

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18th January, 2022

10.00 am

Online





AGENDA

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 January 2022 at 10.00 am
Online

Ask for: **Matt Dentten**
Telephone: **03000 414534**

Membership (16)

Conservative (12):	Mr S Holden (Chairman), Mr R C Love, OBE (Vice-Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mr C Beart, Mr T Bond, Mr N J Collor, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr M Dendor, Mr A R Hills, Mrs S Hudson, Mrs L Parfitt-Reid and Mr D Watkins
Labour (2):	Ms M Dawkins and Mr B H Lewis
Liberal Democrat (1):	Mr I S Chittenden
Green and Independent (1):	Mr M Baldock

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast announcement
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
To receive apologies for absence and notification of any substitutes present.
- 3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
To receive any declarations of interest made by Members in relation to any matter on the agenda. Members are reminded to specify the agenda item number to which it refers and the nature of the interest being declared.
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2021 (Pages 1 - 10)
To consider and approve the minutes as a correct record.
- 5 Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
- 6 Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings (Pages 11 - 12)
21/00109 - Kings Hill Solar Park

- 7 Petition Scheme Debate - Proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton (Pages 13 - 18)
- 8 Draft Ten Year Capital Programme, Revenue Budget 2022-23 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-25 (Pages 19 - 20)
- 9 21/00118 - Active Travel Capital Projects (Pages 21 - 30)
- 10 21/00116 - National Bus Strategy and Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan: Next Steps and implementation of Kent Enhanced Partnerships (Pages 31 - 84)
- 11 21/00123 - Household Waste Recycling Centre Booking (Pages 85 - 98)
- 12 Ash Die-back Annual Report (Pages 99 - 106)
- 13 Presentation from Southern Water
To receive a presentation from Dr Toby Willison, Director of Environment and Corporate Affairs, Southern Water.
- 14 Performance Dashboard (Pages 107 - 118)
- 15 Work Programme (Pages 119 - 122)
To consider and agree a work programme for 2022.

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
General Counsel
03000 416814

Monday, 10 January 2022

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 3 November 2021.

PRESENT: Mr S Holden (Chairman), Mr R C Love, OBE (Vice-Chairman), Mr Baker, Mr C Beart, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr N J Collor, Mr D Crow-Brown, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor, Mr M A J Hood, Mrs S Hudson, Mr B H Lewis, Mr D Watkins, Mr A Weatherhead and Mr H Rayner

ALSO PRESENT: Mr D L Brazier (Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport) and Miss S J Carey (Cabinet Member for Environment)

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr S Jones (Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport), Mrs S Holt-Castle (Director of Growth and Communities), Mr P Lightowler (Interim Director of Transportation) and Mr M Dentten (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**32. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**
(Item 3)

No declarations were made.

33. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021
(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2021 were an accurate record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

34. Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
(Item 5)

1. Mr Brazier gave a verbal update. He confirmed that a successful bid had been made to the Department for Transport's Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme. He informed members that on 20 October he chaired a meeting of the Kent Rail Summit, which received updates on South Eastern and Network Rail station improvements, and had recently visited the Sevington inland border facility with Lord Agnew from the Cabinet Office and representatives from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, Border Force, the Department for Transport and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Regarding senior staff changes, he confirmed that Phil Lightowler had been appointed as interim Director of Transport.
2. Miss Carey gave a verbal update. The committee were directed to the quarterly environment and waste member briefing which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. Miss Carey informed members that the Kent Heritage Coast, part of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty,

had received international recognition, featuring in Lonely Planet's 'Best in Travel 2022'. She noted that it was the only UK destination included and was selected for its unique experiences and ongoing commitment to sustainable tourism practices. Miss Carey mentioned the Kent Environment Strategy launch event, which had been well attended by business and local government representatives from across Kent, thanks were given to Mr Holden for chairing the event. Members were reminded that the Kent Heritage Strategy's public consultation remained open until 13 December.

RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

35. Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee meetings

(Item 6)

1. Mr Brazier explained the reason for taking the 21/00087: Bus Service Improvement Plan decision on 21 October. He reminded members of the Department for Transport's National Bus Strategy, "Bus Back Better", which was published in March 2021 and allowed KCC, as a Local Transport Authority to create an Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators, in order to maintain access to current and future funding opportunities. He confirmed that the initial decision to create an Enhanced Partnership was taken in July 2021. He stated that the deadline set by the Department for Transport to create an Improvement Plan was 31 October 2021, as a result it was not possible to take the decision after the cabinet committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the decision be noted.

36. Bus Feedback Portal

(Item 7)

Steve Pay (Public Transport Planning and Operations Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier introduced the report and summarised the history of the Bus Feedback Portal which was introduced in January 2019 and was last discussed by the committee in December 2019. He recognised that whilst there had been subdued Portal activity since the onset of the pandemic and resulting reduction in bus use, that it remained a useful tool for receiving public feedback.
2. Mr Pay gave a verbal overview of recent trends and the Portal's future role within the Enhanced Bus Partnership. He clarified that it was designed to avoid duplicating corporate complaints and instead collected quantifiable public feedback to aid analysis of service provision and operator performance. He informed members that most complaints related to service reliability and capacity.
3. Ms Dawkins encouraged the continued use of the Portal, recommended innovative advertising methods including QR codes and asked whether feedback was shared with operators. Mr Lightowler confirmed that weekly meetings had taken place with operators throughout the pandemic and that feedback from the Portal was shared. Concerning bus advertising, he noted

that it was agreed during the pandemic that promotional material be replaced with public health information.

4. The chairman asked whether there were any concerns on the validity of the public feedback, given the small sample size. Mr Pay acknowledged that the sample size was a challenge, though added that the Portal was often the second port of call, after a direct complaint to the operator. In relation to reliability complaints, Mr Pay confirmed that Public Transport had worked with operators to adjust timetables to increase reliability, where possible.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

37. Traffic Management Act. Part 6 - Update (Item 8)

Tim Read (Head of Transportation) and Neil Edwards (Traffic Manager) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Brazier introduced the report, confirmed that the purpose of Part 6 powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004 were to allow Councils outside of London to enforce moving traffic offences, noted that KCC had to apply for the powers and set out the requirements.
2. Mr Edwards gave an update on the progress made in applying for the powers. He confirmed that KCC had submitted a statement of intent to the Department for Transport and that following approval, the Council would be required to undertake a 6 week public consultation on how the powers would be used. He added that a letter of endorsement had been received from Kent Police and that should the Council receive the powers, it would not impact Kent Police's enforcement. Concerning irregularities, Mr Edwards noted that environmental weight limits could be enforced, whilst structural weight limits could not. He informed members that a meeting had been arranged for 4 November with Cardiff Council, the only non-London authority with the powers. The fine issuable under the powers was confirmed at £70, reduced to £35 if paid within 14 days. In relation to the timeframe, he recognised that whilst the secondary legislation linked to the powers had been scheduled for early 2022, this was dependent on the parliamentary timetable.
3. Members commended the powers and Mr Edwards' work on the issue.
4. Mr Rayner stated that the powers would reduce the impact of HGVs on rural communities and infrastructure.
5. The chairman recognised the importance of the powers in improving residents' quality of life and its contribution towards achieving the objectives of the 'get lorries out of lives' campaign.
6. Mr Love asked that the Cabinet Member monitor the use of the powers, if granted, in order to protect against an unnecessary increase in highway cameras.

7. Ms Dawkins asked for further information on camera placement and the technology that would be used for enforcement purposes. Mr Edwards confirmed that the cameras used would be in accordance with the government approved specifications.
8. Following a question from Mr Watkins, Mr Edwards confirmed that the Part 6 powers did not extent to speeding or vehicle width restrictions.
9. Mr Lewis asked for an indication of the overall cost to the Council. Mr Edwards reassured members that revenue linked to the use of the powers would be retained by the Council and recognised that there would be initial costs that would need to be budgeted.
10. Mr Hood asked whether the cost of enforcement would be fully covered by fine revenue and if parking on pavements could be enforced. Mr Edwards explained that he expected to receive a better indication of volume and trends following the meeting with Cardiff Council. Regarding pavement parking he confirmed that it was not a formal offence.

RESOLVED that the work undertaken to date by the officers and the Leader's intention to submit an application to the Department for Transport that will grant KCC via a Designation Order the ability to enforce Traffic Contraventions of the Traffic Management Act 2004 be noted.

38. Waste Management Covid Recovery - Update

(Item 9)

David Beaver (Head of Waste and Business Services) was in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey gave a verbal update on waste management developments throughout the pandemic. Members were reminded of the county and districts' respective waste responsibilities. She confirmed that the national HGV driver shortage had impacted district waste collection, with 4 suspending garden waste collection. Strong county-district collaboration on waste during the pandemic, which was coordinated through the Kent Resource Partnership, was highlighted.
2. Mr Beaver provided an overview of key waste management trends and volumes. He confirmed that as of September 2021 the volume of waste managed was 12% lower than the pre-pandemic average. He noted that changes had been made to accommodate the changing work patterns of district waste collection services, which had been impacted by the national shortage of HGV drivers. Concerning Household Waste Recycling Centre use, Mr Beaver informed members that in October 2021 145,000 of 280,000 slots were used.
3. Mr Love asked that the removal of the booking system be considered and noted that some members of the public had been discouraged from using the sites as a result of the system's introduction.

4. Mr Crow-Brown asked whether an allowance for larger trailers could be made. Miss Carey agreed to consider an allowance, in the form of specialist large trailer slots, subject to sufficient demand and site accessibility.
5. Mr Lewis suggested that future decisions on Household Waste Recycling Centre booking be made on a site by site basis.
6. Mr Rayner asked whether Kent residents were able to use Household Waste Recycling Centres in Medway. Mr Beaver confirmed that residents from both areas were able to use each other's Centres and that Kent boasted some of the best accessibility in the country, in terms of opening hours.
7. Following a question from Mr Weatherhead, Mr Beaver confirmed that all district councils in Kent, except Sevenoaks, charged for curbside garden waste collection.
8. Mr Baker commended the performance of Household Waste Recycling Centres and the booking system. He emphasised the need to fully understand use patterns and booking culture. The correlation between the ease of waste disposal and volume was noted.
9. Members noted that the booking system had improved traffic around Household Waste Recycling Centres and agreed to wait for the full evaluation of public consultation responses before discussing the matter further.
10. Mr Love moved and Mr Rayner seconded an amendment to add, **“and ask that the Cabinet Member for Environment give due consideration to the issues raised during the debate.”**
11. Members voted on the amendment. The vote was won by majority vote.

RESOLVED that the committee note the report and ask that the Cabinet Member for Environment give due consideration to the issues raised during the debate.

39. Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure in Kent - Update *(Item 10)*

Tim Middleton (Transport Innovations Programme Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Middleton summarised electric vehicle trends, which included a significant growth in ownership and public support for green infrastructure. Concerning future infrastructure, he noted that alongside the volume of charging points, positioning and charging speed were vital for supporting greater take-up. He confirmed that government had not yet set quotas for councils and that modelling had been undertaken to judge future infrastructure requirements. In terms of delivery, he recognised that the private sector would take the greater role in expanding electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Kent. The committee were informed that 600 new electric vehicle charging points would be installed by KCC.

2. Mr Love commented that regular electric vehicle charging point servicing was important for maintaining capacity. He asked whether a vehicle charging infrastructure portal would be considered by the Cabinet Member. Mr Brazier welcomed Mr Love's suggestion and confirmed that it would be looked into in due course.
3. Mr Hood encouraged collaboration between KCC and district councils on electric vehicle infrastructure wherever possible. He noted that whilst public carparks were accessible areas for charging, they were not evenly distributed throughout the county.
4. Ms Dawkins asked that pavement gullies be investigated to allow for an expansion of on street charging. Mr Middleton recognised the challenge of on street charging and informed the committee that Oxford Council was running a pilot on the matter, which KCC monitored.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

40. Plan Tree - Update

(Item 11)

Elizabeth Milne (Natural Environment & Coast Manager) was in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey gave an update on the progress of Plan Tree, KCC's Tree Establishment Strategy 2021-2031, which committed to plant 1.5m new trees in Kent. She emphasised the importance of member involvement, members would be given the opportunity to participate by establishing trees within their own divisions across the four-year term, based on a target of 350 trees per division.
2. Ms Milne set out the strategy's key principles, targets, overall coverage and environmental benefits. She noted that the strategy extended beyond carbon capture and acknowledged the health, social and economic benefits of tree planting. Improved tree management and natural regeneration were highlighted, as was a commitment to a 'right tree, right place' approach to planting. Ms Milne confirmed that the strategy would go out to public consultation following the committee's endorsement.
3. Mr Chittenden asked whether tree replacement, including street trees, would be included in the member tree planting scheme. Miss Carey confirmed that tree replacement would be permitted wherever possible.
4. Mr Collor supported the 'right tree, right place' approach to planting and noted that if handled incorrectly leaves could negatively impact drains and other highway infrastructure.

RESOLVED that the committee endorse the draft Plan Tree, Kent County Council's Tree Establishment Strategy 2021-2031, for public consultation.

41. Adaptation Programme

(Item 12)

Tom Henderson was in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey introduced the report which provided an overview of key developments related to the Climate Change Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway. She reminded the committee that the Kent and Medway Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment results were discussed at its March 2021 meeting with the main findings that climate change was likely to result in warm, wet winters and hot, dry summers, with more frequent extreme weather events. She confirmed that the development of a localised adaptation plan had involved extensive engagement with local partners across key sectors.
2. Mr Henderson detailed the impact of existing climate change on Kent and Medway, which noted that over recent years extreme weather events had increased in frequency and had direct negative financial implications. In relation to the progress required to achieve carbon net zero in Kent by 2050, he explained the key roles of the local government, agriculture and utility sectors. Examples of the work already carried out by Kent businesses to reduce their carbon footprint were shared. The need to protect against the impact of rising sea levels and coastal flooding was stressed.
3. Miss Carey emphasised the need for the adaptation programme to become embedded in the actions of Council and county as a whole, in order to meet the target of carbon net zero by 2050.
4. Mr Chittenden asked if there had been any consideration towards including environmental impact assessments as part of all executive key decisions, in a similar format to pre-existing Equality Impact Assessments. Mrs Holt-Castle confirmed that initial investigations had been undertaken.
5. Mr Hood highlighted the importance of wastewater management and up-to-date surface water mapping for monitoring the impact of climate change. Miss Carey reminded members of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee's functions, which included scrutinising flood and coastal erosion risk management functions exercised by the Environment Agency and KCC.
6. Ms Dawkins stressed the importance of investing in education and skills to create the required capacity for making environmental improvements. Miss Carey reassured members that a report on new green job opportunities would go to the appropriate Cabinet Committee in due course.

RESOLVED that the ongoing development of the Climate Change Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway be noted.

42. 21/00089 Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 - 5 year review public consultation
(Item 13)

Sharon Thompson (Head of Planning Applications Group) was in attendance for this item.

1. Miss Carey introduced the proposed decision. She thanked members for their involvement in the minerals and waste working group and confirmed that the plan protected access to minerals and waste in the county.
2. Mrs Thompson reminded members of the previous decision taken to review the 2016 adopted Plan (21/00073 - Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30, 5 Year Review), which was endorsed by the committee in September. The changes to the plan, outlined in the decision report, were highlighted and Mrs Thompson confirmed that national planning and environmental policy changes had necessitated the proposed alterations. She informed members that the public consultation would take place over 6 weeks, with responses reviewed at its conclusion, in line with the timeline set out in 1.8 of the report.
3. Mr Rayner sought assurance that mineral sites in Kent would not be sterilised and that KCC would continue to support the policies outlined in the Plan, if pressured by operators to deviate. Mrs Thompson gave assurance that policies DM7 (Safeguarding Mineral Resources) and DM8 (Safeguarding Minerals Management, transportation Production & Waste Management Facilities) would be upheld.

RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member responsible for the Minerals and Waste Local Plan to:

1. Approve the proposed updates to the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Policies (and supporting text) and Chapters 1 and 2 of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 as set out in Appendix 1;
2. Delegate to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport the authority to approve draft updates to the Minerals Safeguarding Areas in the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment prior to their publication for consultation;
3. Agree to publish the proposed updates to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan, and associated supporting evidence, for a minimum six week period of public consultation in line with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
4. Agree the revised Local Plan Timetable, as shown in paragraph 1.8, to be set out in an update to the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Development Scheme; and
5. Delegate to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport the authority to approve any non-material changes to the proposed updates of the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Policies (and supporting text) and Chapters 1 and 2 in the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment prior to their publication for consultation.

43. Southern Water - Presentation

(Item 14)

The chairman informed the committee that Southern Water had been invited to present at its January meeting.

44. Performance Dashboard

(Item 15)

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

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

45. Work Programme

(Item 16)

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2021/22 be noted.

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From: Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: **Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member Decision

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: County-wide

Summary: The attached decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Cabinet Committee for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.5 below.

Recommendation:

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00109, Kings Hill Solar Park was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Cabinet Member for Environment has taken decision 21/00109 to:

- The deployment of grant funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (decision 21/00034) for the procurement and management of works for the construction of the Kings Hill Solar Park;
- Approve the policy determining appropriate use of the electricity produced by the solar park, in line with the requirement to reduce KCC's carbon emissions;
- Delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including, but not limited to, entering into contract and other legal agreements as required to arrange and deliver the ongoing management of the solar park once operational; and
- Delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, and the Cabinet Member for Environment, to enter into all necessary legal agreements for the delivery and the construction of the project, including purchase of the site.

1.2 The decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee, as it could not reasonably be deferred due to the reasons set out in paragraph 2.5 below.

2. Background to decision

- 2.1 Kent County Council has been awarded via a Section 31 agreement time limited grant funding from Salix towards the delivery of low carbon energy projects including two solar parks (see decision 21/00034). The grant funding from Salix must be spent by the 31 March 2022, with any remaining funds needing to be passed back.
- 2.2 This decision sees the delivery of a c2.98MW solar park in Kings Hill near to the Kent Scientific Services building.
- 2.3 The scheme is seeking to offset over 633 tonnes of carbon a year from KCC's energy requirement and will contribute significantly to the de-carbonisation of KCC energy supplies and in meeting its carbon neutrality 2030 target.
- 2.4 The funding was initially allocated to the North Farm waste site which KCC own however over a year's worth of environmental improvements were required on the site before the solar park project could start. Instead of losing the funds, officers have sought to develop the Kings Hill site instead which is owned by the Liberty KCC joint venture.
- 2.5 Due to the complexity of the project and associated risks in several areas including rapidly changing market conditions, officers in liaison with the Cabinet Member needed time to develop a comprehensive risk mitigation plan which delayed confirmation that the project could be delivered. Following this confirmation, the decision needed to be rapidly implemented so that work could start on site from January and the time limited grant funding from BEIS secured.

3. Recommendation(s)

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00109 Kings Hill Solar Farm was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

4. Background Documents

- Record of Decision: [21/00109](#)
- Record of Decision: [21/00034](#)

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From: Benjamin Watts, General Counsel

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18
January 2022

Subject: **Petition Scheme Debate – Proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Details of a petition received which will be the subject of a debate, in accordance with the County Council's petition scheme.

1. Introduction

1.1. In accordance with the Petition Scheme set out at sections 14.34-14.39 of the Constitution, any petition on a County Council matter which has between 2,500 and 9,999 signatures will trigger a debate at the appropriate Cabinet Committee.

1.2. The process for the debate on each petition is that the lead petitioner will be invited to speak to the petition for a total of 5 minutes. There will then be a debate of up to 45 minutes before the Cabinet Member is invited to respond for a maximum of 5 minutes. As the subject matter of this petition relates to a matter which is the responsibility of the Council's Executive, the Cabinet Committee can decide whether to make a recommendation to the relevant Cabinet Member to inform the decision-making process.

2. Petition – Proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton

2.1. A petition was received which requested that proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton be reconsidered. This petition had a total of 3,269 signatures, thus triggering a debate at this Cabinet Committee.

2.2. A statement from the lead petitioner, John Baker, is attached at Appendix 1. Mr Baker has confirmed that he will be attending the meeting to address the committee about the petition.

2.3. A position statement prepared by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport is attached at Appendix 2.

Recommendation:

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is invited to debate the issues raised in the petition, comment to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and decide how it intends to respond to the petition.

Background Documents
[Constitution of Kent County Council](#)

Contact Details

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STATEMENT TO SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING PETITION:

Say No To Cheriton Cycle Lanes.

Signatures 3,269

I started County Hardware from an empty shop with my wife and young family back in 1997, and together we created a successful independent business. Over time however we have faced many challenges and seen trade drop off significantly from its heyday.

While Cheriton has seen the rise in the likes of The Range (which has affected us and other traders massively), and numerous Sheds keep popping up on Park Farm with their FREE large car parks, Cheriton has lost banks, greengrocers, bakers, clothes shops... And that's before we mention the dreaded word AMAZON.

If cycle lanes come into Cheriton and with it the loss of parking, County Hardware will be added to that 'Closed Down' list, along with many other independent traders as we would be unable to survive. We sell heavy and bulky goods that won't go on a bike. We serve many old people who can't ride a bike, and we don't only serve the people of Cheriton, but also the people of the Marsh, Elham, Stelling Minis, Dover, Newington etc...

