

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITIES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Growth, Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee held in the Online on Thursday, 1 July 2021.

PRESENT: Sir Paul Carter, CBE (Chairman), Mr Baker (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor (Substitute for Mr S Holden), Mr M A J Hood, Mr J A Kite, MBE, Ms J Meade, Mr J Meade, Mr D Robey, Mr M J Sole, Mr S Webb and Mr J Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr D Murphy

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Jones (Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste), Ms J Taylor-Smith (Strategic Manager, Business Development - Libraries and Registration Service), Mrs A Hunter (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

2. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr Holden and Mr Manion.

Mr Dendor was present as a substitute for Mr Holden.

3. Declarations of Interest

(Item 3)

Mr Broadly declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 13 (Work Programme 2021/22) on the agenda, with reference to the Theme Park Project on Swanscombe Peninsula, due to his role as Chairman of Broadness Cruising Club and Secretary of Northfleet Harbour Restoration Trust.

4. Election of Vice Chairman

(Item 4)

It was proposed by Mr Kite, and seconded by Mrs Binks, that Mr N Baker be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

It was RESOLVED that Mr Baker be elected Vice Chairman of the Committee.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021

(Item 5)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 are correctly recorded and a paper copy be signed by the Chairman.

6. Verbal updates by the Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

(Item 6)

1. Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services) introduced himself to members, explaining that he oversees a complex portfolio encompassing 15 services, and is always happy to speak to members outside of the Committee. Mr Hill said he is also the Chairman of the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Panel.

Mr Hill gave a verbal update on the following:

- (a) The 4,000 mile Public Rights of Way (PROW) network has been very busy during the pandemic. A decision paper on PROW Operational Management Policies will come to the Committee at a future meeting.
- (b) The County Council's 9 country parks have been very busy during the pandemic seeing an increase in visitors of 60%. The development of a Country Parks Strategy is underway and will be supported by a member working party.
- (c) The County Council has an active partnership with Sports England with the Kent School Games taking place every second year and this proves to be very popular. The Open Golf in Sandwich will take place between 11 and 18 July 2021 with an expected attendance of 32,000 visitors each day, a total of 130,000 visitors over four days.
- (d) The Community Warden Service has provided an important visible presence across rural areas throughout the pandemic providing protection for around 4,000 vulnerable people. Two Canterbury Community Wardens, Mandy Quay-Verlander and Roger Lithgow, have received the Lord Mayor's 'Community Hero' Award.
- (e) The Coroners' Service has seen an increased workload as a result of the pandemic which necessitated the building of a temporary mortuary.
- (f) Trading Standards have increased their remit and played a major role during Brexit with increased border responsibilities. A paper on the implication and planning for new import duties will come to the Committee at a future meeting.
- (g) The Arts Investment Fund has provided a lifeline to small arts organisations with hotspots for creative activities being established in several areas within Kent. The Turner Contemporary is providing a real focus for arts in Margate, with smaller organisations being set up in its shadow.
- (h) The Libraries Registration and Archives Service (LRA) has been badly affected by the pandemic with the closing of 99 libraries and 5 mobile libraries. A phased reopening is taking place, in line with government guidelines, with 43 libraries currently open, and it is anticipated libraries across the county will be open by mid-August. Many libraries in town centres have been refurbished but some small libraries require work. A review will be taking place and a paper will come to the Committee at a future meeting.

- (i) Birth and death registrations were halted during lockdown but are now fully operational with death registrations taking place by telephone. The service has taken the decision to cease further wedding and civil partnership ceremony bookings for July, August and September this year. The first National Registrars Day to recognise efforts during the pandemic was held on 1 July 2021.
 - (j) Kent Libraries have announced that the Summer Reading Challenge is back with Wild World Heroes. This year, Wild World Heroes is a celebration of nature and action for the environment and is in partnership with WWF UK. It will run from Saturday 10 July until Saturday 11 September and children aged 4 – 11 years old can take part.
2. Mr Hill responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
- (a) Mr Hill confirmed there were no plans to reduce visits and mobile libraries will form part of the review. The importance of these visits for the community in rural areas was noted.
 - (b) Mr Hill confirmed the leaking roof of Folkestone Library is in the process of repair and recognised the importance of completing this.
 - (c) Asked whether there was an intention to cut the opening hours of smaller libraries, Mr Hill responded that there was currently no intention to do so.
 - (d) Asked about the increase in demand for wedding and civil partnership ceremonies and when things would get back to normal, Mr Hill confirmed there had been a 60% increase in demand and bookings are now being taken for October onwards in line with government guidelines.
 - (e) Reference was made to the top 10 suggestions for cycling in Canterbury in the Active Travel document and the creation of cycle paths, but as it was the responsibility of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport it was suggested that the document be sent to him.
 - (f) Asked whether youth hubs opening would coincide with libraries in mid-August, Mr Hill said that responsibility for youth services was not part of his portfolio but the library service was considering how it might work in collaboration with other services.
3. Mr Murphy (Cabinet Member for Economic Development) introduced himself and his Deputy, Mr Robey, to members and said that he was available for questions outside of the Committee.

