don't know – 14% (52)

You said

We did

<p>There needs to be more work to prevent children and young people experiencing problems, and to intervene early if they happen.</p>	<p>We agree that early intervention and prevention is important and the sections on <i>The best start in life</i> and <i>Prevention and early help for children and families</i> reflect our important work on this. We have expanded the <i>A county that works for all children</i> section to clearer about our preventative and advocacy role to champion children, young people and families, especially vulnerable students. We have clarified the objectives and added a new one to learn from best practice in prevention and early help in other areas and from our multi-agency work with vulnerable adolescents in North Kent and Medway.</p>
<p>More funding and resources are needed to support children, young people and families, from the earliest years to becoming adults.</p>	<p>We agree and have said at the start of this outcome that we need sufficient funding to support high quality services for children and young people including early years. This is one of our asks of Government and we will continue to stand up for Kent's interests despite the difficult funding situation. We have also included an ask of Government on reforming the special educational needs system as well as providing sufficient funding for these important services.</p>
<p>Sports, arts, culture and nature are important for children and young people's health and wellbeing, especially outdoor places to learn and play</p>	<p>We agree these are important to wellbeing and creating positive futures for children and young people. We've added more content on this and new objectives, including work we will do with our partners. We have also talked about the importance of safe green spaces for families in new developments in <i>Securing sustainable infrastructure</i>.</p>
<p>Young people need activities and things to do to help them develop and prevent them getting into trouble.</p>	<p>We have committed to providing a countywide youth offer and recognised the valuable preventative impact this should have. We have talked about how we will support community and voluntary groups to provide positive activities in the local community. We are investing more money to provide street-based youth workers in every Kent district outside of usual hours.</p>
<p>The emotional wellbeing and mental health of our children and young people is very important and there should be more support for this including in schools and colleges.</p>	<p>We had already emphasised the importance of this in the section on <i>Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing</i>. We have included recognition of the need for a smoother transition and continuity of support for young people needing mental health services as they reach adulthood, as well as improving support in schools and colleges. We have added new partnership objectives, based on suggestions from our partners.</p>

Outcome 7: Quality health, care and support



Early listening

Residents, KCC staff and young people feel it is important that KCC continues to provide quality social care and support for adults who need it. **We have committed in this outcome to continue to support the most vulnerable in our communities and keep striving to improve the quality and choice of support. KCC's Members** felt that securing adequate, fair funding from Government for adult social care is essential and **we have included objectives to develop the market of social care providers and continue to push Government for adequate centralised funding for adult social care.**

“What more we can do as a county council to ensure that the army of carers out there are being looked after as well?”

KCC elected Member

KCC's elected Members and staff and young people value the hard work of carers who care for family and friends and would like them to continue to be supported. **We have included commitments to develop a Business Carers Pledge with employers and make it easier for carers to find information, advice and guidance around care needs and services.**

Representatives of Parish Councils and KCC Members also felt that tackling social isolation is an important way to promote peoples' wellbeing. **We have included an objective to find new ways to prevent social isolation and loneliness.**

Wellness and wellbeing is a priority for **young people**, and **representatives of Parish Councils, KCC Members and partners delivering healthcare** in Kent have told us that it is important people take personal responsibility for their health and wellbeing. **We will work with our partners to promote healthy living and help communities and individuals stay well at all stages of life. By improving quality of life through all of our commitments in Kent's Future, Our Priority, we will be supporting people to live healthier and happier lives.**

“This walk has got me out and got me back meeting and talking to people”.

A recently widowed resident talking to a Parish Councillor about the 'Every Steps Counts' walking and social club

Residents told us how being able to get healthcare when they need it, including GP appointments, makes a big difference to their quality of life. **Representatives of Parish Councils** told us that people want to understand how changes to the way health and social care services are going to be provided locally will affect them. **We will clearly communicate our role in delivering an Integrated Care System for health and social care and what this means for people. We will work with partners to develop responsive local care in communities.**

“More money to mental health services, particularly in Margate there's a lot of talk of it.”