But this Proposal is not only unpopular with the traders; it is also very unpopular with local residents. The response we received when we started our petition took us by surprise, as we were inundated with folks coming into our shop to sign the petition and to moan about the scheme. Councillor Rory Love and Dylan Jeffrey attended two crowded public meetings (arranged by Cllr Jeffrey), so will know only too well the strength of feeling and anger at the proposal.

Since Covid, Cheriton has seen a rise in footfall as customers near and far feel safer shopping in smaller independent stores. And so now Cheriton has very few empty shops, unlike Folkestone with its disastrous Pedestrianisation scheme. Just look at Sandgate Road where you can drive along and park, then compare it to the pedestrianised stretch of Sandgate Rd and Guildhall St.

Cheriton is a friendly community driven, secondary High St, where shopkeepers and staff have time to talk with their customers, and be on first name terms with many. Cycle lanes would destroy all this and will only lead to empty shops, more takeaways, graffiti and anti-social behaviour.

Yours in good faith

John Baker

County Hardware

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From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: **Petition Scheme Debate – Proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: Position statement, responding to the petition against proposed cycle lanes in Cheriton, in accordance with the County Council’s petition scheme.

1. Position Statement

- 1.1. This scheme received the highest number of comments and opposition due to the removal of parking bays and the perceived negative impact on businesses. Consequently, acknowledging the strength of community feeling, other comments received from the consultation and the feedback from the public meetings attended by officers, officers are reviewing the scheme. Kent County Council will not proceed with the proposals on Cheriton High Street that were shown in the consultation as they were.
- 1.2. Officers now need to review the terms of the grant and take stock. Officers are committed to working with local businesses and stakeholders to shape improvements so that investment can still take place to encourage walking and active travel in the locality. This may involve provision of improved walking facilities between the Harvey Grammar School and Shorncliffe Road. If a suitable scheme can be delivered, details will be reported to this Cabinet Committee in March 2022.

Background Documents

None

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From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: Draft Ten Year Capital Programme, Revenue Budget 2022-23 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022-25

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The budget report published on 5 January 2022 sets out the background to and draft budget proposals for the capital programme, revenue budget for the forthcoming year and medium term financial plan. The report is a standard report for the whole council focussing on the key strategic considerations underpinning the decisions necessary for County Council to agree the budget at the Budget Meeting in February.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) NOTE the draft capital and revenue budgets including responses to consultation; and
- b) SUGGEST any changes which should be made before the draft is presented to Cabinet on 27th January 2022 and full County Council on 10th February 2022.

Contact details

Report Author(s)

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From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: Active Travel Funding Tranche 2

Key decision 21/00118

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report:

- A paper titled 'DfT Emergency Active Travel Fund' in relation to Tranche 1 of the funds went to the 17 July 2020 meeting of Environment, and Transport Cabinet Committee
- Details of the Tranche 2 Active Travel Projects came back to this committee in June 2021 covering off the Hythe scheme.

Future Pathway of report:

- Cabinet Member decision on the Canterbury Scheme
- Details of the Gravesend, Folkestone and Thanet Tranche 2 Active Travel Projects will come back to this committee in March 2022.

Electoral Division:

District	Electoral Division	County Member
Canterbury	Canterbury City South	Mel Dawkins
Folkestone & Hythe	Cheriton Sandgate & Hythe East	Rory Love OBE
Folkestone & Hythe	Folkestone West	Dylan Jeffrey
Folkestone & Hythe	Hythe West	Andy Weatherhead
Gravesham	Gravesend East	Jordan Meade
Gravesham	Gravesend East	Alan Ridgers
Gravesham	Northfleet & Gravesend West	Dr Lauren Sullivan
Gravesham	Northfleet & Gravesend West	Conrad Broadley
Thanet	Birchington & Rural	Derek Crow-Brown
Thanet	Birchington & Rural	Linda Wright

Summary: Following the results of the second-round consultation carried out 14 September to 25th October 2021, this paper seeks approval to move the Canterbury scheme to a detailed design stage and construction. The three remaining schemes (Gravesham, Thanet, and Folkestone) received a high number of detailed responses which officers are continuing to analyse to bring them to the March Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee for an informed decision on how to proceed.

Recommendation(s): The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider the results of the public consultation on the Canterbury scheme and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member the decision to proceed to the detailed design and then construction of the Canterbury: Littlebourne to City Centre as shown at Appendix A.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Department for Transport has provided two tranches of active travel funding. The first tranche supported the installation of temporary projects for the COVID-19 pandemic and the second tranche is to enable and support the creation of permanent infrastructure to support walking, cycling and active travel.
- 1.2 The DfT ran a competitive bidding process for tranche two, and Local Authorities were invited to submit their top five named schemes for consideration. There were very clear criteria to establish the types of schemes that LAs could include in the bids, and these were:
 - Strategic schemes that challenged the status quo of the network
 - Segregated cycle routes only (no shared or lining schemes to be included)
 - The schemes had to score highly on the Government's 'Propensity to Cycle' tool and the 'Rapid Cycleway Prioritisation Tool'
- 1.3 Schemes were selected on this basis and Kent included an additional 10 schemes above the five requested. It was an ambitious bid that referred to the unique and rural nature of Kent and the different landscapes and ambitions of the various districts.
- 1.4 The bid was submitted on 6 August 2020 and the announcement was made on 27 November 2020. Kent was awarded £6.098million. This was the third highest settlement in the Country. It covers the cost of the five named schemes.
- 1.5 Considering the nationwide push back on the tranche one schemes (mostly related to the unrealistic timescales preventing consultation) the Government has now made some key amendments to the grant conditions of this fund, including
 - Prior to the 11 December, Kent must evidence public consultation with local communities. Kent has made a positive start on this by launching a high-level early consultation on the five named schemes to test the community appetite of the principles around the active travel investment. www.kent.gov.uk/kentactivetravel
 - The timescales for spending this fund have been relaxed to enable proper time to consult communities and develop the schemes fully.
- 1.6 The five schemes that were submitted have three broad strands to them: walking and cycling infrastructure, healthy neighbourhoods and placemaking improvements.
- 1.7 The scheme proposals are intended to give people more opportunities to choose cycling and walking for their day-to-day journeys, as part of wider government plans to boost active travel.
- 1.8 The Cinque Ports scheme has proceeded to construction stage due to the overwhelming support in the first consultation. In line with the Government Guidance, a comprehensive consultation has been carried out on the

remaining four schemes, which ran between 19 September to the 25 October 2021.

- 1.9 The consultation gave residents, businesses, and stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback via KCC’s consultation process.
- 1.10 Following the closure of the consultations, analysis has been undertaken to better understand the appetite for these schemes and learn from the comments received to make an informed judgement as to the next steps.
- 1.11 This report will identify the results of the consultation for one scheme only, Canterbury: Littlebourne to the City Centre.
- 1.12 Analysis continues for the other three schemes (Gravesham, Thanet and Folkestone following the significant number of responses and detailed comments. This report provides an update on the likely direction of these three schemes.

2 The report

- 2.1 This report captures the key themes identified as part of the consultation process in relation to the Canterbury: Littlebourne to City Centre proposal.
- 2.2 An independent consultancy was used to collate the results as follows:
- 2.3 The consultation received **162** responses with **125** respondents leaving a comment to the proposal. There were **1.37k** visits to the Canterbury scheme webpage with **660** document downloads.
- 2.4 Targeted social media was used to advertise the consultation and this has proven to be the most successful tool to ensure local communities were aware of the need to respond. We also delivered postcards, put up posters along the route and issued a press release. See Fig 1 identifying “How did you find out about this consultation?”

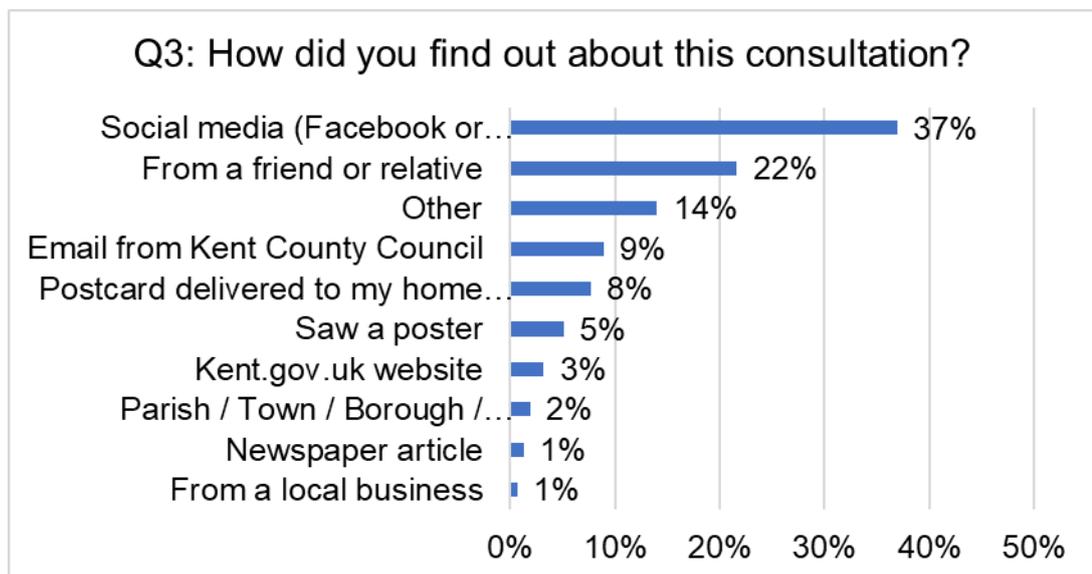


Fig 1.

2.5 **161** responses were provided to the question, “To what extent do you support or oppose the overall design being proposed for the Canterbury: Littlebourne Road to City Centre scheme?” 76% of respondents either supported or strongly supported the scheme as shown in the table below.

Strongly Support	56%
Support	20%
Neither Support nor Oppose	7%
Oppose	6%
Strongly Oppose	10%
Don't Know	1%

Table 1

2.6 Stakeholder mapping was undertaken prior to the consultation commencing, this allowed targeted engagement with the relevant stakeholders. This included local businesses and residents, giving everyone the opportunity to respond. A selection of responses and their support for the scheme can be seen in Fig 2.

Business/Organisation	Strongly support	Support	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Canterbury City Council	X				
Canterbury Christ Church University (Student)	X				
Canterbury Christ Church University (President of Sport and Engagement Student Union)	X				
Canterbury Alliance for Sustainable Transport	X				
St Paul's Church Canterbury					X
British Horse Society			X		
Canterbury World Heritage Site Management Committee			X		
English Heritage Trust		X			
San Fairy Ann Cycling Club, Kent	X				

Fig 2.

2.7 The consultation identified five key themes. These were:

- The scheme will improve safety
- Pedestrian/cyclist safety
- The scheme will improve walking and/or cycling facilities
- Opposition to vehicle restrictions/closures
- Parking removal

The full consultation report is attached as an appendix. Local member and stakeholder consultation will continue throughout the detailed design stage to ensure the detailed decisions are agreeable including consideration of comments received concerning the closure of Monastery Street, raised tables and removal and relocation of trees.

2.8 Gravesham Update

The consultation received **260** responses with **213** respondents leaving a comment on the proposed scheme There were **2.29k** visits to the Gravesham scheme webpage and **867** document downloads.

A thorough analysis of the responses is being undertaken. However, from the initial review it is clear a lot of concern has been raised about the removal of parking. We will complete the analysis and bring our proposals for next steps to this Cabinet Committee in March 2022. This may include incorporating measures for slower speeds and raised tables/entry treatments at side roads to encourage more walking in place of the current bi-directional cycleway to minimise the loss of parking for local residents. Officers will also explore treatments along the route to encourage and promote the crossing points and public realm improvements near the schools and the small retail areas. Detailed conversations with local members and stakeholders will be undertaken once the implications of the consultation responses have been fully considered and assessed.

2.9 Thanet Update

There were **484** responses to the consultation with **415** respondents leaving a comment on the proposal. There were **2.93k** visits to the Thanet scheme webpage with **1.3k** document downloads.

Concerns have been raised regarding the potential for increased congestion with the removal of a traffic lane on the A28 and there has been opposition to the road closure at Epple Road. Further analysis will be carried out to thoroughly consider all comments and proposals will be brought to this Cabinet Committee in March 2022. The final scheme is likely to be a more local provision of walking and cycling improvements to promote safer journeys to and from school and also link to the recently implemented crossing improvements in the vicinity. The details will need to be agreeable to DfT in terms of the grant funding.

2.10 Folkestone

The consultation received **919** responses, with **777** respondents leaving a comment on the proposal. There were **6.65k** visits to the Folkestone scheme webpage, with **2.1k** document downloads.

A petition to oppose the scheme and the officer response is being discussed at this Cabinet Committee.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The DFT's grant conditions state that the expenditure is for the named schemes contained in the bid, for the purpose and benefit of Active Travel and it requires Kent to carry out advanced consultation. The funds were originally intended for expenditure by March 2021, however since the Department for Transport spent some months deliberating the grant offer, an extension has been agreed, and the schemes should be delivered as soon as possible. Officers have had recent discussions with the Department who accept this can be a difficult matter and schemes take time to develop and for this reason we have suitable flexibility in the spend deadlines at this time.

3.2 The DfT grant of £6.098m will fully cover both the capital and revenue costs associated with the scheme as per current concept designs. These costs are split as follows:

- Revenue £1.220m
- Capital £4.878m

3.3 The scheme costs are scalable to suit the budget available and therefore present no financial risk to KCC. A proportion to allow for risk was included in the cost estimates. Independent cost consultants will be used throughout the design process to ensure cost assurance for the whole life costs of the schemes.

4 Legal implications

4.1 None at this stage.

5 Equalities implications

5.1 Five Equality Impact Assessments have been completed for the individual projects, see background documents. Officers will review these documents whilst keeping any affected groups informed and updated via the webpage.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Kent County Council have been working closely with a consultant through the Kent Professional Services Framework Contract to deliver the second consultation on the outline design of four schemes. Following the responses from the consultation the proposal is to move to the next stage of design and construction for Canterbury and update the Cabinet Committee on Gravesham, Thanet, and Folkestone schemes. Officers will bring a further update on these schemes in March 2022.

6.2 There is highly likely to be more funding opportunities coming forward from Central Government under the Active Travel agenda. Central Government has established an Ofsted style body to assess Local Authorities' active travel achievements and it is understood that Local Authorities will receive a sliding scale of funding in the future depending on their active travel achievements.

7. Recommendation(s):

7.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider the results of the public consultation on the Canterbury scheme and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member the decision to proceed to the detailed design and then construction of the Canterbury: Littlebourne to City Centre as shown at Appendix A.

8. Background Documents and Appendices

- 8.1 The relevant documents can be seen on our corporate website:
<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/kent-active-travel-second-consultation>
- 8.2 Appendix A: Proposed Record of Decision

8.3 Canterbury – Littlebourne Road to the City Centre Consultation Findings
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108701/KentActiveTravelCanterburyLittlebourneRoadtotheCityCentreConsultationFindings.pdf>

9. Contact details

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NO:

21/00118

For publication Yes

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Canterbury: Littlebourne to City Centre Active Travel Project

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, I agree to proceed to the detailed design and then construction of the Canterbury: Littlebourne to City Centre.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Department for Transport have awarded Kent County Council £6.098m for five named active travel schemes across the County. The Canterbury Littlebourne to City Centre Scheme is now at the detailed design and construction phase.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Initial high-level consultation of the proposed scheme took place between 9th December and January 2021.

A second more detailed consultation was carried out between 19th September and 25th October 2021.

The Active Travel programme has been regularly discussed at Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee.

This latest key decision will be discussed by Members of the Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 18 January 2022.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing and not submit a bid for funding.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

.....
signed

.....
date

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From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: **National Bus Strategy and Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan – Status Update and implementation of Kent Enhanced Partnerships.**

Key decision: **21/00116**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: Countywide

Summary: This report summarises progress made by KCC and Kent's Bus Operators to meet the requirements of the National Bus Strategy. It advises on progress to date, the approach to Kent's first Bus Service Improvement Plan and the necessary next steps to form Enhanced Partnership Agreements from April 2022.

Recommendation: The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on the proposed decision to support the proposed next steps and specifically the Executive Decision to form Enhanced Partnership Schemes as shown at Appendix A.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2021, Government published a new National Bus Strategy which set out a blueprint for how Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators should work together to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and then seek to improve all aspects of bus service provision inclusive of both service levels and extending to infrastructure, ticketing, innovation, information, vehicle, accessibility, and environmental considerations.
- 1.2 At the time of publication, Government stated that £3bn would be made available over three years to support the strategy although this figure has since been adjusted to £1.2bn reflecting existing commitments and expenditure.
- 1.3 In order to be able to access this funding and to protect existing funding streams, the National Bus Strategy placed a number of requirements on Local Transport Authorities and operators.

- By end of October 2021, Local Transport Authorities had to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The BSIP is a medium-term plan reviewed annually.
- By April 2022, Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators have to form Enhanced Partnership Agreements governing all bus services in the Local Transport Authority area.

1.4 If KCC does not meet these requirements, existing funding of £7m is at risk.

1.5 Whilst, the focus of the National Bus Strategy and therefore, the resulting BSIPs is positive and ambitious, the bus industry is facing a very serious challenge in its efforts to recover from the pandemic. Use of buses in the off peak is approximately 30% down against pre-pandemic levels and support funding which is sustaining current levels of service is not secure beyond March 2022.

2. Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan

2.1 The Kent BSIP was published and submitted to Government in October 2021 after extensive engagement with the public, various stakeholders, and Bus Operators.

2.2 In keeping with the guidance, the Kent BSIP is an ambitious document which aims to protect current levels of provision and to then drive significant improvements across all areas of service provision in partnership with bus operators.

2.3 Alongside the BSIP, Local Transport Authorities were required to submit a supporting funding bid. Kent's overall funding bid, over the three years of National Bus Strategy funding is £213m (revenue and capital) of which £25m is required to sustain current service and ticketing offers.

2.4 The Kent BSIP identifies 47 initiatives for potential delivery, with associated funding requirements, which are summarised below:

Total number of Initiatives: 47	
Number requiring National Bus Strategy (NBS) Funding: 31	
Category	NBS Funding Requested
Network development	£56.75m
Fares and ticketing	£34.75m
Bus priority, infrastructure and Highways network maintenance	£86.68m
Environment and air quality	£16.5m
Innovation and digital accessibility	£16.28m
Public transport information	£1.19m
Total amount requested	£212.6m

2.5 At the time of submitting this report, the allocation of National Bus Strategy funding is not known. It is expected that Local Transport Authorities will be advised of this early in 2022. However, it is known that the £1.2bn National

Bus Strategy funding pot is oversubscribed by around £6bn. As such, Kent's allocation is likely to be significantly short of its £213m funding bid.

- 2.6 Additionally, there is no certainty whether prescriptions will be placed on spending priorities, nor the apportionment between revenue and capital.
- 2.7 This will generate a significant task in prioritising the BSIP initiatives for delivery. Public Transport Officers are therefore developing criteria to inform this approach for further engagement with stakeholders.

3. Enhanced Partnership Agreements

- 3.1 Enhanced Partnerships are a statutory provision made available to all Local Transport Authorities through the 2017 Buses Act.
- 3.2 An Enhanced Partnership consists of two distinct parts; a plan and a scheme. The Plan sets out the vision and the intentions of Local Transport Authorities and Operators, the areas identified for improvement and how the plan will be delivered.
- 3.3 The Scheme is the detailed part of the Enhanced Partnership and is binding on both KCC and the Bus Operators
- 3.4 In order to reflect differences in geography, demography, local conditions and the respective operating territories of Arriva and Stagecoach, Kent are proposing to form three Enhanced Partnerships covering; East Kent, West Kent, and Kent Thameside.
- 3.5 Local Transport Authorities must serve two 28-day notice periods to Bus Operators advising of the intention to form the Enhanced Partnership; making them available for review and objections including with identified statutory consultees; the Traffic Commissioner, Kent Police, all District Councils and Transport Focus (the recognised bus passenger representative group for the UK).
- 3.6 To meet the April 2022 deadline, the statutory notice was served on all Kent Bus Operators on 10th January triggering the first 28 days statutory notice period.
- 3.7 The timetable does not allow for any significant objection. If a significant objection was raised, KCC may fail to meet the deadline of adopting Enhanced Partnerships from April 2022.
- 3.8 The detailed and binding nature of the Enhanced Partnerships, the need to have them adopted by April 2022 and the absence of clarity about levels of National Bus Strategy funding generates a significant issue for Local Transport Authorities. The expectation is that Enhanced Partnerships commit Local Transport Authorities and Operators to improve service and provision standards but with many improvement measures requiring additional funding, it is not possible to commit to such improvement within the timescale demanded.