Mr Murphy gave a verbal update on the following:

- (a) Mr Murphy said he had been in communication with the Chief Executive of Visit Kent regarding rebuilding the county's tourism sector which had fallen to less than a quarter of what it was before the pandemic.

- (b) The Kent Show would not be going ahead as normal this year and was being replaced by the Kent County Summer Fair at the Kent Showground, Detling on 10 and 11 July.
 - (c) Entries for The Kent Excellence Business Awards 2021 had now closed and winners would be announced in the KM and KM online.
 - (d) Staff at the Kent Film Office were managing unprecedented demand for filming in Kent which had resulted in a direct spend of £34 million into the Kent economy. This included 905 enquiries and 519 filming days.
 - (e) Mr Murphy said he had been involved in discussions around the roll out of broadband in the county, inland border facilities at Dover and Sevington, Dungeness B and its decommissioning, and how better to manage Section 106 contributions.
4. Mr Murphy and Mr Jones responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
- (a) Mr Murphy said there will be continued lobbying for infrastructure funding from all avenues including central government, external agencies and Section 106 contributions. Work is also taking place with Network South East and rail providers to look at new cross county rail links and links in and out of London. Mr Murphy suggested that the Committee consider a paper on infrastructure funding at a future meeting.
 - (b) In response to a question about rural broadband, Mr Murphy said there had been delays in responses from government and information would be shared as soon as possible.
 - (c) The shortage of HGV drivers nationwide had resulted in recycling waste collections being suspended in some areas. Mr Murphy said nationally 45,000 tests were waiting to be carried out and there had been a migration of qualified HGV drivers back to Europe due to Brexit.
5. Mr Jones gave his update, explaining he was the interim director until a permanent director has been recruited. Since the last meeting bids had been made for the Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund, and the Active Travel funding pot had been announced.

Services throughout the pandemic have been exceptionally flexible and agile with some services, such as country parks, seeing an exceptional level of high demand. There is an eagerness within the Directorate to get all community services operational, and Mr Jones expressed gratitude and credit to those involved.

6. It was RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

7. Risk Register Review

(Item 7)

Jody Catterall (Risk Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Catterall (Risk Manager) introduced the risk management report explaining that the report presents two strategic risks on the Corporate Risk Register which relate to the Cabinet Committee, and a summary of key risks from within the Growth, Environment and Transport directorate.

Ms Catterall explained that the Corporate Risk Register is taken to the Governance and Audit Committee regularly and, in addition to this, strategic risks are reported to cabinet committees annually.

2. Ms Catterall and Mr Jones responded to comments and questions from the Committee, including the following:
 - (a) In response to a question about whether Risk GT0003 should be assessed higher than the current score of Medium as a result of blockages further afield due to utilities and debris, Mr Jones said teams were working with water authorities to ensure drains were clear and pumping equipment was fully operational.
 - (b) Ms Catterall explained the methodology behind scoring risks, namely the use of the 5x5 matrix, impact and likelihood, and discussions with officers.
 - (c) Referring to risk CRR0003 and risk CRR0042 it was noted that many traders are experiencing difficulties in sourcing materials and parts efficiently and questioned how these businesses can be supported. Mr Jones explained that the backlog of building activities was creating a shortfall in materials. Work was being done with the border force to increase efficiency in importing goods, and on transporting materials to site as quickly as possible. He explained that whilst new materials are difficult to get, there has been an improvement in the recycling and reuse of equipment in the construction industry.

