

**POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 22nd September, 2021**

**2.00 pm**

**Online**







## AGENDA

### POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

**Wednesday, 22 September 2021**  
**2.00 pm**  
**Online**

Ask for: **Theresa Grayell**

Telephone: **03000 416172**

#### **Membership (16)**

- Conservative (12): Mr R J Thomas (Chair), Mr R A Marsh (Vice-Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr T Bond, Mr T Cannon, Mr N J D Chard, Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mr M Dendor, Mr R C Love, OBE and Mr J P McInroy
- Labour (2) Mr A Brady and Dr L Sullivan
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook
- Greens and Independents (1) Mr P Stepto

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 13 July 2021 (Pages 1 - 14)
- 5 Covid-19 Financial Monitoring (Pages 15 - 26)
- 6 Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard (Pages 27 - 42)
- 7 Information Governance Update (Pages 43 - 44)

- 8 21/00082 - Insurance Tender - Award of Insurance Programme Contracts (Pages 45 - 50)
- 9 Decision taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings: 21/00074 - Interim infrastructure support to the Voluntary Sector (Pages 51 - 62)
- 10 Work Programme 2021/22 (Pages 63 - 68)

**Motion to exclude the press and public for exempt business**

That, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the press and public)*

- 11 Update from the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) (Pages 69 - 74)
- 12 Disposal of land at Bensted House, Kiln Court, Osbourne Court & Former SEC, Faversham ME13 7NY (Pages 75 - 86)
- 13 Disposal of KCC's interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, 98 Sandling Road and Cantium House, 99-102 Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent to Maidstone Borough Council (Pages 87 - 100)

Benjamin Watts  
General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Tuesday, 14 September 2021**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL****POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held online on Tuesday, 13 July 2021.

PRESENT: Mr R J Thomas (Chair), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr T Bond, Mr A Brady, Mr T Cannon, Mr N J D Chard, Mr G Cooke, Mr P C Cooper, Mr M Dendor, Mr A J Hook, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr R A Marsh, Mr J P McInroy, Mr P Stepto and Dr L Sullivan

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Ms Z Cooke (Corporate Director of Finance), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr R Benjamin (Internal Audit Manager), Mr R Clark (Contract and Commissioning Support Manager), Mr S Dodd (Investment and Development Consultant), Ms C Holden (Lead Commissioning Manager), Mr D Lindsay (Interim Head of Technology Commissioning and Strategy), Mr J Sanderson (Head of Property Operations), Miss T A Grayell (Democratic Services Officer) and Hayley Savage (Democratic Services Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS****2. Membership**

*(Item 2)*

The committee noted its new membership and the Chairman welcomed new Members to their first meeting.

**3. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 3)*

There were no apologies for absence.

**4. Election of Vice-Chair**

*(Item 4)*

1. The Chairman, Mr R Thomas, proposed and Mr G Cooke seconded that Mr R A Marsh be elected Vice-Chair of the Cabinet Committee. There were no other nominations.

2. It was RESOLVED that Mr R A Marsh be elected Vice-Chair of the Cabinet Committee.

**5. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**

*(Item 5)*

In relation to agenda item 15, the Chairman, Mr R Thomas, declared that he was a Member of Canterbury City Council so would be voting on the Local Plan in due

course, which would have an impact on the County Council land. He also paid a monthly voluntary donation to the school as a thank you as a former pupil.

## **6. Minutes of meetings held on 3 March 2021 and 27 May 2021**

*(Item 6)*

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 3 March 2021 and 27 May 2021 are correctly recorded and a paper copy be signed by the Chairman when this can be done safely. There were no matters arising.

## **7. Covid-19 Financial Monitoring**

*(Item 7)*

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report and emphasised that the 2021/22 financial year would most likely be the last in which the County Council would receive Government grants to support its work to manage the covid pandemic. In the 2022/23 financial year, recovery work would still be going on but without the support of covid-specific grant funding. The Chairman thanked Mr Oakford, Ms Cooke and the finance team for monitoring and reporting of the complex information.