- 3.9 To navigate through this and ensure that KCC meets the statutory deadline, the intention is to form basic “Shell” Enhanced Partnerships for April 2022. This approach has been encouraged by the DfT, taking account of the lack of time available.
- 3.10 Whilst the EP plans can remain aspirational in scope, the scheme elements will reflect only current commitments and those that can be delivered at little or no cost to ensure that Local Transport Authorities and Operators do not make obligations that they cannot ultimately fulfil owing to an absence of National Bus Strategy funding.
- 3.11 Once funding and any funding requirements are known, the intention is, through further consultation evolve the initial “Shell” Enhanced Partnerships into more aspirational versions expected to be adopted during Summer 2022. These second-generation Enhanced Partnerships would include the additional obligations that KCC and Operators can commit to in light of the funding available.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The bus network in Kent and across the UK is facing a significant challenge to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. The commercial pressures on bus operators, KCC’s own funding position and the absence of security about Government continuity funding, means that there is an uncertainty about the ability to maintain service levels beyond April 2022.
- 4.2 The National Bus Strategy agenda represents a significant opportunity for KCC and Kent’s Bus Operators to secure the funding necessary to protect the current network and drive improvements to the Kent Bus network.
- 4.3 To date, KCC and Kent’s Bus Operators have met Government requirements set out in the National bus Strategy. The next requirement is to form and adopt Enhanced Partnership Agreements to be in place by April 2022.
- 4.4. Owing to the combination of factors described above, the first generation of Enhanced Partnerships will be shell agreements reflecting the current offer and more modest increases. These will be evolved to be more aspirational schemes when there is certainty about the funding.

5. Recommendation:

- 5.1 The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport on the proposed decision to support the proposed next steps and specifically the Executive Decision to form Enhanced Partnership Schemes as shown at Appendix A.

6. Background Documents

- Proposed Record of Decision

- The Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan (<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/busfuture>)
- Draft Kent Enhanced Partnership Agreements:
 - Enhanced Partnership Plan
 - Enhanced Partnership Scheme
- Equality Impact assessment: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108614/EnhancedPartnershipEqIA.doc.pdf>

7. Lead Officers

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**NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY
TRANSPORT ACT 2000
KENT ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN
AND
SCHEME**

Version

- 1. Initial EP Plan and Scheme – adopted April 2022**

INTRODUCTION

In October 2021 as a requirement of the new National Bus Strategy (NBS) agenda, Kent County Council (KCC) submitted its first (pre-funding settlement version) Bus Service Improvement plan to Government. The plan was formed in conjunction with the county's 39 bus operators in order to provide a strategic vision of how Kent's bus offer can be improved in line with the requirements of the National Bus Strategy. The plan sets out the existing bus offer in Kent through consideration of the current regulatory set up, the existing approach and known success stories. It also highlights the barriers and challenges that maybe restricting greater bus use.

To support the formation of the plan we undertook significant data-led analysis of the current network. We also looked at associated measures that have been used to identify areas demanding attention. The plan then uses feedback from bus operators, Kent residents and other key stakeholders to consider potential areas for improvement and future development. These are captured under a set of key principles and more detailed initiatives. While some of these may be delivered within existing budgets, others will require NBS funding to succeed.

Delivering on the National Bus Strategy

To deliver the aims and objectives of the NBS, the Government has set requirements on LTAs and bus operators. These must be adhered to in order to ensure the availability of existing national funding streams as well as a potential new funding allocation through the NBS process. These requirements are as follows:

- To produce and publish the initial version of a BSIP
- To introduce a new statutory path for the regulatory set up of bus services in the county by March 2022, including the use of franchising or Enhanced Partnerships.

Enhanced Partnership or franchising?

In June 2021, following a statutory decision by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, KCC identified that in line with Government guidance it would be forming an Enhanced Partnership (EP) for Kent from March 2022. The EP model will allow KCC to build on the positive relationships it already has with the county's bus operators, in order to seek to deliver the aspirations of the NBS.

The use of franchising was given due consideration but was not deemed appropriate at this time. Franchising is not automatically available to non-mayoral authorities (instead requiring approval from the Secretary of State) and there are considerable questions over the implications on resourcing and subsequent service levels which could be delivered in the county. KCC also already has strong relationships with its operators which can be the basis for more formal statutory EP Schemes in the future.

Kent has an active bus market with 39 operators currently registered with the Traffic Commissioner to operate services in the county. Close ties already exist between operators and KCC through such initiatives as the Kent Travel Saver, Kent's eight

Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) and through management of contracted local bus services. It is felt that these existing relationships will form a strong base for establishing an EP model. KCC received no objections from operators to this approach during engagement conducted for the production of the BSIP.

The formation of our three Enhanced Partnership Schemes have therefore been identified as the appropriate mechanism for KCC and its bus operators to meet the requirement of the NBS in introducing *'a new statutory path for the regulatory set up of bus services in the county by March 2022'*.

Objectives and Key Principles

Through a combination of our Bus Service Improvement Plan, our Enhanced Partnership Plan and the three associated schemes, KCC and Kent's Bus Operators intend to meet the requirements of and deliver on the aspirations of the National Bus Strategy.

At a local level, we have worked to ensure that our BSIP and our resulting EPs reflect the aspirations of bus users, potential bus users and stakeholders and have therefore used engagement activity in the form of public consultation and stakeholder workshops to help us understand what is most important to our residents and what they would like to see delivered through our BSIP and EP schemes.

This has enabled us to form a set of Key Principles which have informed the priorities in our BSIP and which will also be used to establish the detail of the first and future generations of our EPs. These principles are:

Regulation

1 Form Enhanced Partnership Agreements covering all public buses in Kent, setting ambitious targets with respect to punctuality, journey times, vehicle quality and accessibility.

Customer

2 Put the customer at the heart of everything we do through developing a passenger charter agreed through EPs and by developing the Bus Services Feedback portal.

Network developments

3 Seek to secure all available funding and prioritise its use to 1) recover from the pandemic and stabilise the current network, and 2) further develop and enhance Kent's public transport through a range of initiatives.

4 Undertake a countywide and then localised network analysis to help inform the use of existing and new funding, with a view to providing service enhancements for rural communities where levels are currently lacking.

5 Continue to support the development of the community transport sector in Kent to supplement the core bus network.

Innovation and digital accessibility

6 Consider and embrace innovative transport solutions such as DRT and MaaS models as possible alternatives to the private car and make use of BRT where appropriate.

Fares and ticketing

7 Provide flexible and better value ticketing options and use technology to provide cashless and ticketless solutions on all operators' services.

Public transport information

8 Improve the quality and accessibility of public transport information, including the provision of a one-stop-shop for live bus times and fares information and making greater use of technology e.g. for voice announcements.

Accessibility

9 Strive to improve the levels of physical and digital accessibility both on buses and through infrastructure to ensure a fully accessible network for disabled passengers.

Environment and air quality

10 Promote the role of buses in solving air quality issues and work with operators and other stakeholders to improve emissions standards. This would include using funding to support the move from diesel to emission-free vehicles.

Infrastructure, network management and new developments

11 Put buses at the centre of decision making in respect of new road schemes, planning and developments, and support bus operators and services in KCC's role as the highway authority.

COMPETITION TEST

The Kent County Council has undertaken an assessment of the impacts of the EP Plan and Scheme on competition and believes it will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000.

Please note that this competition declaration is a separate, standalone document that does not need to go through the EP variation procedures to change it.

PART 1 - EP PLAN

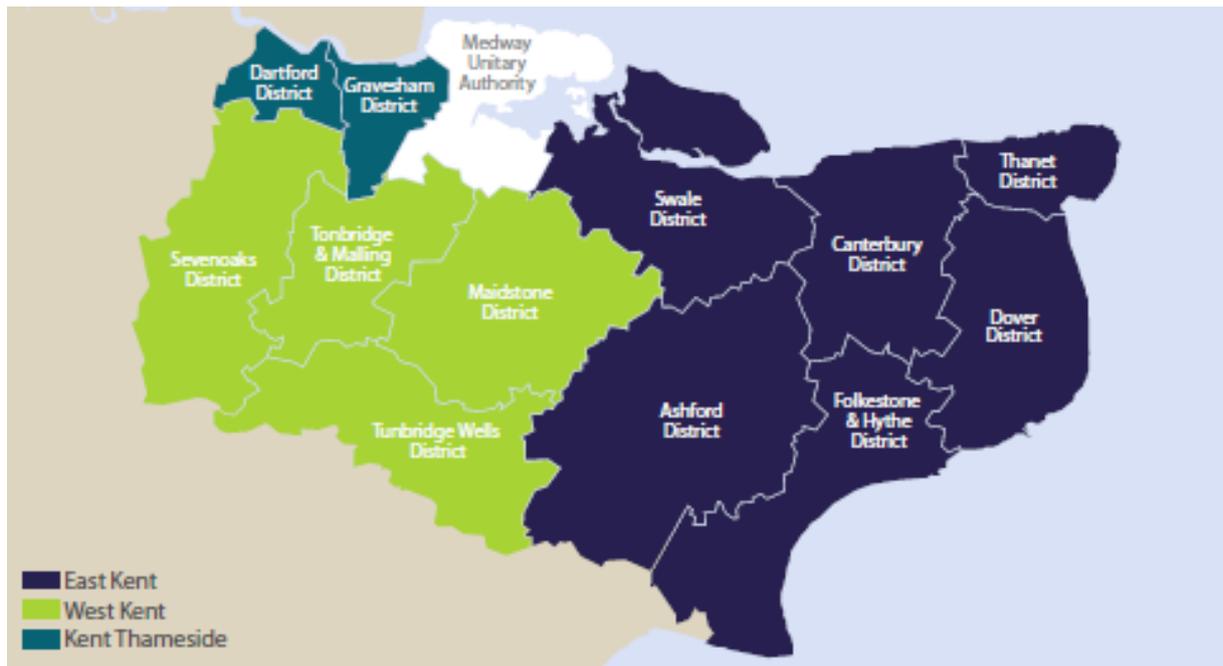
THE KENT ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY: KENT COUNTY COUNCIL.

1. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

Kent is the most heavily populated non-metropolitan authority in the UK. The county is made up of a mixture of larger urban centres such as Canterbury and Maidstone, smaller towns and villages and more rural areas. The county sees unique situations for certain locations with for instance the Gravesham and Dartford areas having close proximity to London and the Dover and Folkestone & Hythe areas being most heavily impacted by cross-channel traffic. It also sees variations across its area in relation to key indices such as employment levels, levels of deprivation and education, and it has 12 borough / district authorities operating in a two-tier administrative set up. There are also variations with respect to bus service provision and which bus operators run services. For example Stagecoach and Arriva are the major national group operators in the east and west of the county respectively.

The above means that the county's geographical make up is not conducive to a single EP arrangement. As a result KCC intends to introduce an EP and related EP Plan covering its entire geographical area but, within it, introduce three EP Schemes. This will allow the overall aims, objectives and targets of Kent's BSIP to be considered and reflected across the county as a whole, but with delivery tailored for different local circumstances, needs and operating territories.

Kent's EP Schemes are intended as follows:



Kent has borders with four other LTAs: East Sussex, London, Medway (Unitary Authority) and Surrey. KCC has held conversations with all four LTAs to discuss the overall approach to BSIPs, common issues between areas and to seek agreement for collaborative working with respect to cross boundary issues. We have and will continue this dialogue with these authorities throughout the EP process.

The differing characteristics and circumstances of each authority means that a joint BSIP was not deemed appropriate. However there is a strong willingness to work together and move forward on key issues such as ticketing and cross boundary implications of passenger charters.

Particular consideration was given to a joint BSIP and EP Plan between Kent and Medway. However this was not pursued for a variety of reasons including:

- In comparison to overall mileage there are only a small number of routes which operate between the two areas
- There is a differing geographical and social-economic make-up between the two areas
- There is a difference in administrative set-up between the two LTAs. Medway is a Unitary Authority holding responsibility over areas such as planning, parking and bus shelters. In Kent these powers are shared with our district partners under a two-tier system.

Medway Council will be an invited attendee at the Enhanced Partnership Board.

Kent's bus operators have indicated support for this approach.

2. PLAN PERIOD AND REVIEW

This first version of the Kent Enhanced Partnership Plan is intended to cover a five year period from April 2022 until end of March 2027. The EP Board may propose variations to the Plan outside of the formal review dates, which if agreed will be subject to the statutory consultation process.

In keeping with Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan, this first version of the Kent EP Plan therefore remains aspirational assuming either receipt of the full NBS funding ask or that during this initial five-year period, there will be other opportunities to attract alternative funding or deliver initiatives in a different way or using the Council's own resources.

The process to review the EP Plan would commence at the start of the final year of the initial period (from April 2026) leading to adoption of a new plan and associated schemes from April 2027. Review of the Plan, would be conducted using the established meeting and governance structure through EP Schemes Monitoring Groups making recommendations to the EP Board for approval.

Changes to operational and financial circumstances will be reflected in updated versions of the Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan which will be subject to six monthly review and through the obligations and commitments made within our EP schemes which will be subject to a controlled but simple and responsive mechanism for variation.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

KCC has a number of strategic and operational plans in place across its Highways and Transportation division. At the forefront of these is Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4): Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031. Kent's LTP brings together the authority's transport policies by looking at local schemes and issues as well as those with a countywide or national significance. Within LTP4, KCC has identified bus improvements as a key strategic priority. As the county recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic, travel patterns change and wider factors such as cross-channel traffic variances due to Brexit have an effect on the county's roads, KCC has embarked on a review of LTP4, with the intention to establish a new plan.

In any new LTP, KCC will set out policies and proposals that reflect the BSIP and our EP Plan that further its delivery. Sitting alongside LTP4 are a number of more detailed plans and strategies such as the Highways Asset Management Plan 21/22 – 25/26, Kent's Active Travel Strategy and the Freight Action Plan. It is intended that Kent's EP Plan will sit alongside the LTP and vice versa and will also likely align with a number of district LTPs.

4. CURRENT POSITION AND FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

In a large rural county like Kent, the bus network plays a major role in connecting remote, less populated areas with essential services and local centres. For this reason, KCC and Kent's bus operators have fought to protect service levels through a combination of funding and partnership working. However it is acknowledged that

in every area of provision there is more that can be done. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan sets out a range of ambitious initiatives to address identified challenges and shortcomings across all aspects of service provision.

As is the case in most parts of the UK, bus services in Kent operate in a de-regulated market outside the control of KCC. The Department for Transport, not KCC, is responsible for the licensing of operators and services. In this de-regulated environment, operators provide services at their own discretion and set vital features such as routes, timetables, frequencies, and fares. Around 90% of all bus journeys in the county are provided on this commercial basis. They do not attract subsidy from KCC but run only for the revenue generated by passenger usage.

Throughout the pandemic, KCC has worked very closely with all its transport providers to ensure that services continue to operate and are provided in line with emerging guidance. Our relationships with bus operators in particular have strengthened as a result of this. From a financial perspective, KCC supported the network by maintaining payments to operators for contracted bus services, and freezing pre Covid re-imburement levels for concessionary schemes. This, coupled with other support provided by the Government, ensured that buses continued to operate and we avoided a significant reduction to service levels in Kent.

However, it is acknowledged that this challenge remains. Covid restrictions resulted in a fall of 66% of passengers on Kent's bus network in the 2020/21 year. KCC continues to work closely with operators and collectively we are confident that ongoing financial support in the form of the Bus Recovery Grant and concessionary travel payments will sustain the network until April 2022. At this point, exceptional funding from Government is expected to cease, and reimbursement will be based on actual usage. Consideration also needs to be given to the pressure on KCC finances, particularly in discretionary areas and with challenging operating conditions caused by increased congestion and running times, and rises in costs such as fuel, wages and insurance. For these reasons, it has been difficult for the council and Kent's bus operators to be ambitious in recent years.

More recently, the national driver shortage has created a resource barrier to providing bus services in parts of the County and is anticipated to exasperate cost increases in this area leading to further pressure on the sustainability of commercially provided services and the costs for the Council in securing subsidised replacements.

As well as any additional funding that might be forthcoming, the NBS and BSIP represent a positive framework for supporting network recovery. Initiatives in the form of enhancements to public transport information and ticketing will be used to encourage passengers to the network with a view firstly to recover patronage to pre Covid levels and ultimately to exceed them. Patronage targets will be set on an increasing scale through our Enhanced Partnership process.

Taking account of the above, KCC is prioritising initiatives that will maintain commercial and subsidised service levels consistent with or similar to the pre-pandemic network. Having secured this base level of provision, additional funding

will be used to deliver a range of aspirations that will, be prioritised through future stakeholder engagement and taking account of a criteria being developed by the Council that will consider; recovery, sustainability and long term legacy, policy context and value for money.

More generally, whilst KCC and Kent’s bus operators have continued to maintain standards and levels of provision, it is acknowledged that there is scope for significant improvement. In respect of bus information, ticketing, fares, infrastructure, innovation and digital accessibility, KCC has identified specific areas for development. These are outlined in respective sections of the BSIP, along with initiatives for improvement in each area.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Engagement and Consultation

Although formal consultation is not required by the BSIP guidance, KCC has wanted to ensure that its plan reflected local need and aspiration. The Council has therefore sought to engage as fully as the timescale allowed, working to a principle of light touch consultation to establish resident’s priorities and then to supplement this feedback with more detailed discussions with stakeholders in order to understand what the feedback means in their area or for their clients. An all-operator forum has met and then been supplemented by ongoing discussions with appointed operator representatives.

An independent Market Research Company have been engaged to analyse and report on feedback and suggestions made through the Public Consultation and the Stakeholder Working Groups.

This process has been used to inform the pre-funding settlement draft of the BSIP. On understanding of the financial settlement, it is intended to more traditionally consult on the updated draft and gain feed-back on proposed priorities to align with the first Enhanced Partnership Schemes in April 2022.

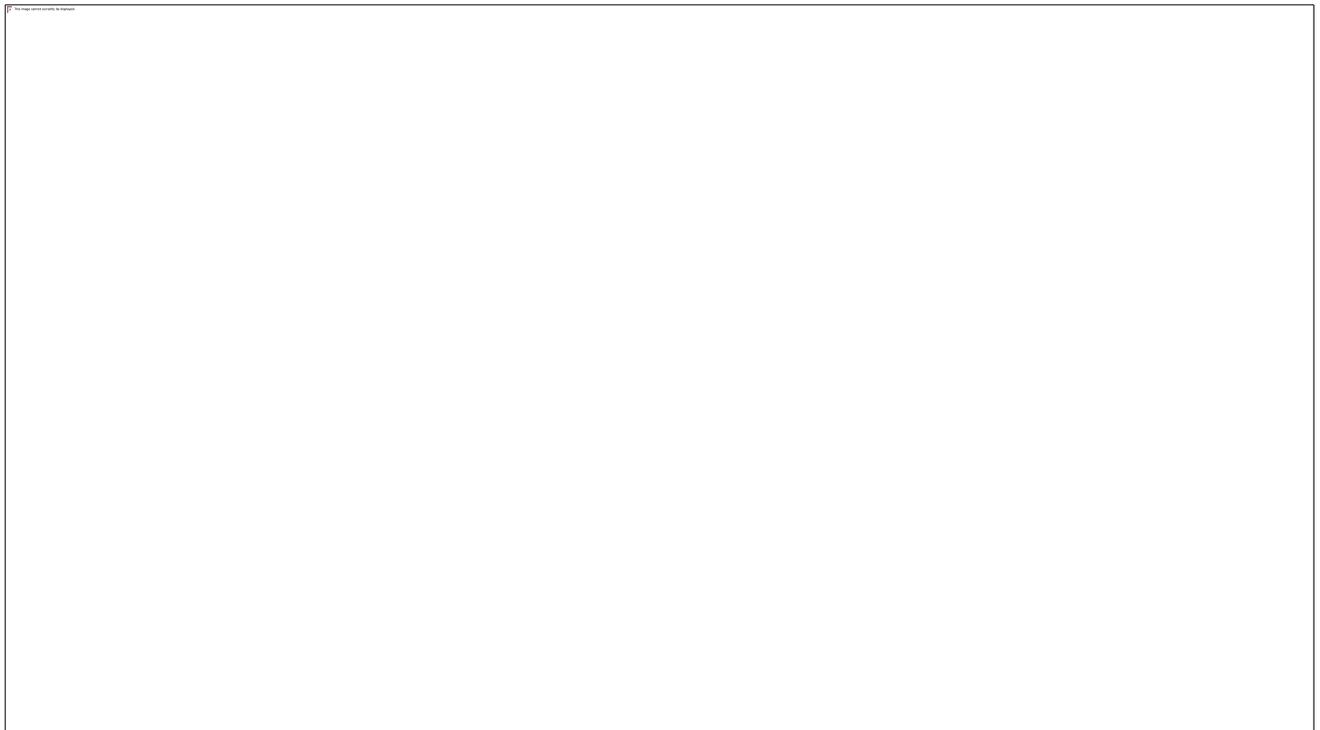
The following formal engagement activities and meetings have been undertaken;

Activity	Consultees / Stakeholders Involved
Engagement with Neighbouring Local Authority	Medway Council, East Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council, Transport for London.
Operator engagement	All Kent Bus Operators, leading to the formation of a working group.
Operator Initiative Survey	All Kent Bus Operators
Operator Data Request Survey	All Kent Bus Operators
Kent BSIP : Stakeholder	Kent District Councils, Medway Council,

Workshop – Kent BSIP Principles	KCC Officers, Passenger Focus, Chamber of Commerce, Youth Council, Disability Groups, other user groups.
Member Briefings	KCC Elected Members
District Council Engagement – Kent BSIP. Local Input to Initiatives	12 Kent District Councils
Transport Focus Engagement and attendance of workshops	Transport Focus
Department for Work and Pensions – Input to BSIP Initiatives	Kent Offices of the Department for Work and Pensions
Public Consultation : to establish priorities for users and provision of service suggestions.	All Kent residents.