3. It was RESOLVED that the risks presented in the report be noted.

8. Performance Dashboard

(Item 8)

Rachel Kennard (Chief Analyst) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Kennard introduced the fourth and final Performance Dashboard for the 2020/2021 financial Year.
 - (a) In response to comments and questions Ms Kennard confirmed that the increase from £5.9 million (for year to March 2020) to £28 million in relation to the activity indicator EPE03 – *Value of items prevented from entering or removed from the market by Trading Standards* - was correct and that there had been considerable effort in this area resulting in the significant increase in performance.
 - (b) Mr Jones undertook to provide additional information to a member about the targets associated with the proposed KPIs SPA01 and SPA02

(c) Mr Murphy said he would speak with Ms Kennard about how more detailed information on employment in the 16-24 age category, including NEETs (not in education, employment or training) and those undergoing apprenticeship programmes within the private and public sector, might be included in the next performance dashboard.

(d) In response to a question about the target of 400 homes being brought back into use through the No Use Empty Scheme when 462 units had been brought back into use in 2020/21, Mr Jones said he would be happy to provide statistical updates.

2. It was RESOLVED that the performance report for Quarter 4 of 2020/2021 be noted, and that Mr Murphy discuss with Officers the inclusion of data relating to young people in unemployment and apprenticeships (16-24 age category).

9. District Visits Programme 2021

(Item 9)

Rob Hancock (Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hancock introduced the report outlining the proposed programme for future member visits to Kent districts in 2021. Visits had been interrupted by the pandemic but it was proposed to start them again in September with visits scheduled to the Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Thanet, Canterbury and Maidstone Districts.
2. Members commented on the success of previous visits and expressed their support for the continuation of such visits. Mr Hancock said that any requests for visits to specific sites should be referred to Mr Murphy.
3. It was RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee endorse the report, and that the briefing note for the visit on 22 September 2021 include background information explaining how the Council and the districts have worked together in the past.

10. Kent County Council Village and Community Hall Grant Scheme Performance Report - 2020/21

(Item 10)

Mark Reeves (Project Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Hill introduced the agenda item and said the County Council's Village Halls and Community Centres Grant Scheme, which supported small village halls by offering capital grants of up to £30,000 from an annual allocation of £75,000, was very important to communities.
2. Mr Reeves introduced the report which provided an update on grants made under the scheme since April 2020.
3. In response to a question, Mr Reeves said that grant agreements were sent once funding was agreed, funds were paid as quickly as possible and halls had the option to submit invoices in stages to alleviate the financial pressure.

4. It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

11. Report on decision taken by the Leader between meetings - 21/00042: UK Community Renewal Fund: Bid Submission
(Item 11)

Sarah Nurden (Strategic Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Ms Nurden introduced the report and presented a series of slides outlining the background to the decision. The presentation is attached as an appendix to the minutes.
2. Ms Nurden said the framework on the Shared Prosperity Fund had not yet been released, and she would welcome the opportunity to speak with members to identify potential projects prior to the framework being announced. She undertook to share the Local Government Association papers on the Shared Prosperity Fund with members.
3. It was RESOLVED that the decision taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution: 21/00042: UK Community Renewal Fund: Bid Submission be endorsed, and that information about successful bids be included as an agenda item at the next meeting.

12. 21/00056 - Inward Investment Services
(Item 12)

David Smith (Director of Economic Development) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Smith introduced the report explaining that the Council was seeking to procure inward investment services for the period August 2021 to April 2023.
2. It was RESOLVED that the proposed decision to enter into a contract with the successful bidder for the provision of inward investment services and provide authority to the Director of Growth and Communities the delegated authority to enter into necessary contractual arrangements to let the contracts as shown at Appendix A be endorsed.

13. Work Programme 2021/22
(Item 13)

It was RESOLVED that the committee's planned work programme for 2021 be noted subject to the inclusion of the following items:

- Country Park Strategy (all member working party)
- Trading Standards – implication and planning for new import duties
- Libraries Network Review
- Section 106 Developer Contributions
- Infrastructure Funding
- Monitoring of unemployment and private and public apprenticeship take-up figures for 16-24 year olds

- Interest free loans – money loaned to businesses on recyclable basis to help economy recover and grow
- Update on the No Use Empty Scheme
- UK Community Renewal Fund: Successful Bids
- Statistics on the key industry sectors in the county to target resources



UK Government

UK Community Renewal Fund

GEDC Cabinet Committee – 1 July

Context:

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for **2021/22**.