East Kent Resident, Female, 18-34 years

Residents, young people, KCC's elected Members, KCC's staff, representatives of Parish Councils, partners delivering health and social care and Kent's businesses have all told us about the importance of good mental health and wellbeing. **Young people and KCC staff** felt that early help was important in supporting people with mental health problems and **residents** wanted to see reduced waiting times for mental health services. **Partners delivering health and social care in Kent** are emphasising helping people to be resilient. **We have included a number of objectives to improve support for mental health, working with the NHS on delivering the Mental Health Matters hotline and safe havens for mental health support at any time of day.**

Consultation comments



Do you think that the draft objectives will help us deliver this outcome?
 Yes – 32% (117), In part – 36% (132), No – 17% (63), Don't know – 14% (50)

You said	We did
More funding is needed for adult social care to make sure everyone gets the support they need as the population grows and ages.	We agree and we have included a new section on <i>Sustainable social care</i> and emphasised our ask of Government to ensure social care and public health services are adequately funded.
People need safe, high quality social care and support in all parts of the county and in their own homes.	In the new <i>Sustainable social care</i> section, we have included more detail on how we will provide a sufficient social care market to deliver quality services and choice for local people. We have committed to providing the right social care services in local communities and in people's homes and developing Local Care services with health partners.
There should be more opportunities for people to look after their own physical and mental health , including through activities that improve health and wellbeing and health checks.	We have included new content on how health checks are important to spot problems early and provide good advice on healthier lifestyles. As well as the new section on <i>Enjoying life in Kent</i> in the <i>Stronger and Safer communities</i> outcome, we have talked about social prescribing to help older and vulnerable people take part in positive activities to improve their health and wellbeing.
There are opportunities for joining up health and social care , especially making sure communities have the health and care facilities they need with housing growth	KCC is a partner to the developing Kent and Medway Integrated Care System and we are working with partners and providers in the independent sector to improve health and care across the county. We have separated this out in a new <i>Integrated, Health, Care and Support</i> section and added new objectives that have been suggested by our partners.
Homelessness is a big issue and KCC needs to do more with partners to provide support in communities	We have updated our section on homelessness to be clearer about the important multi-agency action on this issue, with partners including district and borough councils, substance misuse charities and providers of probation services.
The plan needs to say more about supporting people later in life , including on supporting people with dementia, housing for older people and staying connected to other people.	We have included more references to supporting older people throughout the document, including designing houses that can adapt to people's needs as they get older so people can stay in their own homes safely for as long as possible. Throughout the plan we have talked about the importance of community-led activities to help people feel connected and involved and less isolated. We had already added a section and specific objectives on supporting people with dementia.

We received some comments about NHS services in Kent, including difficulty in getting a GP appointment, concerns about the capacity and location of hospitals and shortages in medical staff. These are not services that KCC controls, but we are continuing to work closely with the NHS in Kent to plan for the right health and care infrastructure to meet people's needs.

How we will measure success

Over the next five years, Kent County Council will work to deliver the outcomes and objectives set out in *Kent's Future, Our Priority*. We need a clear way to know if we are making progress and check that what we are doing is leading to better quality of life in Kent.

During our consultation many people told us it was important that the plan was achievable, realistic and measurable. They asked us how we will measure success and where the detail about delivery will be.

We have developed *Kent's Future, Our Priority* by listening to residents so we can understand their experiences and what is important to them. We want to continue to have these conversations with people. This will help us to see how people's experiences are changing over time, so we know if we are making a difference. It will help keep us on track and let us know if we need to make changes and which actions to prioritise.

Now that we have set the outcomes and objectives, the 5 Year Plan sets out how we will develop a clear and open framework to measure and monitor our progress. This section was updated and clarified as a result of the consultation feedback we received. This will bring together all the information and data available to us, including what residents and service users are telling us, so we can get a good picture of how we are doing.

We will be open and honest about our progress and performance and communicate this clearly so people can hold us to account.

Find out more

You can find out more about our work on the 5 Year Plan, including supporting documents and accessible versions on our website.

www.kent.gov.uk/5yearplan

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