BSIP Consultation Results

The following extract from Kent’s BSIP demonstrates the results from the public consultation undertaken for initial BSIP preparation.



Data

In order to support the understanding of trends across the network KCC engaged with operators to obtain data relating to range of measurables including; patronage, revenue, mode share, running times and reliability.

With the requirement to deliver the NBS at a fast pace, KCC utilised a variety of datasets already available through our current activity. This was complemented by further research and data from operators, requested during development of the EPs. Moving forward, we are looking to improve our planning resources and tools to support delivery of our EPs.

Data collected from operators pre-Covid demonstrated that buses were operating at 77.7% on time across the network. Such performance highlights the challenge of building a reliable schedule, indicating high variability in traffic congestion in Kent. Statistics collected from operators in June 2021 presented an average of 85% service on time.

OTP results presented earlier clearly highlight the challenges faced by operators when trying to set a workable and reliable timetable. While some counties achieved well over 90% bus on time and the England outside London average reached 83.5% in 2019, Kent's estimated OTP figure was 77.7% on time in November 2019. The main causes of variability include variable volumes of traffic, roadworks, and the impact of the M25.

More detail obtained through ABOD shows the peak hours are even more affected, while performance in off-peak and weekends are better overall.

The analysis of existing schedules demonstrates that the planned commercial speed of services is around 24.7km/h on average in the morning peak for most service types, except for P&R and urban services which reach around 19km/h for the same period.

In some areas the bus network in Kent is significantly affected by traffic congestion. This is visible through our journey time analysis. An analysis of main congestion points extracted from the Kent traffic model clearly highlights locations around the M25 in Dartford, Canterbury, Dover and Tunbridge Wells as being particularly affected. Not surprisingly, these locations almost all coincide with the key bus travel corridors identified in Kent.

Mode share

The KCC traffic and public transport model has estimated a theoretical pre-Covid public transport mode share (bus + rail) for Kent and Medway of around 9.2% between 7am and 7pm. The public transport mode share per district is presented in Figure 16.

Dover, Folkstone & Hythe, Maidstone and Ashford districts present the lowest public transport mode share (below 8%), although it should be noted that figures in Dover and Folkestone & Hythe may be impacted by cross-channel traffic.

Our journey time analysis concentrated on low network coverage for these districts and also highlighted pockets of deprived population which reinforce these results.

6. PLAN OBJECTIVES AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

The overall imperative for KCC and Kent's Bus Operators is to recover from the impacts of the pandemic, sustaining current service levels and offerings and then to aspire to drive genuine improvement across all areas of bus service provision in Kent.

To inform the formation Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan, in conjunction with Kent's Bus Operators and other stakeholders we developed and agreed **11 Key Principles** to act as the focus for the plan.

Key Principles

Regulation

1 Form Enhanced Partnership Agreements covering all public buses in Kent, setting ambitious targets with respect to punctuality, journey times, vehicle quality and accessibility.

Customer

2 Put the customer at the heart of everything we do through developing a passenger charter agreed through EPs and by developing the Bus Services Feedback portal.

Network developments

3 Seek to secure all available funding and prioritise its use to 1) recover from the pandemic and stabilise the current network, and 2) further develop and enhance Kent's public transport through a range of initiatives.

4 Undertake a countywide and then localised network analysis to help inform the use of existing and new funding, with a view to providing service enhancements for rural communities where levels are currently lacking.

5 Continue to support the development of the community transport sector in Kent to supplement the core bus network.

Innovation and digital accessibility

6 Consider and embrace innovative transport solutions such as DRT and MaaS models as possible alternatives to the private car and make use of BRT where appropriate.

Fares and ticketing

7 Provide flexible and better value ticketing options and use technology to provide cashless and ticketless solutions on all operators' services.

Public transport information

8 Improve the quality and accessibility of public transport information, including the provision of a one-stop-shop for live bus times and fares information and making greater use of technology e.g. for voice announcements.

Accessibility

9 Strive to improve the levels of physical and digital accessibility both on buses and through infrastructure to ensure a fully accessible network for disabled passengers.

Environment and air quality

10 Promote the role of buses in solving air quality issues and work with operators and other stakeholders to improve emissions standards. This would include using funding to support the move from diesel to emission-free vehicles.

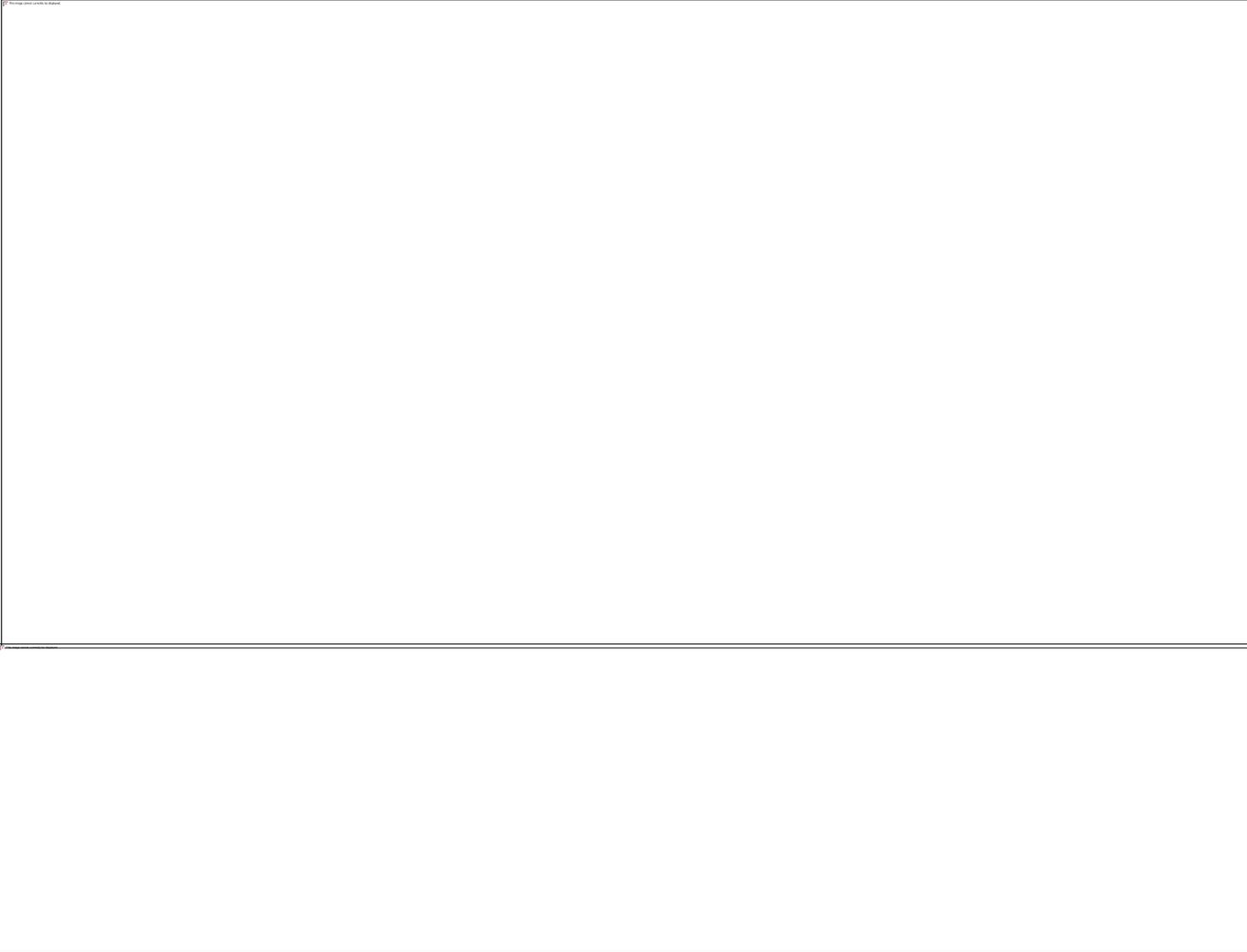
Infrastructure, network management and new developments

11 Put buses at the centre of decision making in respect of new road schemes, planning and developments, and support bus operators and services in KCC's role as the highway authority.

Initiatives

To support the achievement of these Key Principles and using feedback received through Public Consultation and our Stakeholder workshops, we then identified our range of **Initiatives**. In our initial EP scheme documents we have included facilities, measures and obligations which can be delivered with no funding from the NBS process. The Bespoke variation method outlined within the EP Scheme will be utilised to add further initiatives included below should funding permit.





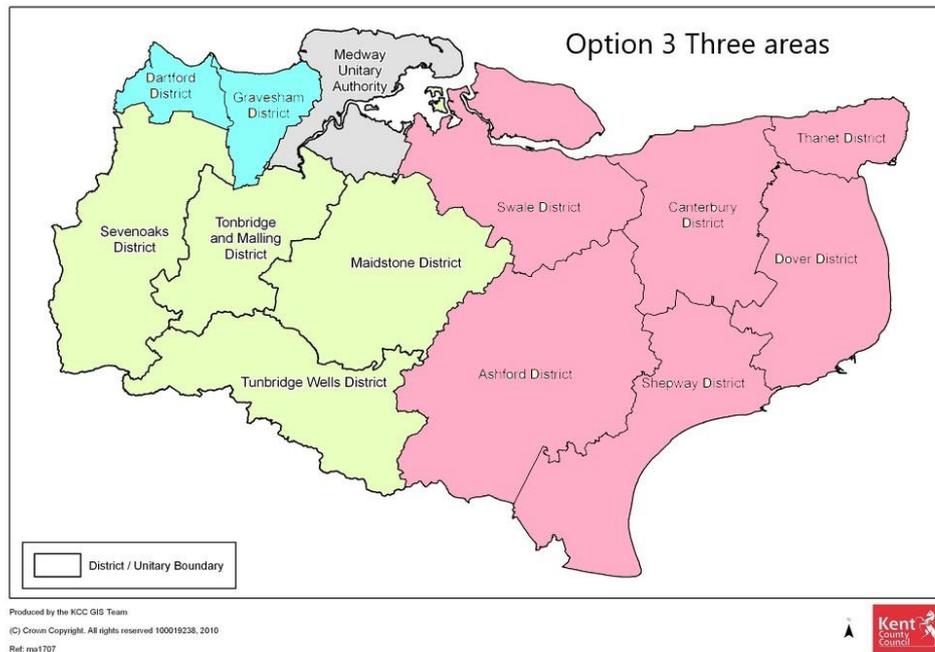
7. DELIVERY

As well as any additional funding that might be forthcoming, the EP plan represents a positive framework for supporting network recovery. Although it is not fundamentally changing the deregulated and commercial nature of the bus network, KCC is intent on forming Enhanced Partnership schemes that promote close working relationships with operators and stakeholders and permit more direct influence on standards and outcomes.

These are formal partnerships targeted at improving bus services. Although they are published by the local transport authority, they are close partnerships between bus operators and the local authorities. Other parties will play a part, including district councils, passenger groups and businesses, and there will be consultation, including obtaining public views, on what needs to be improved and what the priorities should be.

We have formed one **Enhanced Partnership Plan** for Kent (this plan), covering all of the county to take effect from April 2022. This will set out a strategic view on how the partners will improve bus services in Kent and will take most of its content from this BSIP. It will be updated every 5 years.

Sitting beneath our Kent Plan will be three **Enhanced Partnership Schemes** as shown in the map below:



The three areas would be:

1. **East Kent** covering Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe, Swale and Thanet
2. **West Kent** covering Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells Districts.
3. **Kent Thameside** consisting of the Dartford and Gravesham Districts

These schemes provide a more tailored approach for each of these smaller areas setting out more detail of the plans for improvements to be made and taking on board local views. They will set out intentions for the following few years and will be updated from time to time as the degree of success of the early schemes become clear and the demand for bus services changes.

Current Quality Bus Partnerships

In many areas of Kent, voluntary Quality Bus Partnerships (QBPs) between the county and district councils and the local bus operators have been in place for a number of years. The Enhanced Partnership schemes will build on and in most cases carry forward the positive work achieved by these arrangements. The

governance proposals are designed to ensure that groups are in place to reflect the legal requirements of the EP (e.g. overall EP Board, EP Scheme Monitoring Groups etc) but that these are complemented by more localised groups reflecting QBPs.

Improved bus services

The agreements with the bus operators will be aimed at bouncing back from the pandemic period, during which far fewer people used buses in Kent. Once pre-Covid levels of passengers have been achieved, the EP will be used to go for growth by increasing the bus share of the transport market and to position the bus as a green form of transport.

A summary of our proposed measures are below Our ability to introduce a number of these will depend on the availability of funding. The highlights are:

- Increased bus services including during the evenings and to out of town employment sites
- Lower fares, including more flexible seasons and better tickets where you need to use more than one operator
- More use of smartcards and mobile phone tickets to make purchases even easier, with rail tickets and even car hire available on the same app
- Better integration with other transport modes
- Innovative ways of retaining rural transport links, such as demand responsive services
- An expanded Fastrack, frequent and high-quality services and consideration of a 'Superbus' network
- Modern and comfortable buses and a move to zero-carbon vehicles
- Traffic management measures to speed up buses on the key radial routes
- Improvements to bus stops and the information shown at them
- Comprehensive bus and train information on a one-stop site
- Introduction of a bus passenger charter, with redress when things go wrong

Cross-boundary services

The extent of cross-boundary working with Kent's neighbouring authorities has been considered, particularly in terms of a potential joint EP Plan. The key neighbour is Medway, which is surrounded on three sides by Kent. As Medway has different priorities and urban geography to Kent, it is not proposed to undertake a joint plan. However, both authorities are working closely to minimise any cross-boundary issues that might arise and are looking at developing joint initiatives where suitable.

We will also liaise closely with East Sussex and Surrey councils and with Transport for London to ensure that cross boundary routes can continue to operate effectively.

Governance

The Enhanced Partnership Plan and schemes will be supported by a governance structure. This will cover:

- An executive board supplying strategic overview and carrying out the key decision-making process, including formal reviews of the contents of the schemes
- Monitoring groups in each of the three scheme areas, and reviewing progress of the local initiatives
- Network and bus punctuality improvement partnerships, concentrating on road network improvements and management
- Passenger charter groups in each scheme area monitoring progress of the charters and feeding back customer views
- Local focus groups in each district and borough, feeding the district views into the process and addressing issues previously covered by Quality Bus Partnerships.

Passenger charter

The EP will include a passenger charter developed initially by the targeted charter groups in each EP scheme area. These will set out the service that passengers can expect, the commitments made by both local authorities and bus operators and how any passenger issues will be addressed. Performance of services against the charter criteria will be monitored and complaints analysed to inform further actions in the EP Schemes.

8. ENGAGEMENT AND FUTURE REVIEW

This first version of the Kent Enhanced Partnership Plan is intended to cover a 5 year period from April 2022 until end of March 2027. The EP Board may propose variations to the Plan outside of the formal review dates, which if agreed will be subject to the statutory consultation process. Statutory consultees will be invited to sit on Kent's Enhanced Partnership scheme monitoring groups and as such have the opportunity to input into the success of the plan and inform any requirements for review or amendment.

In keeping with Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan, this first version of the Kent EP Plan therefore remains aspirational assuming either receipt of the full NBS funding ask or that during this initial five-year period, there will be other opportunities to attract alternative funding or deliver initiatives in a different way or using the Council's own resources.

The process to review the EP Plan would commence at the start of the final year of the initial period (from April 2026) leading to adoption of a new plan and associated schemes from April 2027. Review of the Plan would be conducted using the established meeting and governance structure through EP Schemes Monitoring

Groups making recommendations to the EP Board for approval. Targets will be reviewed through EP Schemes.

Changes to operational and financial circumstances will be reflected in updated versions of the Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan which will be subject to six monthly review and through the obligations and commitments made within our EP schemes which will be subject to a controlled but simple and responsive mechanism for variation.

ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME – KENT

THE WEST KENT ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY:

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC)

Section 1 – EP Scheme Content

1.1 - This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138 of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:

Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date

Section 3 - Obligations on the Local Authorities

Section 4 - Obligations on Bus Operators

Section 5 - Governance Arrangements

1.2 -The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan.

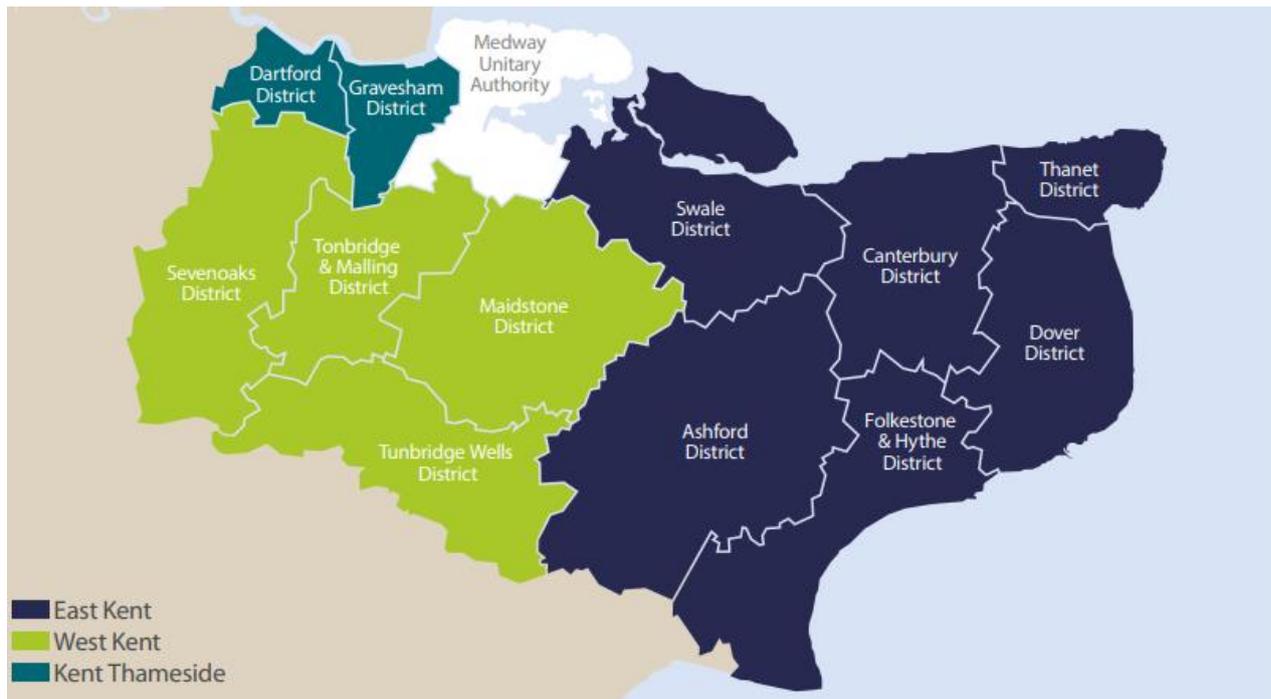
1.3 - The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Kent County Council (KCC), and those bus operators that provide local bus services in this EP Scheme area. It sets out commitments on both Local Authorities and operators of local services in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of working towards the objectives of the associated EP Plan. The Lower Tier Authorities of Kent were engaged in the development of Kent's BSIP, the principles of which form the basis of the EP Plan.

Section 2 - Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

Description of Geographical Coverage

2.1 - This EP Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating in Kent.

2.2 - Map of EP Plan and EP Scheme Areas



2.3 - Kent's EP Plan covers the whole of the area shown in the map (asides from Medway Unitary Authority which has formed its own EP).

2.4 – This Kent EP Scheme covers the Boroughs / Districts shown.

Commencement Date

2.5 - The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made in March 2022. The Plan will have no end date but will be reviewed every five years from the commencement date. The EP Board may propose variations to the Plan outside of the formal review dates, which if agreed will be subject to the statutory consultation process.

2.6 - The EP Scheme will have no specific end date but will be formally reviewed by the EP Board on an annual basis. Variations may be made to the EP Scheme outside of this formal review date as set out in section 5.

Exempted Services

2.7 - The following services are exempt from the requirements of the EP Scheme:

- Long distance or commuter services terminating in Central London or Docklands.
- A service which is registered as a local service under section 6 of the Transport Act 1985 but which would otherwise be an excursion or tour within the meaning in section 137(1) of that Act is exempt.
- A service provided by operators using S19 or S22 licences
- Services operated by Transport for London (TfL)

-A service aimed primarily at the tourist market utilising specialised vehicles – KCC will hold ultimate jurisdiction over which further services fall under this clause.

Section 3 - Obligations on the Authorities

3.1 - The following matrix sets out the specific interventions that authorities are required to deliver by subject area as part of the EP Scheme.

3.2 - All of the below obligations can be amended using the EP Scheme bespoke arrangements for varying or revoking the EP scheme as set out in Section 5.

3.3 - New obligations that relate to the principles and initiatives contained within the EP Plan are also subject to the bespoke arrangements for varying the EP scheme as set out in Section 5.

3.4 – KCC will seek to enter into Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with its Borough / District Councils in order to gain support against the measures and facilities identified under “supporting authorities” in the matrix below.