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UK Government



UK Shared Prosperity Fund

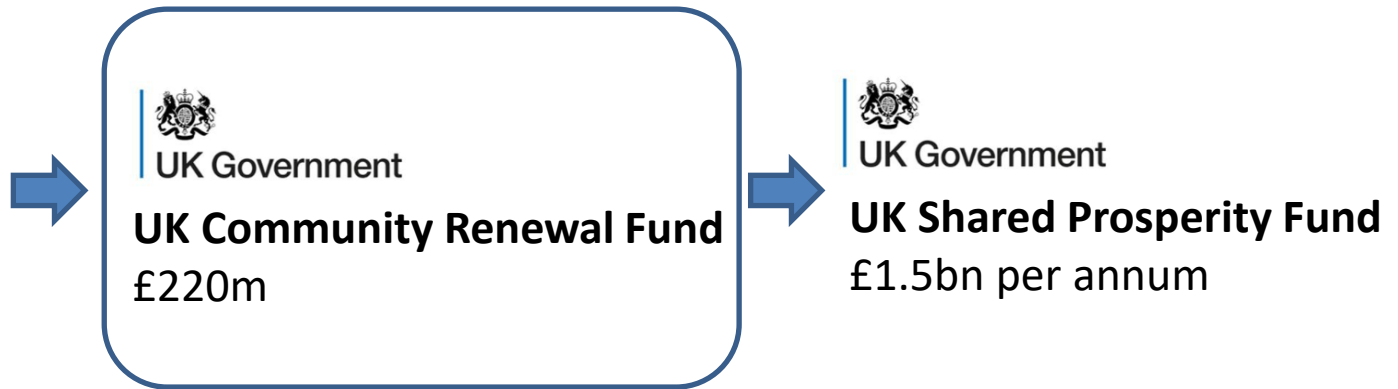
£1.5bn per annum

Context:

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme for **2021/22**.



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This aims to support people and communities **most in need** across the UK to **pilot programmes and new approaches** to prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

It is a 90% revenue fund

Priority Places

To ensure the UK Community Renewal Fund funding reaches the most in need, the UK Government has identified 100 priority places for investment based on an index of economic resilience across Great Britain.

In Kent, the UK Government has designated these four districts as priority places:

- Canterbury
- Gravesham
- Swale
- Thanet

The Government will prioritise bids that target the top 100 places, however bids targeting other places can be submitted.

Investment Priorities

Projects must deliver activity that is in line with the UK Community Renewal Fund Prospectus and align with **one or more** of these investment priorities:

- Investment in skills
- Investment for local business
- Investment in communities and place
- Supporting people into employment

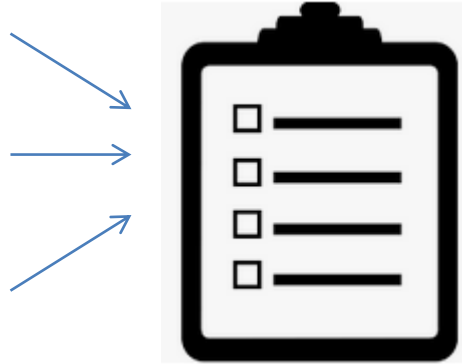
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There are no financial allocations to these priorities.

Projects should also be able to demonstrate the extent of contribution to net-zero carbon objectives or wider environmental considerations. *(This is not applicable to interventions focused on supporting people into employment).*



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Bid Value - £0 to £3m
Bids £0.5m+ encouraged

£3m per place shortlist

Funding award

Assessment Criteria

Strategic Fit Sub-Criteria:

- Aligns with local need & evidence of local support
- Aligns to the investment priorities
- Contributes to the net-zero agenda
- Produces transferable learning
- Is innovative

Deliverability, Effectiveness & Efficiency Sub-Criteria:

- Can meet 31 March 22 deadline
- Appropriate risk mitigation
- Offers good value for money
- Has a need for intervention
- Has effective evaluation strategy