2. Mr Oakford and Ms Cooke responded to comments and questions from the committee, including the following:-

- a) asked about the underspend figures set out in paras 3.2 and 3.4 of the report and how these related to each other, Mr Oakford advised that some underspend on services which had not been taken up due to changing needs during the pandemic could be rolled forward to future years. Ms Cooke added that some underspend related to 'receipt in advance', which included centrally held funds. *She undertook to ensure that listing in the next monitoring report would, set out this increased detail to help readers to understand the fuller picture;*
- b) asked if and when there would be future funding to add to the £27m rolled forward, Mr Oakford advised that it was simply not known whether or not there would be further Government funding made available as the recovery phase unfolded. Ms Cooke added that the £27m reserve had been held separately to meet needs arising from the pandemic. Use of it was carefully monitored and the concern was that, should it be needed, it may prove to be insufficient;
- c) asked about the impact of Council Tax discounts. Ms Cooke advised that a decision had been taken by the Leader and Cabinet in 2020 to allocate additional funding to support Council Tax discounts and hardship payments for households most affected financially by the pandemic, and the outcome of that had been estimated in the report. An update on collection rates would be included in the next regular report to the committee; and
- d) asked if the overspend on school budgets would affect the County Council's own schools rather than academies, and how schools were expected to recover from this burden, Ms Cooke advised that this was an area of risk for councils nationwide. A Government review of the issue was expected but had been delayed and may be published in autumn 2021.

The Children, Young People and Education directorate was working on a plan to manage this issue locally. Mr Oakford added that the County Council and many other Local Education Authorities were lobbying Government to address this issue nationally and for advice on how they were expected to deal with it locally. Ms Cooke added that the County Council's own schools, which were the ones affected, formed a part of its overall estate. The situation would be closely monitored.

3. It was RESOLVED that the information set out in the report and given in response to comments and questions be noted, with thanks.

## **8. Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Dashboard**

*(Item 8)*

1. Ms Kennard introduced the report and, with Ms Spore and Mr Watts, responded to comments and questions from the committee, including the following:-
  - a) asked if the large number of green ratings might be an indicator that targets were set too low, and if the right things were being measured to give the best view of challenges, Ms Kennard advised that targets were reviewed every year as a matter of course. Mr Watts added that reviewing and commenting on the dashboard and the targets in it was a key part of Members' role, and Members were able to shape the dashboard to include the information they wanted to monitor;
  - b) asked if data was available on how long people waited to get help with IT issues, Ms Spore advised that IT indicators had been reviewed and that IT needs would inevitably evolve as the county recovered from the pandemic;
  - c) asked why targets had not been increased where the current performance had exceeded target, as no explanation seemed to be given in the report, Ms Kennard advised that targets had not been raised for this coming year in recognition of the impact of the pandemic on normal service delivery over the last year and the uncertainty, particularly around demand, that was likely to be associated with the upcoming period of recovery. *She undertook to send Members an explanation of the rationale outside the meeting;*
  - d) asked for clarification about what was included in the measure of the number of committee reports being published late, Mr Watts advised that the committee team worked to statutory requirements for publishing material which was to be considered at a formal meeting of the Council or a committee. Accordingly, it was to be expected that all papers would be published on time. It was sometimes necessary to send an item 'to follow' in a supplementary agenda, for example, if the information being reported had not been available when the main agenda was published, but these supplementary agendas were not included in the figure shown on the dashboard. What was important was to be able to distinguish between something sent late unavoidably and what was late due to lack of preparation. Mr Watts reminded the committee that Ms Kennard's team was small and the level of detail which they could record and report was therefore limited;