Key: Kent County Council (KCC)

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
To review the criteria for the support of council-funded socially necessary services to meet the aims of the National Bus Strategy and the post pandemic environment.	KCC		M	By March 2023
To develop Kent transport modelling and a prioritisation methodology to identify appropriate 22/23 service enhancements (NDI2 in BSIP) and assist with identifying further areas of focus for network studies (NBI3 in BSIP) should NBS funding allow.	KCC		M	By March 2023
Utilising the above methodology, to work with operators to deliver resulting 22/23 service enhancements (NDI2) and subsequent network studies / related network improvements (NDI3) as funding from the NBS allows.	KCC		M	Commence once funding known

To ensure that appropriate bus service provision is actively considered as part of new planning applications, including housing schemes.	KCC	District councils	M	By March 2023
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SERVICE MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER CARE

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
In conjunction with operators and passenger charter groups, develop and implement a single Kent passenger charter to cover all services within the EP and to ensure high operating and customer service standards.	KCC		M	By March 2023

To put passenger safety at the forefront of thinking with respect to operational / service management.	KCC		M	Ongoing
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FARES AND TICKETING

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
KCC will help to identify and deliver specific fares and ticketing schemes, with a particular focus on initiatives which support recovery from the pandemic and access to tourism, employment opportunities and the support of Kent businesses.	KCC		M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.

As funding allows, KCC will continue to assist bus operators to invest in their ETMs and back-office systems to enable the introduction of innovative ticketing offers, including a fully contactless fleet and fare capping	KCC		M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.
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INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRIORITY

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
To introduce new bus stops and upgrade existing bus stops (including poles, flags, timetable cases, raised/ dropped kerbing, clearways) to support the network and passenger / operator requests as funding permits.	KCC		F	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.

When conducting civils work at bus stops to take the opportunity to bring them up to latest standards with respect to accessibility where practically possible.	KCC	District councils	F	Ongoing.
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To work with Borough / District Councils to establish whether revised shelter contracts could be introduced across EP areas to improve standards and consistency of offering.	KCC	District councils	M	March 2024 Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.
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To seek to offer the annual Rural Shelter Grant to support the delivery of improved shelters in more rural areas as funding commits.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
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Within funding constraints, to work with Borough / District Councils to identify and deliver bus standing and driver facilities to support network growth.	KCC	District councils	F	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once
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				NBS funding known.
To produce a bus stop hierarchy to enable the prioritisation and delivery of mobility hubs, bus – bus interchanges etc as NBS funding permits.	KCC		M	By March 2023
To press (where appropriate based on modelling) for the inclusion of bus priority measures as part of new developments or funded highway schemes	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
To refine the list of corridors where congestion has a high impact on bus reliability and work with operators to further prioritise focus areas, to allow delivery of feasibility studies and subsequent schemes as NBS funding permits.	KCC		M	By March 2023
To trial new technological solutions at bus stops where funding permits .	KCC		F	Ongoing.
<i>Deliver already programmed infrastructure related to BRT schemes (e.g. Bean Road Tunnel, Bath Street, Gravesend, Dover BRT network etc) to improve Kent's overall BRT offering.</i>	KCC		F	Dates Tailored to EP Scheme

HIGHWAYS AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
Through KCC's new technical approvals process and the Kent Design Guide ensure that new and upgraded highway schemes fully consider buses with respect to access and design.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
For any new / upgraded highway schemes under KCC's control consider potential bus service improvements which would enhance reliability, service levels and accessibility and incorporate as funding permits. Ensure that these principles are encouraged (or enforced where applicable) for other non KCC schemes / developments.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
As funding permits seek to deliver highway interventions to aid bus punctuality coming out of PIPs, local transport focus groups or other sources.	KCC	District councils	F	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.
Review, relaunch and lead new Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIP)	KCC		M	By March 2023
Through PIPs and local focus groups identify parking issues affecting buses and work with to introduce new restrictions and/ or enforce existing restrictions as funding & resource permits.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
Establish a roadworks taskforce – seeking to refine notification / communication processes. To support this work, KCC will secure and provide access for operators and other stakeholders to a roadworks planning tool.	KCC		M	By March 2023

Continue to support buses with respect to soft landscaping issues	KCC		M	Ongoing.
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Work with Borough / District Councils to agree an approach to bus gate and bus lane ANPR enforcement, delivering solutions as funding permits.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
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ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODELS

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
To continue to develop the Fastrack service in Kent Thameside and to deliver a new Fastrack route in Dover	KCC		M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.

KCC will establish a policy to ensure further opportunities for BRT and Superbus schemes are explored, including the creation of a housing development triggerpoint for larger scale developments.	KCC		M	By March 2024
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To ensure that park & ride, coach services, community transport services and DRT schemes are integrated with the conventional bus network, including in marketing and ticketing schemes.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
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ENVIRONMENT AND AIR QUALITY

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
Utilise DfT Zebra funding to deliver zero emission buses and charging infrastructure on Fastrack Thameside and Fastrack Dover.	KCC		M	Tailor for ep scheme
Pursue any future funding opportunities to improve Kent's vehicle emission standards.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
Where funding permits deliver publicity campaigns to promote the role of the bus in meeting environmental challenges.	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing.
Form an AQMA hierarchy in order to help to prioritise any future funding submissions linked to zero emission buses.	KCC	District councils	M	By March 2023
Set minimum emission standards for operation within EP scheme areas and negotiate with operators an appropriate programme for improving these standards.	KCC		M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
As funding permits KCC will support operators to help them secure enhanced ETMs, associated back-office functionality and TransXChange / Real Time Information capability. This will support a range of initiatives in respect of Real Time Information, ticketing and reliability	KCC		M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.

As funding permits maximise the use of innovation in conjunction with operators – e.g. RTI, at stop audio announcements etc	KCC		F	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.
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PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

Responsibility	Local Transport Authority	Supporting Authorities	Facility (F) or Measure (M)	Delivery Date
Consider the development of the Kent Connected brand and its role as a Kent brand / its ability to deliver the “one stop shop” solution – see below.	KCC		M	By March 2023

Develop and deliver a “one stop shop” for Public Transport information including journey planning functionality, an interactive map and RTI.	KCC		F	By March 2023
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Agree with operators to set standards for at-stop bus timetables and printed publicity.	KCC		M	Ongoing.
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Conduct publicity campaigns (subject to funding) to encourage higher usage of the bus post recovery and to support strategic priorities	KCC	District councils	M	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known.
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Section 4 - Obligations on Local Bus Operators

4.1 - The below sets out the specific interventions that operators are required to deliver by subject area as part of this EP Scheme.

4.2 - All of the below obligations can be amended using the EP Scheme bespoke arrangements for varying the EP scheme as set out in Section 5.

4.3 - New obligations that relate to the principles and initiatives contained within the EP Plan are also subject to the bespoke arrangements for varying the EP scheme as set out in Section 5.

4.4 – Bus operators operating within the geographical area covered by this EP scheme will provide representation at every EPSMG meeting.

NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	To work with KCC to identify and implement opportunities to improve local bus services in Kent, particularly to underserved communities and at times of day when service levels are poor	Ongoing
Operators	To work with KCC to develop a unified bus network, making best endeavours to co-ordinate timetables and introduce simple ticketing to enable interchanging between services.	Ongoing

Operators	To better integrate bus services with other transport modes, particularly rail wherever practical.	Ongoing
Operators	To agree to work with KCC to identify a set of common registration / timetable change dates per year, recognising the need for emergency exemptions.	By March 2023
Operators	To work openly and transparently with KCC with respect to any planned service changes, ensuring that notification and discussion takes place ahead of the statutory registration window.	By March 2023
Operators	To work with KCC to deliver 22/23 NBS service enhancements (NDI2) and subsequent network studies and related network improvements (NDI3) as funding from the NBS allows.	Commence once funding known

SERVICE MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER CARE

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	In conjunction with KCC and passenger charter groups, develop and implement a single Kent passenger charter to cover all services within the EP and to ensure high operating and customer service standards.	By March 2023
Operators	To ensure that all staff are fully trained in providing excellent customer service and to operate services to high standards of service quality.	Ongoing
Operators	Through high levels of operational management (e.g. vehicle contingency, network planning, scheduling, roadworks planning etc) work to deliver the highest possible levels of reliability and operational standards.	Ongoing
Operators	To put passenger safety at the forefront of thinking with respect to operational / service management.	Ongoing
Operators	To raise any safety concerns regarding stopping arrangements in the county, including marked bus stops and hail and ride stopping practices with KCC.	Ongoing

FARES AND TICKETING

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
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Operators	To work with KCC to deliver specific fares and ticketing schemes, with a particular focus on initiatives which support recovery from the pandemic and access to tourism, employment opportunities and the support of Kent businesses	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known
Operators	To improve the capability of ETMs whenever possible to support contactless bus ticketing and innovative new products	Ongoing.
Operators	To ensure that return tickets are accepted by all operators on common sections of route, subject to a separate ticketing agreement, and to work with KCC to improve ticket acceptance of period passes.	Return tickets – Summer 2022 Period tickets – subject to funding

INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRIORITY

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	Provide feedback to KCC on bus stop condition to allow for quick and efficient action to be taken.	Ongoing
Operators	To ensure that buses are using infrastructure appropriately (e.g. position of bus at raised kerb) to support accessible boarding.	Ongoing
Operators	If through agreement with KCC operators are delivering bus stop infrastructure directly (e.g. flags, cases), operators will work to conditions and standards agreed by KCC.	Ongoing
Operators	When laying over between journeys, ensure buses are parked up at appropriate positions which are communicated with KCC and Borough / District Councils.	Ongoing
Operators	Where new standing & or driver meal break / toilet facilities are provided, to propose reciprocal operational benefits where achievable	Ongoing.
Operators	To work with KCC to trial new technologies at bus stops where funding permits	Ongoing.
Operators	Work with KCC to refine the list of corridors where congestion has a high impact on bus reliability and through use of data consider reciprocal network benefits which could be offered up if improvements were	Ongoing. Extent of obligation

	delivered.	subject to change once NBS funding known
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HIGHWAY AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	Where highway network changes are made that result in resource savings as a result of faster journey times operators will reinvest some of the benefit in more frequent services, new or newer buses, or other improvements of mutually agreed value in conjunction with local network reviews	Ongoing.
Operators	Engage fully with KCC when consulted on new road schemes and their operational impacts	Ongoing.
Operators	Send appropriate representation to PIPs, Roadworks Taskforce meetings etc and work constructively with KCC, including providing supporting data, to identify areas of concern and to deliver solutions within budget constraints.	Ongoing.
Operators	Report on soft landscaping issues affecting buses in a timely manner.	Ongoing.
Operators	Through use of roadworks planning tool, ensure roadworks diversions / stop suspensions are appropriately planned and communicated to passengers.	Ongoing.

ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODELS

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	To work to ensure that the Fastrack bus network and surrounding local bus networks are organised in a way to complement each other. Operators must take part in seamless ticketing products to enhance these links.	Ongoing.

Operators	To work with KCC to ensure that park & ride, coach services, community transport services and DRT schemes are integrated with the conventional bus network, including in marketing and ticketing schemes.	Ongoing.
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ENVIRONMENT AND AIR QUALITY

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	Seek to continuously improve bus emission standards through new investment in fleets, as funding permits.	Ongoing.
Operators	Work with KCC and Borough / District Councils as appropriate to form bids to any future funding sources to support conversion to zero emission vehicles	Ongoing.
Operators	To commit to minimise idling when at bus stops and stands or in queuing traffic.	By March 2023.
Operators	To work with KCC on advertising campaigns to promote the role of the bus in meeting environmental challenges as funding permits.	Ongoing.

INNOVATION AND DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
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Operators	Maximise the use of innovation in conjunction with KCC as funding permits or legislation requires – e.g. audio / visual on bus announcements, passenger occupancy tools etc.	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known
Operators	To improve the capability of ETMs whenever possible to provide contactless bus ticketing and innovative new products	Ongoing.
Operators	To ensure that live information feeds to BODS and other real time systems cover all local bus services	Ongoing.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
Operators	Ensure that appropriate and up to date data feeds are being fed into KCC / BODS to meet legislation and support a one stop shop website	March 2022
Operators	To conduct publicity campaigns (subject to funding) in partnership with KCC to encourage higher use of the bus post recovery and to support key strategic priorities. This will incorporate any agreed brand.	Ongoing. Extent of obligation subject to change once NBS funding known
Operators	To ensure that publicity postings comply with minimum standards set within the EP	Ongoing.
Operators	To provide and support a website which includes clear, accurate and up to date information, including but not limited to, timetables, contact details and provide a link and promotion to the KCC “one stop shop” site	Ongoing.
Operators	To agree any numbering for new services with KCC to avoid passenger confusion or duplication.	Ongoing.

Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

5.1 An Enhanced Partnership Board (EPB) has been formed which has the role of overseeing such matters as the success and fitness for purpose, variation and

revocation of the Enhanced Partnership Plan, Enhanced Partnership Schemes and downward governance structures, through formal voting and variation mechanisms.

Kent has three EP Schemes in place and as such an Enhanced Partnership Scheme Monitoring Group (EPSMG) will also be formed for each EP Scheme area.

The EPB will:

- Oversee the formation and content of the EP Plan, ensuring consistency with the Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
- Oversee the introduction and continuously monitor the progress of Kent's EP Plan and three EP Schemes ensuring consistency across the county
- Form and agree terms of reference for each EPSMG and ensure they are delivering EP Scheme outcomes.
- Table and vote on measures, facilities and obligations for inclusion in the EP Schemes, which will subsequently be subject to formal variation.
- Consider proposals for variation from Kent's three EPSMGs for changes affecting the county as a whole (i.e., applicable to all EP Schemes)
- Consider reports and proposals for variation affecting individual EP Schemes, proposed by the relevant EPSMG.
- Review progress against BSIP Targets (see Annex B)
- Ensure that each party is fulfilling its obligations within the overall EP.

The EPSMGs will:

- Oversee the delivery of existing measures, facilities and obligations in the EP Schemes, with reference to the EP Board.
- Provide reports to the EPB on EP Scheme progress and performance against all targets.
- Give consideration to how well the EP Plan and EP Schemes are working and recommend any potential changes required to the EPB.
- Agree and promote items for potential EP Scheme variation to the EPB, which may be applicable to the EP as a whole or the relevant EP Scheme.
- Address feedback from the EP Scheme Passenger Charter Group, Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP) and Local Focus Group.

5.2 - The EPB will consist of a maximum of nine (9) persons representing voting Core Members, those persons being the below (or a substitute attendee nominated by the core member who has authority to vote):

1. The KCC Cabinet member– *Meeting Chair*
2. The KCC Director of Highways and Transportation
3. The KCC Head of Public Transport
4. The KCC Traffic Manager

5. Five (5) operator attendees. This will include an automatic invite to any operator operating over 25% of scheduled mileage in Kent. Any remaining operator positions will be subject to nomination by an operator agreed process with the aim of ensuring coverage of all EP Scheme areas and inclusive representation for all operator types – i.e., inclusive of group and smaller, independent operators.

5.3 – The following will be invited to all EPB meetings:

1. Transport Focus
2. Traffic Commissioner for the South-East and Metropolitan traffic area
3. A Borough / District representative nominated by each EPSMG.

Additional non-voting Members will be subject to invitation to the EPB dependent on the content of meetings (e.g. Medway Council, KALC etc) as agreed by EP Core Members.

5.4 - The EPB will meet at least every 6 months with meeting dates agreed in advance of the relevant financial year (April – March). Extraordinary meetings may be proposed by any EPB member. Voting Core Members should advise of attendance within 7 days of the scheduled meeting with 80% of attendees needing to be present for the meeting to proceed.

5.5 – It is expected that the EPB will predominantly meet virtually

5.6 – In the interest of transparency and to enable all stakeholders the ability to comment and inform the considerations of the board and their resulting decisions, meeting papers for the EPB will be circulated to all board members and scheme monitoring group members fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting date, with items subject to formal vote and potential variation clearly identified.

5.7 – The EPB will undertake to consider all comments received from any party referenced in 5.6, so long as comments are received no less than 5 days prior to the meeting date.

5.8 – Meeting notes (including action points and variations to be enacted) will be circulated within 14 days of the meeting date and published on the EP website. Meeting notes will be subject to KCC's normal FOI procedures.

5.9 – Meetings will be administered by KCC.

5.10 - Decisions of substance or with financial impacts on KCC will be subject to the KCC constitution and governance policies and processes, which may affect the timing items are brought to the EPB

Review of EP Scheme

5.11 - Once the EP Scheme is made, its progress and any potential variations will be reviewed by the EPB through its meetings - see 5.1. Any review will consider as a minimum the effectiveness of the measures taken, facilities provided, and requirements imposed on operators - particularly in relation to their impact on the objectives for improving services set in the EP plan and BSIP and, if relevant, on bus journey times, passenger satisfaction and growth of the market.

5.12 - Once the EP Scheme is made, it will be formally reviewed by the EP Board on an annual basis. Variations may be made to the EP Scheme outside of this formal review date as set out in section 5.13. Reviews will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP. Kent County Council will initiate each review.

Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

5.13 - Under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations relating to commitments in sections 3, 4 and associated annexes where section 5.13 is quoted, will be subject to the bespoke voting mechanism also set out in section 5.16.

5.14 – If changes to or new flexibility provisions under s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 are not in the existing EP Plan they must satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018

Proposer of a variation

5.15 - Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme variations, highlighted by one of the organisations represented on the EPB, or proposed by a EPSMG. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan or current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to nbs@kent.gov.uk KCC will forward all requests onto all EPB members for information and arrange for an agenda item at the next available EPB meeting.

Decision-making process and bespoke variation mechanism

5.16 – Any material change affecting any EP scheme, including variations, will be subject to a vote by the Operator members at the EPB. If the proposed variation is agreed by the majority of bus operators, and if KCC are also in full agreement, the EP Scheme variation will be made within ten working days and the revised EP scheme will be published on the KCC website. If the agreed variation is not related to one of the elements of the EP scheme where the bespoke variation method is applicable (as detailed in section 5.13 and 5.14) they must satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018. All operator reps need to have voted either in person at the meeting or remotely in advance of the meeting. To avoid a tie, any operator abstaining from the vote will be deemed to have voted in favour of the decision.

Revocation of an EP Scheme

5.17 - If a member of the EPB believes it is necessary to revoke the EP Scheme, the EPB will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke the EP Scheme, it will follow the full formal statutory process and not the bespoke arrangements.

5.18 - Any data required for the operation of the EP Scheme will be confidential between the parties, Data shall only be shared to the extent permitted by competition law and subject to any UK GDPR.

5.19 - Information provided to KCC under Section 143 of the Transport Act 2000 and associated secondary legislation will remain confidential, unless otherwise agreed or required by law.

ANNEX A - GLOSSARY AND DEFINITIONS

The following terms have been used in the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme documents in Kent:

ABODS/BODS – The Government’s Analyse Bus Open Data service brings together data from bus operator systems, including ticket machines, to collate and summarise bus reliability by individual services.

AQMA – Air Quality Management Areas are defined areas where action is being taken to reduce air pollution.

ANPR – Automatic number plate recognition cameras may be used for bus lane enforcement, see below.

Bespoke Variation – A means to vary the requirements of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme, described in Section 5, without invoking the full requirements of Section 138 of the Transport Act 2000.

BRT – Bus Rapid Transit systems offer high quality and frequent bus services on routes with a high level of bus priority measures which often include segregated bus lanes.

Bus Gate – A short stretch of road carriageway that is restricted to use by buses and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles as indicated on appropriate signage on the approach.

Bus Lane – A signposted lane, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles, at the times also indicated by signage.

Bus Lane Enforcement – action taken to ensure that bus lanes and bus gates are used only by authorised vehicles. This is often carried out by using cameras to record unauthorised use, with the issue of civil penalties to offenders under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) – A document published in June 2021 containing proposals to improve bus services, available to download at kent.gov.uk/busfuture

Bus Stand – A bus stop clearway which permits a local bus to stand within the carriageway for as long as may be necessary up to a period of 10 minutes.
DRT – Demand responsive transport schemes are flexible bus services using pre-booking via an app or telephone booking line.

Enhanced Partnerships – Formal partnerships between local authorities and bus operators created under the Bus Services Act 2017, designed to improve bus

services by setting out firm commitments which are binding on both authorities and operators.

Enhanced Partnership Board – The committee of operators and the LTA responsible for managing the Enhanced Partnership, including decision making.

Enhanced Partnership Scheme Monitoring Group – The group formed of local authorities and all bus operators running in this EP Scheme area to oversee the delivery of existing commitments and to promote potential variations to the Scheme to the EP Board.

Enhanced Partnership Plan – The document made pursuant to section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 and which is required to be in place for an EP Scheme to be made.

Enhanced Partnership Scheme Area – The area to which this EP Scheme document applies.

Facilities – physical assets that are provided at specific locations along particular routes (or parts of routes) within the EP scheme area or new and improved bus priority measures. This is deemed for such purposes of section 138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000.

Fare Capping – A multi-operator ticketing scheme which will cap a user's travel cost according to the lowest price available for the journeys made.

Fastrack – Kent's well established and successful BRT service.

LTA – Local Transport Authorities have responsibility for transport matters in their area. In the case of this EP Scheme, this means Kent County Council.

Local Focus Group – Each borough or district in Kent will have a local focus group, looking at their local bus services and how they can be improved. This group will replace Quality Bus Partnerships, where these exist.

MaaS – Mobility as a service platforms bring together a number of transport modes on one app, offering details of each service together with ticket booking facilities.