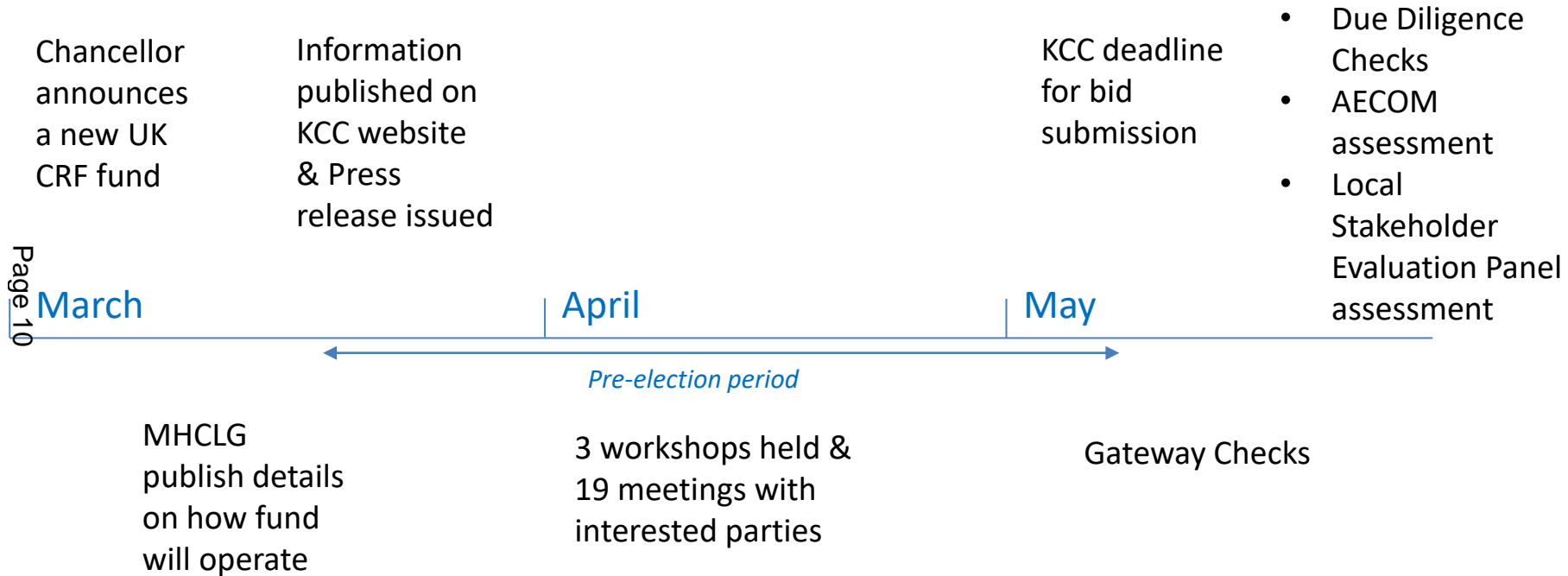
Band A – Projects scoring 80% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in the priority place(s).

Band B – Projects scoring 80% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in other place(s).

Band C – Projects scoring 50% in strategic fit and in the deliverability criteria, and 51% of activity in the priority place(s).

+ Ministerial Discretion

Timeline



Timeline

Cabinet Members met to discuss feedback

Call-in period

MHCLG to make decision in “late July 2021 onwards”.

KCC enter into back-to-back funding agreement with project promoters.

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June



July

August

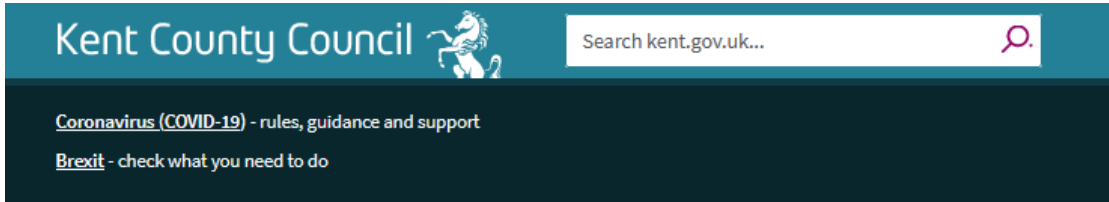
KCC leader takes formal decision

Submission to MHCLG

KCC enter into funding agreement with Government

Project Inception

Website & Workshops:



[Home](#) > [Leisure and community](#) > [Community grants and funding](#) >

UK Community Renewal Fund

The UK Community Renewal Fund is a UK Government programme. It aims to support people and communities most in need across the UK to pilot programmes and new approaches to prepare for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This is a government funding programme that will begin in 2022.

This £220 million fund will invest in skills, community and place, local business, and supporting people into employment.

We are seeking bids from organisations wishing to deliver activity in Kent as part of the UK Community Renewal Fund.

- Grants of up to £3 million are available for project activity in 2021/22.
- 90% of funding available through the UK Community Renewal Fund is revenue funding.