- e) asked about the range of themes of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and how this impacted on the time taken to respond to them, Mr Watts advised that, early in the pandemic, FOI requests had been about covid-related issues and the ability to access services such as household waste sites and libraries. Similar issues re-emerged during later lockdowns. FOI requests were now much more complex and took longer to respond to. *Mr Watts undertook to set out more detail in a report on FOIs to the committee's next meeting;*
- f) concern was expressed that, in an age of digital access and online records, information required to support a timely response to an FOI request should surely be easier and quicker to locate. Late responses or shortage of information could lead to the Council being fined by the Information Commissioner's Office. Mr Watts advised that available staff resources had been directed during the pandemic to deal with frontline services, and issues such as responding to FOI requests had been given a lower priority;
- g) Mr Watts advised that the Council held some very historical documents, which existed only on paper and which would either be very difficult or costly to digitalise or which were referred to so infrequently that the cost of digitalising them would not be cost effective. Delays in responding to FOI requests were usually as a result of research time in looking through paper documents, which had the added complexity during the pandemic that staff had to access closed buildings to locate and examine them; and
- h) a view was expressed that Members needed to be able to find out in more detail about target-setting and performance monitoring so they could make an informed contribution to it. The targets and key performance indicators (KPIs) on which the dashboard was based were as important, if not more so, than the dashboard itself, and should be the subject of a separate and more detailed report, to raise their profile. Ms Kennard advised Members that they had scope to review what was measured and how this was reported. It was suggested that a small group of Members have a separate briefing meeting to discuss target setting and shape future reporting, and Members who were interested in attending this gave their names to the clerk. Mr Watts confirmed that a meeting between those Members and Ms Kennard would be set up as soon as possible.

2. It was RESOLVED that:-

- a) the performance information set out in the dashboard for Strategic and Corporate Services be noted;
- b) Members' comments on the KPIs for 2021/22, set out above, be taken into account; and
- c) a briefing meeting be arranged at which Members could have more information about target setting, KPIs and monitoring and discuss what they wished to see included in future reporting.



## **9. Kent Public Service Network Update**

*(Item 9)*

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report, on which there were no questions.
2. It was RESOLVED that the information set out in the report be noted, with thanks.

## **10. Construction Partnership Framework Commission**

*(Item 10)*

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report and Ms Spore set out the steps taken to develop the framework since last reporting to the committee in January 2021. Mr Oakford, Ms Spore, Mr Clark and Mr Sanderson responded to comments and questions from the committee, including the following:-
  - a) the procurement process for contractors would include a range of 6 key performance indicators and robust benchmarking against the market to ensure that contractors admitted to the framework offered best quality and value for public money. Overhead margins would be fixed at the tendering stage and would be checked to ensure that market rates were being adhered to. Contractors joining the framework were also required to commit to investing in the local economy, for example, by offering apprenticeships;
  - b) concern was expressed that limiting the framework to only four contractors might mean that the skills and expertise of other potential contractors was being missed, and doubt expressed that a limit of only four contractors would offer sufficient competition to secure best value for money. Ms Spore set out the benefits of the approach as savings in County Council administration costs and a sustained level of work and benefits to the local economy, for example, apprenticeships. It would also encourage an 'open book' approach and would support rather than limit benchmarking. Mr Clark added that the local market of contractors was no longer as large as it had once been. Ms Cooke added that Finance staff would work closely with Ms Spore's team to address social value issues; and
  - c) concern was expressed that the four main contractors would need to engage local sub-contractors who were not necessarily trained as builders. Mr Clark advised that some small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may not be large enough to take on a contract alone but could work together with other SMEs to manage a large contract. Engagement of small local sub-contractors would allow those companies to grow their businesses and benefit the local economy. One aim of the framework was to encourage collaboration, but Members were assured that the price of materials would correspond to national rates to avoid over-charging and the danger of developing a cartel. If contractors overcharged for materials, they would not get work. Mr Oakford added that most County Council work was taken on by four main contractors, there were many fewer capital projects now for them to bid for and the scale of the market had therefore reduced. Ms Spore advised that if too many companies joined the

framework, there would not be sufficient work to support them all. *She undertook to send the committee the latest information on the existing framework.*