Measures – improvements with the aim of:

- Increasing the use of local bus service serving the routes to which the measures relate or ending or reducing a decline in their use; or
- Improving the quality of local bus service.

Memorandum of Understanding – In this case, an agreement between KCC and each borough or district council to work closely together on issues such as planning in relation to bus services, roadworks, bus stop infrastructure and bus priority measures.

Multi-Operator Ticketing – common fares and ticketing products applied and accepted by multiple operators.

National Bus Strategy – The national strategy for England as set out in the Government document “Bus Back Better”

Passenger Charter – A document setting out bus users’ rights to defined standards of service including a mechanism for redress. The Passenger Charter will be a single Countywide document. Each EP Scheme will have its own Passenger Charter Group to monitor the performance of local bus services.

Passenger Charter Group – An independently hosted group consisting of a range of stakeholders and user groups formed to monitor fulfilment of the Passenger Charter in each EP Scheme area.

PIPs – Punctuality Improvement Partnerships are forums where bus operators and local authorities discuss locations where bus services are regularly delayed and seek to find solutions to reduce these delays.

Quality Bus Partnerships – Voluntary agreements between KCC, borough or district councils and bus operators in that district designed to work closely together to improve local bus services.

Real Time Information – Technology used to track the location of buses in real time. Information is transmitted to bus stops or devices to indicate to passengers the predicted arrival time at a particular point.

Rural Shelter Grant – A KCC scheme designed to assist in providing improved bus shelters in rural areas.

Soft Landscaping – Features such as trees and bushes that can obstruct the highway.

Superbus Network – A well promoted network of higher frequency, lower fare bus services, ideally in intermediate areas, such as a group of individual towns.

TransXChange – A common standard that ensures that timetable information can be exported by bus operators in to service information portals.

UK GDPR: the retained EU law version of the General **Data Protection** Regulation ((EU) 2016/679).

Zebra Funding – A Government scheme designed to implement a comprehensive zero-emission bus network in a defined area.

Zero Emission Vehicle – A vehicle that emits no pollution from its tailpipe.

ANNEX B – TARGETS

This annex may be varied using the Bespoke variation method described in Section 5 of this EP Scheme.

Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) included high level aspirational targets covering the following areas – Passenger numbers, journey time (bus speeds), reliability (service timekeeping), reliability (service actually operating), passenger satisfaction and vehicle emissions.

Once Kent's NBS allocation is known it is intended to include figures for the above targets within this scheme annex through variation.

ANNEX C – DETAIL ON MEASURES, FACILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

This annex may be varied using the Bespoke variation method described in Section 5 of this EP Scheme.

When further detail has been agreed concerning the facilities, measures and obligations set out in sections 3 and 4 of this EP Scheme, this will be included as schedules within this annex.

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NO:

21/00116

For publication: YES

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

National Bus Strategy and Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan: Next Steps and implementation of Kent Enhanced Partnerships.

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, I agree to support the proposed next steps and specifically the Executive Decision to form Enhanced Partnership Schemes.

Reason(s) for decision:

In March 2021, Government published a new National Bus Strategy which set out a blueprint for how Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators should work together to recover from the impacts of the pandemic and then seek to improve all aspects of bus service provision. The National Bus Strategy places a requirement on Local Transport Authorities and Bus Operators have to form Enhanced Partnership Agreements governing all bus services in the Local Transport Authority area by 1 April 2022.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

In response, following executive decisions by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, on 28th June 2021 KCC published its stated intent to enter into negotiations with bus operators to form an Enhanced Partnership for Kent

On 29th October 2021, after extensive engagement with the public, various stakeholders, and Bus Operators KCC published and submitted the first version of its BSIP to the DfT.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Not to comply with the requirements of the National Bus Strategy which would jeopardise approximately £7m public transport funding from government and potentially access to future funding regimes.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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signed

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date

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From: Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
Simon Jones, Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: Booking to visit a Kent County Council Household Waste Recycling Centre

Key decision: 21/00123

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Countywide

Summary: After a period of temporary closure during the initial stages of the Covid-19 pandemic from 24 March 2020, Kent County Council (KCC) re-opened the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) on 15 May 2020 and used a booking system to safely manage access.

Whilst the booking system was introduced to help manage demand at the HWRCs in response to social distancing and revised workplace rules, it has provided operational benefit and received positive customer feedback.

As a result, a public consultation was undertaken to gain views from the public and stakeholders on the future use of a booking system to access the KCC HWRCs.

Overall, more respondents felt positively about the future use of a booking system. Of those that felt negatively, the main reason was wanting to be able to visit an HWRC on the day. This concept has been trialled and is now operating at Folkestone and Maidstone HWRCs and, should the booking system remain in place, will be extended to all HWRCs.

This report sets out the findings of the consultation and makes a recommendation regarding the future use of a booking system.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision as shown at Appendix A for:

- (i) the Waste Management service to permanently operate a booking system for customers to access Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres and
- (ii) the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to keep progress of the booking system under review and to inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation to make any further operational changes to the booking system to maximise customer service.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper presents the findings from the recent Kent County Council (KCC) consultation 'Booking to visit a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC)'.
- 1.2 KCC Waste Management operates in a two-tier system. KCC is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority (WDA), responsible for the receipt at Waste Transfer Stations (WTSs) and onward processing / disposal of household waste which is collected by the District and Borough councils as the Waste Collection Authorities (WCAs). KCC also has the statutory responsibility to provide an HWRC service to residents.
- 1.3 KCC operates 18 HWRCs across the County for the use of Kent's 1.6 million residents to bring their household waste for recycling and final disposal.
- 1.4 In March 2020, when the country entered the first lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, KCC temporarily closed its 18 HWRCs and concentrated resources on the Waste Transfer Stations to ensure the kerbside waste collections from the district/borough councils were prioritised and also provide assistance to the district/borough councils in collection at a time when staffing levels were reduced.
- 1.5 KCC re-opened all the HWRCs on 15 May 2020 accepting all types of waste using a booking system to manage the numbers of visitors to each site and ensure social distancing for both customers and staff. The booking system was also initially used to fairly ration limited capacity with limits on bookings per household that were lifted and finally removed in line with increased capacity.
- 1.6 Whilst the booking system was developed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has provided additional benefits, as described in detail in section 3.
- 1.7 Periodic survey feedback also showed that a most customers found booking convenient and useful, whilst others preferred to just 'turn up and go'. As a result, public consultation was undertaken to gain more in-depth views from the public and stakeholders on the future use of a booking system to access the HWRCs.

2. How the Booking System Works

- 2.1 The booking system is available on the [KCC website](#)¹ where customers can book visits at any of the 18 HWRCs. For customers that do not have internet access and / or an email address, bookings can be made by calling KCC's Contact Centre.
- 2.2 As Covid-19 restrictions have changed and in response to customer feedback, improvements have been made to the booking system since it's been in operation. The booking system now offers:
 - More than 64,000 slots per week
 - The ability to make a booking(s) online or via the telephone
 - Unlimited bookings
 - Next day booking – book by midnight for a slot the following day (availability permitting)

1 <https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/rubbish-and-recycling/household-waste-recycling-centres/visiting-a-hwrc-during-coronavirus>

- On the day booking – originally trialled and now in operation at Maidstone and Folkestone HWRCs, to be extended across all 18 HWRCs should the booking system remain
- Bookings can be made a month in advance
- Bookings can be amended / cancelled, freeing up slots for other customers
- Emailed confirmation and reminder of booking
- Customers can view and choose available slots before entering vehicle details

2.3 A significant number of other Local Authorities (LA) also introduced a booking system at their respective HWRCs in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst some have since removed their systems, the majority have kept them and there are others who are now looking to introduce one. KCC were the first LA to go out to consultation regarding keeping a booking system. A recent survey undertaken in November 2021 by LARAC (Local Authority Recycling Advisory Committee) on behalf of Defra resulted in the following findings:

- 63 respondents introduced a booking system after March 2020 (55%)
- 11 respondents were looking at potentially introducing a booking system in the future
- 57 (of the 63 respondents with a booking system) said their booking system is still place
- Regarding plans for the future use of a booking system;
 - 26 respondents (52%) will retain their system indefinitely
 - 4 will retain their system until some point in 2022
 - 9 were unsure
 - 1 was in the process of removing their system
 - 1 will remove their system by a certain date
 - 9 answered 'other'

3. Advantages and disadvantages of the booking system

3.1 Feedback from customers, HWRC operating contractors, stakeholders and KCC waste officers obtained prior to consultation, identified a number of benefits of having a booking system to access the HWRCs, as well as some disadvantages, many of which were echoed in the consultation findings (Section 5).

3.1.1 Environmental advantages

- Reduced contamination rates (see section 5.8 for details)
- Increased recycling rates, as staff have more time to help customers dispose of waste in the correct containers / areas (see section 5.8 for details)
- Customers are making fewer journeys but with more waste, benefiting the environment (see section 5.8 for details)
- Reduced traffic queueing into the HWRCs, improving Air Quality Management

3.1.2 Customer and operational advantages

- Communications with customers are improved, for example, informing directly of any potential service issues / emergency closures, avoiding unnecessary journeys and ability to survey customers on levels of satisfaction/service improvements.

- Managed throughput of visits, allowing staff more time to help customers, rather than managing traffic queues
- Reduced queuing on high-speed roads such as the A2, A256 and A25
- Reduced queuing and disruption particularly at the Centres where there have been complaints from Kent Police, bus operators, local residents and customers queuing to access the service
- Certainty that customers will be able to access the HWRCs, reducing wasted car journeys and spending less time at the Centre
- HWRC maintenance can be planned in line with customer demand, rather than disrupting the service at times that customers are accessing the Centre
- Reduced risk of incidents and near misses at previously congested Centres, for both customers, HWRC staff and haulage contractors
- People are “thinking more” about whether to dispose of waste, or whether to reuse or sell items in the first instance

3.1.3 Feedback regarding disadvantages of the booking system received prior to consultation and again echoed in the consultation findings (section 5) include:

- customers cannot make spontaneous decisions about visiting a Centre without using the booking system – although they can now book for the next day at all HWRCs and within one hour at those Centres operating ‘on the day’ booking
- customers with larger volumes of household waste may have to estimate how many trips are needed rather than making multiple spontaneous visits
- in the early days of the booking system, customers were limited by the frequency and availability of slots. Changes have been made which has resolved this issue
- there have been added call volumes regarding the waste management service to the Contact Centre, which can lead to a longer wait to get through to an advisor to make a booking via the telephone

4 Consultation Response

4.1 A six-week public consultation seeking views on the future use of a booking system ran from 19 August to 30 September 2021. Various communication methods were utilised to ensure a broad range of target audiences were engaged, including users and non-users of the service.

4.2 In total 10,705 responses were received as follows:

- 10,585 online questionnaire responses completed
- 8 word / pdf questionnaire responses completed and emailed to KCC
- 42 hard copy / paper questionnaire responses completed and sent to KCC
- 52 comments received by email / letter
- 18 comments received via voicemail

4.3 Most responses were from Kent residents (98%). 14 responses were received from a District or Parish council, 1 response by a ‘business owner or representative’ and one from ‘a Charity, Voluntary or Community Sector organisation (VCS).

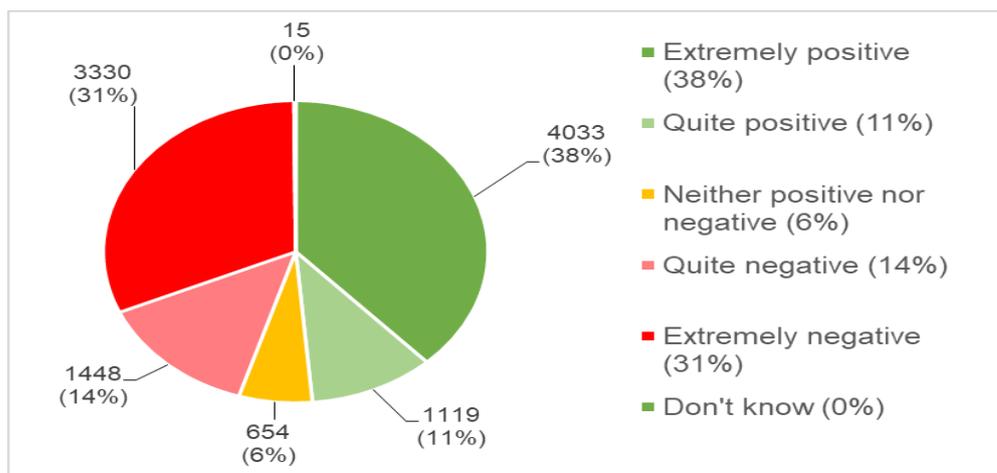
5 Consultation findings, conclusions, and future considerations

5.1 KCC Waste Management officers have undertaken detailed analysis of all results and the full consultation analysis report is attached as Appendix B. A summary of key findings / themes is provided in this paper. As the booking system has evolved, the service has already made some changes reflecting some of the comments and suggestions received from the consultation. These changes are set out in section 5.4 to 5.9 below. Appendix C provides the Waste Management Service response to the consultation.

5.2 The consultation analysis report aims to identify where strength of feeling may be particularly intense, while recognising that interpreting consultation is not simply a matter of counting responses. It's about understanding the impact our proposed decision may have on customers and using this insight, along with other evidence, to enable a well-informed decision to be made.

5.3 View on future use of the booking system

5.3.1 Respondents were asked 'How positive or negative would you feel about using a booking system to access the HWRCs in the future?' 49% (5,152) felt positively 45% (4,778) felt negatively and 6% (654) felt neither positive nor negative. A greater number of people felt *extremely* positive (38%, 4,033 respondents) opposed to *extremely* negative (31%, 3,330 respondents) about the system.



5.3.2 There is a significant difference in views between respondents who have previously used the booking system and those who have not. Whilst 5,035 (52%) of those that have used the booking system are positive about using the system in the future, this drops to just 10% (96 respondents) for those that have not used the system.

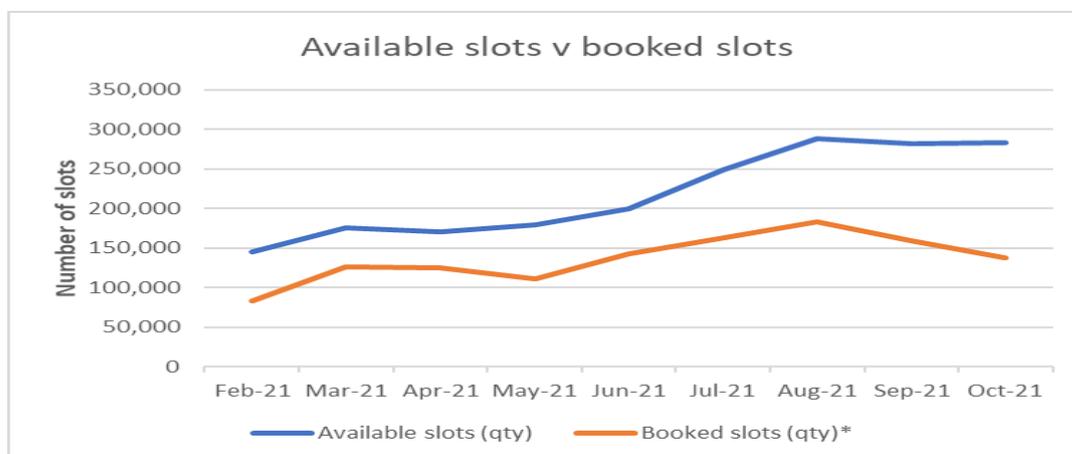
5.3.3 There is also significant variation in views when analysed by which HWRC respondents normally visit. The most positive views are from customers using Maidstone, Margate, Pepperhill, Sittingbourne, Swanley and Folkestone HWRCs. These are some of the biggest HWRCs in the network, which often, pre-Covid-19 (and therefore before the booking system), experienced queuing.

5.3.4 Older age groups (with the exception of the 85+ cohort) are more likely to be positive about the booking system.

- 5.3.5 Respondents who stated they consider themselves to be disabled are less likely to be positive about the booking system (47% compared with 58% who do not consider themselves to be disabled). However, they are still more likely to be positive about the booking system than negative (290, 47% positive, 279, 45% negative).
- 5.3.6 Respondents who consider themselves to be a carer are slightly less likely to be positive about the future use of a booking system than those who are not carers (52% compared with 57%).

5.4 Booking slot availability and flexibility

- 5.4.1 When the booking system was first introduced in May 2020, the level of bookings available was significantly less than the offering now. The level of available bookings was constantly reviewed and refreshed as Centres were able to safely accommodate greater capacity, and as restrictions eased.
- 5.4.2 Although the consultation findings have suggested that some people (251 respondents) report they were not able to find a slot for the day / time they wanted, it is possible that they attempted to book before restrictions were lifted, and when Centres were often fully booked, especially at the weekends.
- 5.4.3 Booking data now shows that there is plenty of capacity for bookings across the HWRCs (see graph below), albeit some Centres are more popular than others, there is rarely a day when there are not slots available to book, even at the weekends. This is reflected in the sharp reduction in complaints received, with the service very rarely now receiving a complaint with regards to availability.

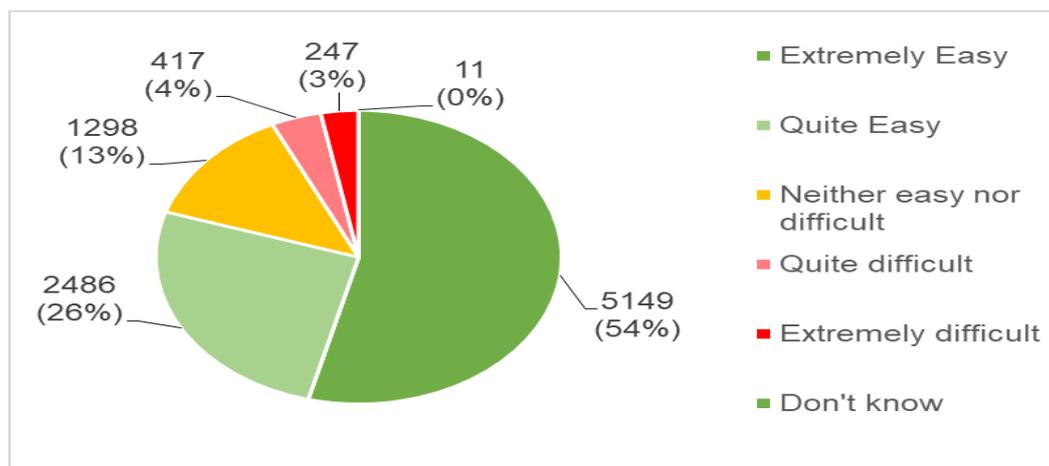


- 5.4.4 A misconception mentioned by 71 respondents was the ability to book multiple trips. At the start of the booking system, the number of available visits per household per month was one visit. Over time and to allow for the initial surge in demand for the service, this increased to two visits, then to four, and now unlimited visits whether on the same day, week or month.
- 5.4.5 The length of a booking slot was also cited as being challenging by 64 respondents. Again, this has been modified over time. When the booking system was first introduced, each slot was 1.5 hours in length. Whilst this had benefits of providing customers with a longer window within which to arrive at the HWRC, it was found that most people were turning up at the beginning of the slots resulting in a

'bunching' effect. As a result, these slot times were changed to 30 minutes in order to keep a consistent flow of visits throughout the day as much as possible. This ensures that users can access and egress sites in a timelier manner.

5.5 Ease of use of the booking system

5.5.1 Results from the consultation show that most people find the booking system easy to use; 54% (5,149 respondents) found it extremely easy to make a booking and 26% (2,486) found it quite easy. 3% (247 respondents) found it extremely difficult and 4% (417) found it quite difficult. 13% (1,298) found it neither easy nor difficult to make a booking. Contact Centre statistics, show that 97% of bookings (around 146,000 on an average month) are made online, with 3% (around 4,000 per month) via the telephone.



5.5.2 One of key themes to emerge was regarding difficulties for those without a computer / an email address or the confidence to do things online, such as booking a slot. The ability to book via the telephone has been in place since the start of the booking system to ensure that all customers are able to make a booking. Many respondents did not realise that a telephone booking system was in place. The number of respondents that booked via the telephone was small and therefore findings should be treated with caution, however, of those that had used the telephone system, 44% (22 respondents) found it easy to use, 26% (13 respondents) found it difficult, and the rest neither easy nor difficult. Comments suggest that the main reason some people find booking via the telephone difficult is due to the length of time to get through to a Contact Centre advisor.

5.5.3 Should the decision be taken to retain a booking system, the Waste Management service would work with the Contact Centre to improve the experience and reduce the need for people to telephone the Contact Centre about a booking or a general waste query. The service will also look at other ways to advertise the telephone number, rather than just online (e.g., in Parish Council newsletters and via information provided at the HWRCs), to reach those without the internet and therefore more likely to require the service.

5.5.4 There were some suggestions regarding the functionality of the booking system e.g., changes to vehicle registrations after booking, the ability to enter a postcode to find the nearest HWRC. Should the booking system be retained, the service will work with the booking system provider to improve the customer journey and streamline the booking process.