The deadline for applications is **9am on Tuesday 4 May**. Early submission is encouraged.

Information for applicants

[Apply](#)



[Workshops](#)



[Privacy notices](#)



If you are interested in applying, please read:

- [invitation to bid document \(PDF, 293.3 KB\)](#)
- [the assessment criteria document.](#)

[Visit the GOV.UK website for more details about the UK Community Renewal Fund.](#)



[UK Community Renewal Fund: prospectus 2021-22](#)

HTML



[UK Community Renewal Fund: assessment criteria](#)

PDF, 236KB, 17 pages



[UK Community Renewal Fund: technical note for project applicants and deliverers](#)

PDF, 326KB, 17 pages

BIDS

Gateway Checks (in-house)

Due Diligence Checks by S151

All private-sector bidders were asked to submit a copy of the last three years of their accounts, so a credit check could be undertaken on the applicant.

Two officers in KCC's finance team used this financial information to ascertain if each bid passed this gateway criteria:

- Project proposal will be delivered by a **legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds.**

Local Stakeholder Evaluation Panels

The Government said *“lead authorities may choose to involve other organisation to provide advice during the assessment and prioritisation process, e.g. on alignment with local priorities or links to existing activity. CMM in March agreed to this approach.*

Thus 12 district panels were arranged in May to which MPs, District, Skills, Business, and Community representatives were invited. Panel Members were asked to score each bid against these two criteria:

- Project contributes to **local needs** and has **evidence of local support**
- Project contributes to an **investment priority**

Consultancy Checks

The Government said *“Lead Authorities must ensure that all applicants are assessed in the same way and conflicts of interest are avoided”*. To aid independent assessment and help with resource management, CMM in March agreed that some of the UK CRF capacity funding should be used to procure consultants to score each bid against the **5 deliverability, effectiveness, and efficiency sub-criteria**, and the remaining **3 strategic fit sub-criteria**.

GET had an existing framework agreement, which allowed KCC to contract with AECOM to complete this work in the short timescale.

KCC Leader decided shortlist
Informed by earlier assessment activity

Local Stakeholder Evaluation Panels

- Constituency MP(s)
- District Leader
- District Chief Executive
- Skills Representative
- 2 x Business Representative
- Community Representative
- Kent Environment Board Representative

Appendix A: Kent-based projects shortlisted for submission to the Government

Proposal Name	Activity within which district or unitary areas	UK CRF requested		
<i>In alphabetical order:</i>	<i>(PP) = Priority Place</i>			
Breaking Barriers – Inclusive Employability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Folkestone & Hythe 	£437,938	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£83,260
Bridge the Gap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£561,618	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£500,000
Canterbury & Folkestone Skills Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Folkestone & Hythe 	£998,668	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£983,577
Canterbury's Creative Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) 	£815,895	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Ashford 	£998,668
Cohesive Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Dartford 	£1,629,172	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanet (PP) • Dover 	£998,668
Creative Tunbridge Wells	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunbridge Wells 	£425,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Dartford 	£79,440
Diversity House: Centre for Innovation and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) 	£423,631	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£500,000
Employment and Support Hub - Canterbury & Thanet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£640,556	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£500,000
Employment and Support Hub - Gravesham & Swale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) 	£1,363,023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks • Tunbridge Wells 	£412,778
GreenCore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£726,650	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford 	£51,557
Growing Green: A net-zero innovation pathway for micro and SME businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swale (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Tonbridge & Malling 	£513,122	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth National Seaside Heritage Centre 	£192,168
Growing Regional Innovation by Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Thanet (PP) • Dover 	£662,763		
Growth Gurus – Community Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevenoaks (specifically Swanley) 	£552,500		
Ignition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£545,120		
Kent and Medway Partnership for Enterprise, Food and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravesham (PP) • Swale (PP) • Medway* <p>*Medway is its own lead authority and this project is recommended for shortlisting by their officers.</p>	£528,714		
Net Zero Pathway for Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canterbury (PP) • Gravesham (PP) • Thanet (PP) 	£625,603		
Pop Up Digital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford • Dover • Folkestone and Hythe 	£1,586,896		
Recover. Rebuild. Restart.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dartford • Folkestone and Hythe • Maidstone 	£49,680		
Runway Futures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashford • Maidstone • Tonbridge & Malling 	£521,119		
Community Renewal and Decarbonisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone 	£500,000		

Q&A