2. It was RESOLVED that the information set out in the report, and the proposed next steps, be noted, with thanks.

#### **11. 21/00041 - Technology Refresh Programme (originally listed on agenda as Total Refresh Programme)**

*(Item 11)*

1. Mr Oakford, Ms Spore and Mr Lindsay introduced the report and responded to comments and questions from the committee, including the following:-
  - a) the type of device issued to any member of staff would be based on their job profile and what they needed to do, for example, work in the field, which required good mobility, or intensive project work, which might require a higher spec device. Users were able to take part in trials of new technology to see what would best suit their work needs. Funding of devices was from corporate spend;
  - b) concern was expressed that the assumption that many staff could continue to work from home in the future had been based on experience during a time of national crisis and hence was atypical. Ms Spore advised that the aim was to establish technology which would allow maximum flexibility and resilience to adapt to future needs;
  - c) asked if it would be more cost effective to purchase equipment direct from manufacturers, Ms Spore advised that, taking account of the management service arrangements which also needed to be put in place, costing was complex, but that best value for money would always be the objective;
  - d) asked what would be done with devices which had exceeded their warranty period but were still perfectly serviceable, Ms Spore advised that achieving the best use of all devices was always ideal. However, co-ordinating the lifespans of devices so more could be replaced at the same time, and hence achieve economies of scale, was also a sensible aim; and
  - e) a view was expressed that, to support the increased use of devices at meetings, so they could make the best contribution to daily work, it would also be important to ensure that suitable power sources and recharging points were available in meeting rooms in County Council buildings.
2. It was RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to agree the Technology Refresh Programme Strategy, approve the award of a contract for End-User Devices (Technology Refresh Programme), following a competitive process, and to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to enter into the necessary contractual negotiations and legal agreements, be endorsed.

## **12. 21/00059 - Dover Discovery Centre Community Hub Redevelopment**

*(Item 12)*

1. Mr Oakford introduced the report and Mr Sanderson showed a series of slides which showed the current building and set out the proposed changes of use for it. There were no questions.
2. It was RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to authorise the creation of a Dover Discovery Community Hub (including the following KCC services: Community Learning and Skills, Children's Social Services, a library and Good Day Programme Services), delegate authority and authorise the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to enter into a Funding Agreement setting out the funding arrangements with Dover District Council, and to enter into any contracts or property arrangements required to deliver the Community Hub, be endorsed.

## **13. 21/00061 - Kent County Council / Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Service**

*(Item 13)*

1. The Leader of the County Council, Mr R W Gough, introduced the report and emphasised the value of the proposal as a good basis for joint working between local authorities. There were no questions.
2. It was RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Leader of The Council, to enter into an Inter-Authority Agreement with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for the provision of Internal Audit and Counter Fraud services, be approved

## **14. Work Programme 2021/22**

*(Item 14)*

It was RESOLVED that the committee's planned work programme for 2021/22 be agreed.

## **15. 21/00060 - Disposal of Land at Langton Field, Langton Lane (off Nackington Road), Canterbury, Kent**

*(Item 15)*

The item was considered in closed session. A summary of the exempt minute is set out in Minute 18, below.

## **16. 21/00064 - Property Accommodation Strategy - Strategic Headquarters**

*(Item 16)*

*The committee was asked to consider this item as urgent business as the report had been published after the main agenda and hence had not been in the public domain for the statutory length of time. This was agreed.*

1. The Chairman asked Members if, in debating the subject, they wished to refer to the information included in the exempt appendix to the report. They confirmed that they did not and so the item was considered entirely in an open session.

2. Mr Oakford introduced the report, which updated Members on the further work which had been undertaken since last reporting to the Cabinet Committee in November 2020, the revised accommodation model, the ability of the Strategic Headquarters accommodation to meet the Council's needs and the preferred option. He highlighted the process by which the available options had been assessed and scored and highlighted the key aims of the programme: to achieve space for staff to return to working in an office for 2-3 days a week, and the need for space for officers and Members to meet and collaborate. He referred to the backlog of maintenance work which needed to be completed to make Sessions House fit for purpose and he and Ms Spore advised Members of the stages of the RIBA Plan of Works process by which capital projects were planned, costed and monitored. *A copy of a document setting out this process was shared with the committee after the meeting.* Mr Oakford advised that the key decisions on the way forward would be made by the Cabinet, with the first one being expected early in 2022.