5.6 On the day booking

- 5.6.1 The most suggested recommended improvement to the booking system was to introduce the ability to book 'on the day'. This was cited by 61% (over 6,000) of respondents that answered the 'improvements question.' A trial of a fully automated 'on the day' system was undertaken and is now fully operational at Folkestone and Maidstone HWRCs and this can be readily applied to all HWRCs. On the day booking functionality also ensures that should a customer cancel their appointment the redundant slot immediately becomes available for another customer to use.
- 5.6.2 One of the key themes to emerge from the analysis of the equality and diversity question was the challenge, particularly for those with a disability, mental health condition or caring responsibilities, with not knowing whether they will be well enough or able to attend an appointment until the day. The ability to book (and amend) at short notice can help to alleviate these concerns.

5.7 Hybrid booking system

- 5.7.1 A suggestion by 86 respondents was to deploy a hybrid booking system, for example booking required only at weekends, at busy times, certain days or certain HWRCs. Whilst a hybrid system could offer limited control of demand and queuing, there are some reservations which must be considered.
- 5.7.2 Within the waste management industry, there is a shift by Government to ensure a more consistent service across both the collection and disposal of waste. The waste collection service provided by the District / Borough councils can often result in some confusion due to lack of consistency e.g., collection days, and what can and cannot be recycled. Consistency would be vital while booking to access the HWRCs. If a hybrid option were to be employed at the HWRCs, there is the potential for confusion for the customer. Needing to check which days and at which HWRCs you had to book. Some customers already visit multiple HWRCs, all of which could potentially lead to wasted car journeys and frustration at the HWRCs for both residents and employees.
- 5.7.3 Furthermore, a hybrid system could result in change of customer behaviour, choosing to go to an HWRC where booking would not be required, or a weekday when they would normally go at the weekend – this could lead to HWRCs which would ordinarily have no queues, or days which would ordinarily be quieter, becoming much busier with resultant queuing. A hybrid solution would compromise the opportunity for a well-managed service and negatively impact the customer experience.

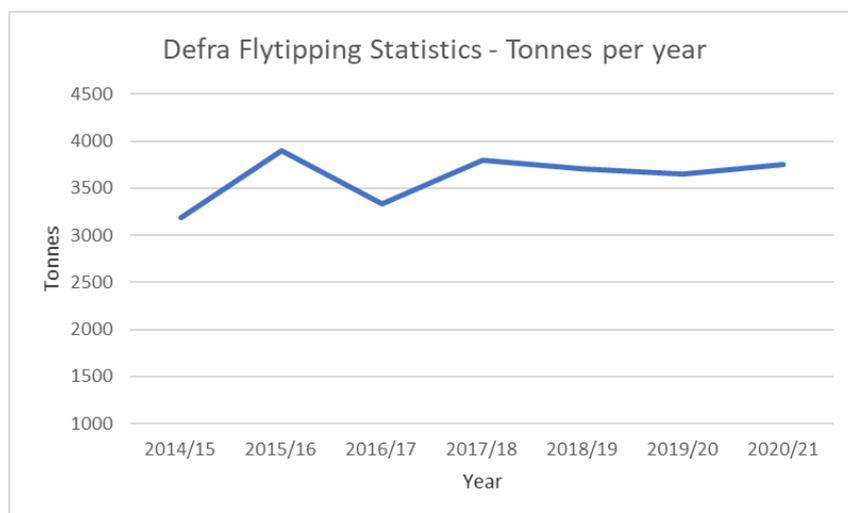
5.8 Environmental benefits and concerns

- 5.8.1 Data has found that the average load of waste taken to HWRCs per vehicle has increased since the booking system has been employed. Prior to the booking system, on average each vehicle would bring 44kg of waste to the HWRC. In recent months, this load has increased to around 60kg per vehicle. This means that people are coming to the HWRCs less often (which is evident from booking uptake data) but with more waste each visit. This results in fewer car journeys which provides wider environmental benefit. The managed approach to accessing the sites has

seen less queueing and a reduction in associated engine idling which supports better air quality. Whilst reduced queues onto the local highway network improves both road safety and local journey times for residents, businesses, and bus operators.

5.8.2 HWRC operating contractors report that through greater customer assistance and interaction, as a result of the booking system, they are more able to ensure customers dispose of / recycle their waste in the appropriate area. This leads to reduced contamination, improved recycling levels and greater material segregation which is evident from recycling rates which for 2021/22 is currently at just under 70% compared with 65% in 2019/20.

5.8.3 One of the misconceptions of the booking system evident in some responses received, was that it has / will lead to flytipping. It remains that there is no evidence to suggest that law abiding residents of Kent will undertake the criminal act of flytipping as a result of having to book to visit an HWRC. Indeed, the tonnage of flytipping brought to KCC for disposal by the District / Borough councils has remained broadly level since 2014/15.



5.9 Other operational / policy developments

5.9.1 The findings from the additional questions regarding opening hours and cross-border use of the KCC HWRCs will help to inform any future operational / policy developments made in these areas in the future. The booking system would enable any such change in policy to be managed.

5.9.2 Maintaining the booking system presents the opportunity to review other HWRC operational policies such as trailer size, pedestrian, and bicycle access, as the system allows demand and safety to be better managed across and within the sites.

5.9.3 There are further opportunities improve the use of other waste services and policies such as, the integration of the booking system alongside the vehicle voucher policy with an Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) system, which will speed up the process for both customers and staff.

6 Financial implications

- 6.1 The contracted operators will be able to reduce operational overhead costs by £150k pa as the demand at the sites is better managed. These savings are included within the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP); this saving is wholly associated with this policy proposal.
- 6.2 By operating the booking system in 2020/21 there has been a change in public behaviour whereby communities seek to re-use items before planning a visit to HWRCs. There has been less cross border usage and more skip hire. HWRC operatives have had more time to assist customer and maximise levels of recycling. The public has made more use of the districts' chargeable bulky collection services. This has reduced volumes of materials but with greater levels of recycling, a budget was set in the current year to deliver savings by the WDA of £1.3m, this is being delivered.
- 6.3 The cost of operating the current booking system is £21,000 per year including licence, software, set up and provider support. There was an additional cost of £25,000 to cover the increased calls to KCC's Contact Centre to answer Waste Management enquires during the pandemic and make bookings for customers unable to book online.
- 6.4 Should the decision be taken to retain the booking system, there will also be some modest costs associated with the roll-out of 'on the day' booking. These costs are limited to some additional connectivity requirements at specific HWRCs and additional tablet/mobile operational devices, and these will be funded using existing budgets.

7 Legal implications

- 7.1 KCC is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) for the county. There has been a duty on the WDA to provide HWRCs since the Civic Amenity Act 1967. The duty is now embodied within section 51 of the Environmental Protection act 1990. There will be no legal implications if the booking system is retained, as the HWRC service will continue to operate, albeit with the requirement to book in advance.

8 Equalities implications

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed prior to the booking system being introduced in May 2020 and again before the consultation to ensure consideration was given to the impact of the system and the approach to consultation. The initial assessments indicated that any impact on users could be reasonably mitigated. As part of the consultation approach, alternative formats of the questionnaire were available on request. Respondents were asked for any comments about the EqIA as part of the consultation questionnaire. The most common themes were:
- Views that an EqIA is not applicable or required for this consultation
 - Challenges for those without computer / internet or confidence to use technology
 - Suggestions / challenges regarding disabilities, or health issues, older people, and those with caring responsibilities. For example, and as described in section 5.6.2, a key challenge identified in relation to a disability or mental health condition was not

knowing until the day whether they'll feel well enough or remember their appointment time. In a similar vein, some comments from carers suggested that having to book is difficult to balance with caring responsibilities

- Views regarding the operations at the HWRC. Whilst many praised HWRC staff for being helpful, a number suggested that additional help should be provided for those that needed it. There were also comments about accessibility and layout of some of the HWRCs causing challenges e.g., steps and kerbs.

8.2 The EqlA (found at the end of the Consultation Report – Appendix B) was reviewed after the consultation to enable KCC to respond to any new issues that arose during the consultation and to ensure no groups were disadvantaged. In the initial screening, age, disability, and race were identified as being potentially impacted. The public consultation responses revealed some further low negative impacts to these protected characteristics and an additional impact for 'pregnancy and maternity' and 'carer's responsibilities. These further potential impacts identified can be mitigated and have been included within the 'action plan'.

9 Other corporate implications

9.1 The decision to continue to operate a booking system to access the HWRCs has no other impacts on other areas of the Council's work. Albeit this improved operation will contribute to the delivery of the Authority's environmental commitments.

10 Governance

10.1 If the decision is taken by the Cabinet Member for Environment to continue to operate a booking system, the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport will keep progress of the system under review. The Corporate Director will inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation to make any further operational changes to the booking system to maximise customer service.

11 Conclusions

11.1 It is not considered that any new information has been presented in the consultation findings that would lead to a withdrawal of the booking system to access the HWRCs.

11.2 The Covid-19 pandemic remains a risk. Not only does the booking system enable demand to be managed in response to the pandemic, if restrictions change again in the future, but it also provides many further benefits to support its ongoing use.

11.3 Since it's been in operation, many changes and improvements have been made to the booking system in response to customer and contractor feedback. Further suggested improvements have been identified from the public consultation and from the HWRC contractors, which can be made, including 'on the day' booking. There are also significant opportunities for integration with other systems, to enable a more digitalised and well-managed service for customers.

12. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision as shown at Appendix A for:

(i) the Waste Management service to permanently operate a booking system for customers to access Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres and

(ii) the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to keep progress of the booking system under review and to inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation to make any further operational changes to the booking system to maximise customer service.

13. Background Documents

13.1 Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision (PROD)

13.2 Appendix B – Booking to visit a KCC Household Waste Recycling Centre Consultation Report (including the Equality Impact Assessment)

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108619/BookingtovisitaKCCHWRCConsultationReport.pdf>

13.3 Appendix C – Waste Management Service view on the HWRC booking system and response to the consultation:

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108620/WasteManagementServiceviewontheHWRCbookingsystemandresponsetotheconsultation.pdf>

14. Contact details

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment

DECISION NO:

21/00123

For publication Yes

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Booking to visit a Household Waste Recycling Centre

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree:

For the Waste Management service to permanently operate a booking system for customers to access Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres.

For the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport to keep progress of the booking system under review and to inherit the main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation to make any further operational changes to the booking system to maximise customer service.

Reason(s) for decision:

After a period of temporary closure to adhere to the government's Covid-19 'stay at home' message, Kent County Council (KCC) re-opened the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) on 15 May 2020 employing the use of a booking system.

Whilst the booking system was introduced to help manage demand on the Centres in response to social distancing and revised workplace rules, it has provided some additional benefits, as follows:

- Communications with customers are improved, for example, informing directly of any potential service issues/ emergency closures, avoiding unnecessary journeys
- Managed throughput of visits, allowing staff more time to help customers, rather than managing traffic queues
- Reduced traffic queueing into the HWRCs, improving Air Quality Management
- Reduced queuing on high-speed roads such as the A2, A256 and A25
- Reduced queuing and disruption particularly at the Centres where there have been complaints from Kent Police, bus operators, local residents and customers queuing to access the service
- Certainty that customers will be able to access the HWRCs, reducing wasted car journeys and spend less time at the site
- HWRC maintenance can be planned in line with customer demand, rather than disrupting the service at times that customers are accessing the Centre
- Reduced risk of incidents and near misses at previously congested Centres, for both customers, HWRC staff and haulage contractors
- Reduced contamination rates
- Increased recycling rates, as staff have more time to help customers dispose of waste in the correct containers / areas
- Customers are making fewer journeys but with more waste, benefiting the environment
- People are "thinking more" about whether to dispose of waste, or whether to reuse or sell items in the first instance

Periodic survey feedback showed that many customers found booking convenient and useful, whilst

others preferred to just 'turn up and go'. As a result, the public consultation was undertaken to gain more in-depth views from the public and stakeholders on the future use of a booking system to access the HWRCs.

There were more respondents that felt positively about the future use of a booking system than negatively. Of those that felt negatively, the main reason was because they wanted to be able to visit an HWRC on the day.

It was not considered that any new information had been presented in the consultation findings that would lead to a withdrawal of the booking system to access the HWRCs.

The Covid-19 pandemic remains a risk. Not only does the booking system enable demand to be managed in response to the pandemic, if restrictions change again in the future, but it also provides many further benefits to support its ongoing use (as detailed above).

Since it's been in operation, many positive changes and environmental improvements have been made to the booking system in response to customer and contractor feedback. Further suggested improvements have been identified from the public consultation and from the HWRC contractors, which can and indeed have started, including 'on the day' booking. There are also significant opportunities for integration with other systems, to enable a more digitalised and well-managed service for customers.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

A six-week public consultation seeking views on the future use of a booking system ran between the 19 August to 30 September 2021. Various communication methods were utilised to ensure a broad range of target audiences were engaged with, including users and non-users of the service.

In total 10,705 responses were received. 10,635 questionnaires were completed and 52 emails / letters from people with comments and 18 voicemails with comments were received.

The proposed decision will be discussed at the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee meeting on 18 January 2022.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

As part of the consultation analysis, officers considered the following alternative options that were deemed as not appropriate:

1. Return to access to the HWRCs without the requirement to book
2. Implement a hybrid booking system

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

.....
signed

.....
date

From: Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport
Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: Ash Dieback in Kent

Decision No: N/A

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Division: All Divisions

Summary: This report provides an update on Ash Dieback in Kent and describes the evolving local response and the outbreak's environmental and economic impacts. It further identifies trends and risks, as well as policy, staffing, financial and other resource implications for Kent County Council and its partners. The extent of the challenge is illustrated by the fact that 53.96% of Ash trees are now exhibiting Ash Dieback symptoms across the Kent survey sites, an average increase of 16.7% since 2020. The County Council's leadership and science-based approach to this risk have evidenced some success in slowing the rate of infection in Kent and has enabled a proportionate and cost-effective response to tree safety interventions. This evidence-led strategy has been recognised as best-practice and assimilated into national guidance

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- Note the significant threat Ash Dieback poses to the environment and economy of Kent.
- Acknowledge the local and national leadership role of the County Council in its response to the pathogen and the resultant environmental and financial benefits that have accrued from the science-led response; and
- Endorse the planning, monitoring and response contingencies outlined within this report.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 It was agreed by the Environment, Highways and Waste Cabinet Committee on 10th January 2012 that the Committee will continue to receive regular updates on Ash Dieback. The last update was reported to the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee on 29th November 2019.
- 1.2 This is the fourth report to the Cabinet Committee, which seeks to outline the evolution of the outbreak in Kent, developments since the last update, and

identify future trends, risks and resource implications for the County Council and its partners.

2. Background

- 2.1 Kent was a bridgehead into the British Isles from continental Europe for the invasive fungal pathogen Ash Dieback. Where infection is observed, the fungus rapidly kills young trees and progressively brings about the death of individual twigs and branches within the crowns of more mature trees, with these impacts intensifying through a cycle of annual infection and re-infection. This creates potentially dangerous standing deadwood and makes Ash trees susceptible to lethal secondary infection such as Honey Fungus. There is no treatment currently available to either prevent or cure Ash Dieback, though genetic resistance may facilitate recovery of the Ash population in the longer term.
- 2.2 European Ash is Kent's most widespread tree, recorded in 930 of the County's 1,043 2km squares (89.16% of the County). Its landscape and biodiversity contribution are locally significant, especially at the urban edge and across the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Greensand Ridge. In these areas, Ash is the dominant large native tree species and can support some 112 invertebrate species and 255 lichens. Ash forms a key component of the makeup of Kent's nationally significant ancient woodland heritage, where it is often the tallest canopy tree and allows for the development of uniquely diverse ground flora, in a UK context, by virtue of the dappled shade it creates.
- 2.3 Unfortunately, Kent's gateway status for international trade, mature woodlands landscape, large and growing population and extensive transport network means that this and other tree species are particularly exposed to such pathogens from overseas. Ash Dieback is now present across the entire County wherever Ash grows.
- 2.4 Survey work undertaken by the County Council identifies some 20,000 Ash present on KCC owned and maintained highway land, with as many as 0.5 million trees growing on private and unregistered land adjacent to highways, by-ways, and other publicly accessible lands. This has implications for future safety works and associated costs.
- 2.5 In response to the identification of Ash Dieback within the British Isles, KCC and Kent Resilience Forum partners initiated a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG) in November 2012, in compliance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.
- 2.6 It was agreed that the County Council was best placed to assume the strategic lead. Tony Harwood (Resilience and Emergency Planning Manager) is SCG chair, and the Group continues to meet to guide the multi-agency response.

3. Progress to Date

- 3.1 The Ash Dieback SCG acts to coordinate planning and intelligence gathering and implement a wide-ranging Action Plan (see Appendix 1) and has contributed to guidance for stakeholders (notably [Managing Chalara Ash Dieback in Kent](#) and [Ash Dieback Advice to Schools](#)). Public warning and

informing signage, that emphasises biosecurity guidance, has also been installed across key locations in the County.

- 3.2 KCC has undertaken annual Ash Dieback surveys since 2013. These surveys are focussed upon nine 2km square sample areas, and undertaken across the same sites every year, with three each in East, Mid and West Kent. Resultant survey data provides vital intelligence in terms of better understanding outbreak intensity, trends and associated health and safety and resource implications. The County Council has contributed its data to an influential scientific paper [“Estimating mortality rates of European Ash \(*Fraxinus excelsior*\) under the Ash Dieback \(*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*\) epidemic”](#). Since publication, it has been recognised by Wiley as a ‘top downloaded paper’, in the journal *Plants, People, Planet*.
- 3.3 Analysis of [summer 2021 survey data](#) indicates an increase in infection rates over 2020 levels. Previously, a range of biosecurity interventions had acted to contain and slow the spread of Ash Dieback in the County, however, the outbreak has now intensified in eight of the nine survey areas and become County-wide. Biosecurity and containment policies have focussed on measures to prevent movement of potentially infective material by human means out of heavily infected East Kent alongside pro-active maintenance interventions, such as removal of infected saplings and small trees wherever sporadic outlier outbreaks were identified in Mid and West Kent. Survey data indicates that this approach was previously successful in slowing the expansion of the pathogen from its East Kent stronghold. However, the latest data shows a second infection front spreading Eastwards into Mid and West Kent from East Sussex, Surrey, and Greater London, with fungal spores likely carried on prevailing South Westerly winds (see Appendix 2).
- 3.4 The proportion of trees exhibiting Ash Dieback symptoms observed across the nine Kent survey sites has increased by an average of 16.7% between 2020 and 2021 (Appendix 4 provides a breakdown). Significantly, 2020 had seen an observed recovery in the fortunes of European Ash in Kent, with infection rates decreasing by an average of 13.14% from 2019.
- 3.5 There is evidence from Kent and Denmark that the impact of Ash Dieback on street and other urban trees is less severe than in semi-natural habitats. This is due to lower levels of airborne fungal spores, increased airflow, higher canopy temperatures (limiting fungal development), and a lower likelihood of infection by secondary pathogens. However, a further study has shown that trees in the wider rural landscape, including agricultural land, are infected as readily as woodland trees.
- 3.6 Nationally, KCC remains an active partner within the Defra Ash Dieback Health and Safety Taskforce. Further, the Tree Council issued a UK [Toolkit](#), which is significantly informed by Kent’s local response to the Ash Dieback outbreak. The County Council has also issued ‘Trading Standards Alerts’ forewarning the public and businesses of the risk of ‘rogue traders’ seeking to profit from the outbreak.
- 3.7 An e-learning package addressing biosecurity policy and practice, and prominently featuring Ash Dieback, has been developed by the Resilience and

Emergency Planning Service with Learning and Development colleagues and has been completed by more than 501 KCC personnel to date. This training tool has been marketed by the County Council to seek to recoup development costs.

4. Looking Forward

- 4.1 Any local expansion and intensification of the Ash Dieback outbreak will result in increases in reactive health and safety tree works, with resultant impacts upon all relevant KCC budgets and most significantly Highways, Public Rights of Way and Access, Resilience and Emergency Planning Service and Infrastructure.
- 4.2 The current observed annual average rate of increase in Ash Dieback infection in the County, calculated from annual survey data, is 16.7% (with an average of 54.18% of Ash trees in the County currently showing signs of infection). However, there is some local evidence of individual trees showing natural resistance to the pathogen and for Ash in urban areas being less susceptible to infection than trees growing in semi-natural locations. It should be noted that following initial infection there is a time lag before the extent of dieback, secondary infection and/or decay processes render trees unsafe. Further, recovery occurs in those years where climatic conditions favour Ash and/or disadvantage the fungal pathogen, such as the hot and dry spring and summer of 2020. Therefore, the actual time horizon for the range of Ash Dieback impacts in Kent cannot be reliably forecast at this time. High rainfall levels in the summer months, as seen in 2021, appear to favour the development of the fungus and hence infection rates.
- 4.3 Reflecting the increase in documented Ash Dieback infection across the County and rising costs and challenges surrounding non-compliant private landowners, the County Council's Corporate Management Team has identified Ash Dieback as a **medium** risk.

5. Financial and Other Implications

- 5.1 Ongoing monitoring reveals that the cost to KCC Highways for felling and other safety interventions on Ash Dieback infected trees on the KCC Highways estate remain relatively low. The fluctuation in extent and intensity of infection as evidenced by the latest survey data, suggests that the costs to the County Council and its partners will continue to rise and fall in parallel with the fortunes of our Ash (see Appendix 3). So far, the cost to KCC Highways for the 2021/22 financial year is £9,111.04 (covering the period until November 2021). Since a peak of £66,000 in 2018/19, costs have decreased annually (down 7.27% between 2019/20 and 2020/21 and down 22.10% between 2018/19 and 2019/20).
- 5.2 KCC and partners operate policy and practice whereby the minimum required interventions are undertaken to address identified safety concerns. This approach is enshrined within the Kent Tree Officers Group Ash Dieback Toolkit, adopted by KCC and all Kent Districts, and is deemed to be most appropriate in fostering genetic resistance. It has further avoided the widespread pre-emptive

felling of potentially healthy, recovering or even resistant trees seen in some other parts of the UK, with resultant benefits for landscape, biodiversity, and the County Council's finances.

- 5.3 In recognition of the potentially significant costs which could arise from Ash Dieback in the future, at the start of the outbreak, KCC submitted the required 'expression of interest' for a claim against the then MHCLG administered Bellwin Scheme of Emergency Financial Assistance within the prescribed timescale. Where the criteria for the scheme are met, the grant is normally payable to authorities at 85% of eligible costs incurred above a threshold set for each authority (for KCC this remains £1,764,324). However, to date, all costs captured fall well below this qualifying threshold.
- 5.4 Initial projections indicated a potential eventual cost as high as £16 million for Ash Dieback related highway safety interventions in Kent (this was calculated on the basis that 4% of KCC street trees are Ash according to a recent County-wide survey, equating to some 20,000 individual trees, with a median cost for maintenance interventions, lane hire fees and other costs of £800 per tree). With as many as 0.5 million trees growing on private and unregistered land adjacent to the public highway, the eventual worst-case longer-term cost to KCC was estimated to be as high as £400 million. This figure was predicated upon the fact that interventions for trees on private and unregistered estates often incur legal and administrative costs for Local Authorities to find and engage with landowners e.g., Land Registry searches, serving of notices and follow-up action. Serving notices can sometimes result in costly boundary disputes with private landowners. Dealing with trees on unregistered land can involve Local Authorities addressing all these issues themselves which requires additional resources. In a wider context, research published in the journal *Current Biology* in May 2019 calculates the eventual cost to the UK of Ash Dieback at £14.8 billion. This figure is one third greater than the National Audit Office estimate for the total cost of the 2000/2001 UK Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak.
- 5.5 However, evidence to-date indicates that safety intervention costs associated with Ash Dieback in Kent, are much lower than these earlier estimates. This derives from the epidemiology of the fungal pathogen, with fluctuations in infection intensity from year to year, the relative resilience of Ash outside of woodlands, and its ability to mount a recovery in years with lower infection rates.
- 5.6 A practical concern amongst local stakeholders is lane hire cost and management of road closures to undertake necessary safety interventions in response to Ash Dieback impacts. At a Forestry Commission event, held with conservation organisations from across the South-East, this was identified as a major operational obstruction to progress, with achieving effective co-operation between the County Council, landowners and contractors seen as a key challenge.
- 5.7 The maintenance of bespoke budget headings for Ash Dieback safety interventions and associated staff time devoted to Ash Dieback planning and

response are key to understanding overall costs. All Districts, Boroughs and relevant KCC services are regularly reminded to capture all costs arising from the Ash Dieback outbreak within their respective budgets.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The susceptibility of young trees to Ash Dieback is already limiting growth of new generations of Ash, while mortality of semi-mature and mature Ash is increasing, particularly in those locations where trees are subject to secondary infection and additional stressors such as drought or waterlogging. The one exception to this overall decline narrative appears to be **veteran** and **ancient** Ash (those trees aged between 100 and 200+ years), which have evidenced an observed sustained recovery in crown health across all survey areas. Kent is therefore undergoing an **Ash decline**, which will inevitably result in changes to our landscape and wildlife as profound as those experienced during the historic Elm and Lime declines. The resultant loss of street and other urban Ash is eroding urban tree cover and associated benefits from environmental services – including flood attenuation, shelter, shade and sequestration of atmospheric carbon and particulates.
- 6.2 The unpredictability of outbreak intensity and resultant requirements for safety interventions underlines the importance of ongoing monitoring and cost recording, including annual survey and analysis effort. Ensuring up-to-date outbreak data enables informed decision making and implementation of measured, appropriate, and cost-effective safety interventions.
- 6.3 Recovery considerations will also increasingly come to the fore and will encompass the replacement of lost tree cover. Increasingly, counties impacted by Ash Dieback are framing policies addressing the replacement of lost trees. For example, both Devon and Norfolk County Councils have now agreed on a 3:2:1 tree replacement system, with three replacements for a large tree lost, two for a medium-sized tree and one for a smaller tree. From a local perspective, KCC must ensure records are maintained of how many Ash trees are lost from their estate informing any eventual tally to be replaced. This will allow for restocking once appropriate receptor sites are identified and a local recovery process is determined and funded. Restoration of urban tree cover is increasingly challenging because of the extensive hard surfaces and proliferation of underground services within remaining soft landscaped areas. The development of a tree establishment strategy is currently being undertaken by the recently appointed Kent Tree Strategy Officer and will include consideration of the options for individual tree replacement and wider tree cover restoration.
- 6.4 Guidance produced by the County Council and partners recommends appropriate native tree species to replace the lost Ash, including Field Maple, Small-leaved Lime and Large-leaved Lime.
- 6.5 KCC continue to lobby Government and other potential sponsors for a sustainable funding mechanism to support recovery. Latterly, Government has initiated a Tree Health Pilot Scheme, where Kent is singled-out as a 'primary target area' for investment. Further, the County Council accessed, with four

other English local authorities, a share of a £2.53 million HM Treasury Shared Outcomes Fund grant award, which provides 100% funding for a project officer post until September 2023 and has already seen 4,000 native trees and shrubs planted across Kent.

- 6.6 The County Council's continuing local and national leadership, its science-based interventions, and proactive operational response have all meant that the worst predictions for the impact of Ash Dieback have been averted in Kent to date. Harm to landscape and biodiversity, and associated costs from tree safety interventions, have all been minimised, in contrast with some other parts of the UK and Europe. It is therefore vital that ongoing survey data collection and analysis continues, and that local command and control structures and effective relationships with relevant Government departments are maintained going forward.

7. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- Note the significant threat Ash Dieback poses to the environment and economy of Kent.
- Acknowledge the local and national leadership role of the County Council in its response to the pathogen and the resultant environmental and financial benefits that have accrued from the science-led response; and
- Endorse the planning, monitoring and response contingencies outlined within this report.

8. Background documents

- Appendix 1: KRF Ash Dieback Outbreak SCG Action Plan; Ash Dieback Outbreak Action Plan
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108615/Appendix1.docx.pdf>
- Appendix 2: Ash Dieback Outbreak Action Plan - Graph - Percentage of Ash with No Symptoms Comparison to Ash with Observed Symptoms 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108616/Appendix2.docx.pdf>
- Appendix 3: Ash Dieback Outbreak Action Plan - Percentage increases in trees exhibiting Ash Dieback symptoms observed across all survey sites between 2020 and 2021
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108617/Appendix3.docx.pdf>
- Appendix 4: Ash Dieback Outbreak Action Plan - Graph - cost to KCC Highways, Transportation & Waste for the Felling & Pruning of Ash dieback Infected Ash on KCC Estate
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s108618/Appendix4.docx.pdf>

9. Contact Details

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From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation
Susan Carey, Cabinet Member for Environment
Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022

Subject: Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee Performance Dashboard shows progress made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The latest Dashboard includes data up to October 2021.

Fifteen of the nineteen KPIs achieved target and are RAG rated Green. Four KPIs were below target but did achieve the floor standard and are RAG rated Amber.

Recommendation(s):

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the report to October 2021.

1. Introduction

1.1. Part of the role of Cabinet Committees is to review the performance of the functions of the Council that fall within the remit of the Committee. To support this role, Performance Dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the third report for the 2021/22 financial year.

2. Performance Dashboard

2.1. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance against target for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2021/22. These KPIs, activity indicators and targets came before the Cabinet Committee for comment in June 2021. The current Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee Performance Dashboard is attached at Appendix 1.

2.2. The current Dashboard provides results up to the end of October 2021.

2.3. KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) alerts to show progress against targets. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

2.4. Four out of five KPIs in Highways & Transportation achieved or exceeded target for latest month performance and were RAG rated Green. Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days narrowly missed target in October due to a very high

volume of enquiries regarding drainage and pothole defects following high rainfall that month.

- 2.5. Five of the digital take-up indicators in Highways and Transportation were RAG rated Green, with Concessionary bus passes missing target by 1 percentage point.
- 2.6. Six of the eight indicators for Environment and Waste were above target, leaving two that were below. Municipal waste diverted from landfill is now meeting the 99% target for the 12 months to September. HWRC recycling is two percentage points below target, with volume of waste collected at HWRCs steadily increasing but still below pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.7. The Greenhouse Gas Net Zero indicator has now replaced the previous KPI measuring these reductions. The latest figure is the provisional figure for September 2021 and was well within the target set.
- 2.8. The process for reviewing KPIs and targets for 2022/23 has begun for the indicators reported to this Committee and this will take into consideration demand and the resources available to services.

3. Recommendation(s):

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the report to October 2021.

4. Contact details

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Environment and Transport Performance Dashboard

Financial Year 2021/22

Results up to October 2021

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Produced by Kent Analytics

Publication Date: December 2021



Guidance Notes

Data is provided with monthly frequency except for Waste Management and Greenhouse Gases where indicators are reported with quarterly frequency and as rolling 12-month figures to remove seasonality.

RAG RATINGS

GREEN	Target has been achieved
AMBER	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
RED	Floor Standard* has not been achieved

*Floor Standards are the minimum performance expected and if not achieved must result in management action

Activity Indicators

Activity Indicators representing demand levels are also included in the report. They are not given a RAG rating. Instead, they are tracked within an expected range represented by Upper and Lower Thresholds. The Alert provided for Activity Indicators is whether they are within their expected range or not. Results can either be within their expected range (**Yes**), or **Above** or **Below** their expected range

Key Performance Indicators Summary

Highways & Transportation	Monthly RAG	YTD RAG
HT01 : Potholes repaired in 28 calendar days (routine works not programmed)	GREEN	GREEN
HT02 : Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days	AMBER	GREEN
HT04 : Customer satisfaction with service delivery (100 Call Back)	GREEN	GREEN
HT08 : Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	GREEN	GREEN
HT12 : Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	GREEN	GREEN

Environment & Waste	RAG
WM01 : Municipal waste recycled and composted	AMBER
WM02 : Municipal waste converted to energy	GREEN
WM01 + WM02 : Municipal waste diverted from landfill	GREEN
WM03 : Waste recycled and composted at HWRCs	AMBER
WM04 : Percentage of customers satisfied with HWRC services	GREEN
EPE14 : Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools)	GREEN
EW1: Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days	GREEN
DT05 : Percentage of HWRC voucher applications completed online	GREEN

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Digital Take up	RAG
DT01 : Percentage of public enquiries for Highways Maintenance completed online	GREEN
DT03 : Percentage of concessionary bus pass applications completed online	AMBER
DT04 : Percentage of speed awareness courses booking completed online	GREEN
DT06 : Percentage of Highway Licence applications completed online	GREEN
DT15 : Percentage of KCC travel Saver applications completed online	GREEN
DT16 : Percentage of 16+ Travel Saver applications completed online	GREEN

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Highways & Transportation	Simon Jones	David Brazier

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Month RAG	Year to Date	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Yr
HT01	Potholes repaired in 28 calendar days (routine works not programmed)	98%	96%	97%	98%	GREEN	94%	GREEN	90%	80%	94%
HT02	Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days	91%	91%	90%	89%	AMBER	90%	GREEN	90%	80%	92%
HT04	Customer satisfaction with service delivery (100 Call Back)	93%	98%	90%	98%	GREEN	94%	GREEN	85%	70%	95%
HT08	Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	98%	100%	99%	99%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	98%	95%	97%
HT12	Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	89%	91%	93%	94%	GREEN	92%	GREEN	90%	80%	86%

HT02 – October’s performance was impacted by very high volumes of drainage and pothole defects. The Service managed more than 1,200 drainage enquiries in October which is the highest number of this type of enquiry for the last 7 years.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Highways & Transportation	Simon Jones	David Brazier

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Year to Date	In expected range?	Expected Range	
									Upper	Lower
HT01b	Potholes repaired (as routine works and not programmed)	1,221	906	879	847	766	8,099	Above	7,850	5,050
HT02b	Routine faults reported by the public completed	4,418	5,557	5,161	4,384	3,919	32,883	Yes	33,300	26,300
HT06	Number of new enquiries requiring further action (total new faults)	8,377	8,220	7,586	6,285	6,767	49,558	Below	63,500	51,800
HT07	Work in Progress (open enquiries not yet complete) - end of month snapshot	6,563	7,389	7,542	6,824	6,884	N/a	Above	6,800	5,800
HT13	Streetwork permits issued	13,497	13,012	11,429	12,030	12,474	88,437	Above	83,900	69,600

HT01b – Higher than expected numbers of potholes were reported during summer months as exceptional wet weather had an impact on the roads, with this above expected demand for repairs each month lasting into September, with numbers of the month of October back within expected levels.

HT06 – Whilst the routine faults requiring action in 28 days (drains blocked and potholes etc), have been higher than usual, overall enquiries including longer term repairs, streetlighting queries and pavement issues, have been lower than expected.

HT07 – Work in progress has been impacted by higher demand from drainage and pothole enquiries. Drainage work is often complex and requires work to be programmed and will take longer to complete. Volumes are expected to return to being within range by the year end.

HT13 – The demand from utility companies, developers and indeed our own works to access road space in this quarter reached almost 36,000 permit requests. This demand for road space and managing the Kent network continues to put significant pressure on the team and does not show any signs of letting up. Recruitment for additional resource in the team is ongoing.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Highways and Transportation	Simon Jones	David Brazier

Digital Take-up indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Year to Date	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
DT01	Percentage of public enquiries for Highways Maintenance completed online	63%	59%	59%	60%	60%	GREEN	55%	45%	57%
DT03	Percentage of concessionary bus pass applications completed online	68%	48%	70%	69%	69%	AMBER	70%	60%	72%
DT04	Percentage of speed awareness courses bookings completed online	89%	85%	83%	84%	87%	GREEN	85%	75%	84%
DT06	Percentage of Highway Licence applications completed online	100%	98%	100%	100%	99%	GREEN	90%	75%	95%
DT15	Percentage of KCC Travel Saver applications completed online (Rolling 12 months)	99%	100%	100%	100%	#N/A	GREEN	95%	85%	99%
DT16	Percentage of 16+ Travel Saver applications completed online (Rolling 12 months)	100%	100%	100%	100%	#N/A	GREEN	95%	85%	100%

DT03 - A delay in processing applications by the contractor (Euclid) in August led to a drop in online applications, and although this has largely recovered there will be some monthly variation, and options to apply over the phone, by post and in libraries.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Members
Environment & Waste	Simon Jones	Susan Carey

Key Performance Indicators (Rolling 12 months except WM08)

Ref	Indicator description	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	RAG	Target	Floor
WM01	Municipal waste* recycled and composted	46%	46%	46%	47%	46%	AMBER	50%	45%
WM02	Municipal waste* converted to energy	53%	52%	52%	51%	53%	GREEN	49%	44%
01+02	Municipal waste diverted from landfill	98.5%	97.9%	98.1%	98.1%	99.0%	GREEN	99%	95%
WM03	Waste recycled and composted at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	64%	67%	70%	69%	68%	AMBER	70%	65%
WM08	Overall score for mystery shopper assessment of Household Waste Recycling Centres	N/a	N/a	N/a	97%	96%	GREEN	96%	85%

* This is waste collected by Districts, and by KCC via HWRCs.

WM01 – Overall recycling and composting is comparable with previous years but remains behind the aspirational target of 50%. Kerbside recycling and composting have remained consistently around 44%.

WM03 – This remains slightly below the 70% target. The trend for increased volumes of waste being taken to HWRCs continues, with the managed demand afforded by the booking system allowing more time for operatives to assist residents to recycle more.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Members
Environment & Waste	Simon Jones	Susan Carey

Activity Indicators (Rolling 12 months)

Ref	Indicator description	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper Lower	
WM05	Waste tonnage collected by District Councils	573,257	587,851	602,744	601,274	599,294	Above	550,000	530,000
WM06	Waste tonnage collected at HWRCs	86,232	79,993	73,002	89,405	96,438	Below	150,000	130,000
05+06	Total waste tonnage collected	659,489	667,844	675,746	690,680	695,731	Yes	700,000	660,000
WM07	Waste tonnage converted to energy at Allington Waste to Energy Plant	323,622	323,123	327,984	329,380	341,831	Above	340,000	320,000

WM05 – Volumes of kerbside waste remain above expected levels, although they have reduced over recent months. Most collection authorities continue to collect side waste, which is waste presented by residents next to their containers. Certain Districts have struggled to maintain collection schedules due to personnel shortages and sickness, and delays in obtaining fuel.

WM06 – The volume of waste taken to HWRCs continues to increase, with the latest month around 79% of normal volumes. There are reports of residents continuing to attempt to re-use their waste in communities before attending the HWRC. When residents visit, they tend to visit less frequently but bring a larger load. Good levels of booking capacity exist which is spread evenly through the day.

WM07 – Overall kerbside volumes taken to Allington are above budget, but this, however, is necessary to avoid residual waste being disposed of via landfill. Kerbside tonnage remains 15% higher than in 2019/20, which has resulted in an increase in waste being taken to Allington, most recent data shows a modest decline.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Environment & Waste	Simon Jones	Susan Carey

Key Performance Indicator (reported quarterly in arrears)

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	RAG	Target	Floor
EW2	Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes	19,102	18,235	16,940	16,251	16,519	16,601	GREEN	20,433	22,476

EW2 –As expected, and reflected in the targets set for the year, the data shows a slight increase compared to Quarter 1 as community-based services returned to more usual operating practices and offices reopened over the summer period. This measure uses the latest emissions' factors published by the UK Government which are revised each year. The figures therefore differ to those previously reported for the Greenhouse Gas KPI (EPE14) which used fixed emissions' factors from the 2015 baseline year.

Key Performance Indicators (monthly)

Ref	Indicator description	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Year to Date	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
EW1	Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days	88%	94%	94%	94%	94%	91%	GREEN	85%	76%
DT05	Percentage of HWRC voucher applications completed online	99%	99%	100%	98%	99%	99%	GREEN	95%	85%

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From: Benjamin Watts, General Counsel
To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2022
Subject: Work Programme

Classification: Unrestricted

Past and Future Pathway of Paper: Standard agenda item

Summary: This report gives details of the proposed work programme for the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation: The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its Work Programme for 2022.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed work programme, appended to the report, has been compiled from items in the Future Executive Decision List and from actions identified during the meetings and at agenda setting meetings, in accordance with the Constitution.
- 1.2 Whilst the chairman, in consultation with the cabinet members, is responsible for the programme's fine tuning, this item gives all members of this cabinet committee the opportunity to suggest amendments and additional agenda items where appropriate.

2. Work Programme

- 2.1 The proposed work programme has been compiled from items in the Future Executive Decision List and from actions arising and from topics, within the remit of the functions of this cabinet committee, identified at the agenda setting meetings [Agenda setting meetings are held 6 weeks before a cabinet committee meeting, in accordance with the constitution].
- 2.2 The cabinet committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in appendix A to this report, and to suggest any additional topics to be considered at future meetings, where appropriate.
- 2.3 The schedule of commissioning activity which falls within the remit of this cabinet committee will be included in the work programme and considered at future agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow members to have oversight of significant services delivery decisions in advance.
- 2.4 When selecting future items, the cabinet committee should consider the contents of performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' items will be

sent to members of the cabinet committee separately to the agenda and will not be discussed at the cabinet committee meetings.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 It is vital for the cabinet committee process that the committee takes ownership of its work programme to deliver informed and considered decisions. A regular report will be submitted to each meeting of the cabinet committee to give updates of requested topics and to seek suggestions for future items to be considered. This does not preclude members making requests to the chairman or the Democratic Services Officer between meetings, for consideration.

<p>4. Recommendation: The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and agree its Work Programme for 2022.</p>
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5. Background Documents: None

6. Contact details

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Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee - WORK PROGRAMME 2022

Item	Cabinet Committee to receive item
Performance Dashboard	At each meeting
Work Programme	At each meeting
Budget Consultation	Annually (November/December)
Final Draft Budget	Annually (January)
Risk Register – Strategic Risk Register	Annually (March)
Annual Equality and Diversity Report	Annually (June/July)
Winter Service Policy	Annually (September)
Bus Feedback Portal update	Bi-Annual (every six months)

17 March 2022

No	Item	Key Decision	Additional Comments
	Strategic Risk Register	No	Annual
	Green Economy	No	
	Kent Design Guide	No	

24 June 2022

No	Item	Key Decision	Additional Comments
	Annual Equality and Diversity Report	No	Annual
	Bus Feedback Portal update	No	Bi-Annual

Items for Consideration that have not yet been allocated to a meeting	
North West Maidstone Transfer Station	Requested at E&T Cabinet Committee on 16 July 2019.
A26 cycle route	Requested at E&T Cabinet Committee on 29 June 2021.

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