3. Members' comments on the report and the proposals included the following:-

- information about the future plans needed to be relayed clearly to the public, and they should be asked what they wanted to see in the county town as the County Council's civic centre;
- the retention of a strategic headquarters in Maidstone was supported, and Mr Oakford and the officer team were thanked for their work in bringing forward the current proposals;
- changes in working practice and reduced demand for office space needed to be taken into account in future plans, however, not all staff were able to or wished to work from home in the long term;
- plans would need to identify what accommodation would be needed post-pandemic, for staff and members. Working patterns could be reviewed in 6 months' or 18 months' time to check how needs had changed;
- presenting the majority of the information about the proposals in an open rather than an exempt report was welcomed;
- the report did not make clear how block E of Sessions House was to be used;
- that the heritage of Sessions House was being recognised, and that it was to be used as a civic centre, were welcomed;
- senior officers and Members being accommodated in the same building would support good communications and working relationships;
- the Council should not reduce the space available for its own needs until it was clear what those needs were;

- the proposals would take time to come to fruition; the new accommodation strategy could take more than three years to implement;
- continued virtual working was not good for staff wellbeing, and staff were harder to keep motivated when working remotely;
- the Council could learn from private sector practice as it moved ahead to scope the options;
- staff needed to have a choice of where they worked, so it was important to be able to offer flexibility of accommodation and working practice;
- issues relating to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the security of the wide range of sensitive and confidential information handled by Council staff would need to be protected in whatever new range of working arrangements was ultimately adopted;
- the Council could have started to address the maintenance issues at Sessions House during the previous 18 months, while staff had been working at home and the building had been empty; and
- such an important issue should be presented higher on the agenda in future, or else be the subject of a special meeting.

4. Mr Oakford, Ms Spore, Mr Watts and Ms Beer responded to questions from the committee, including the following:-

- a) asked if sufficient parts of the strategic headquarters (SHQ) could be made fit for purpose to support staff needing to work there, for example, storage units to support hot desking, Mr Oakford advised that the County Council had many regional offices and that staff would not necessarily be expected to travel to Maidstone to access office accommodation. Successive staff surveys, undertaken throughout the pandemic, had asked staff to say how they felt about working remotely and returning to an office after the pandemic;
- b) Ms Spore advised that alternative uses for parts of Sessions House had been explored as part of the proposals, to share the building with stakeholders, including Maidstone Borough Council, Her Majesty's Prison Service, heritage organisations and the local business sector;
- c) Mr Watts assured Members that all available information had been made available to the committee for it to comment on, and that the Council had complied with all its legal duties in preparing the proposals;
- d) In response to concern expressed that no sites outside Maidstone were referred to in the report, Mr Oakford advised that many locations had been reviewed, in terms of office costs and accessibility, and that the focus had settled on retaining Maidstone as the Council's headquarters; and
- e) Ms Beer acknowledged the range of comments made by Members about the importance of offering flexibility in working arrangements, listening to staff's

wishes and needs, and added the need to support staff in being able to uphold standards of service delivery.

5. Mr N J D Chard noted that the wording of recommendation c) did not agree with the wording of recommendation a) iii). He proposed and the Chairman, Mr R Thomas, seconded that a change be made to the wording of recommendation c) as follows: 'agree that the Director of Infrastructure shall work with key stakeholders to test the feasibility of future alternative uses for *blocks A, B and E* of Sessions House with detailed proposals (financially and legally assessed) to be included as part of the proposals at b) above.' Mr Watts advised that the impact of this change would mean that a separate decision would be required on the future use of blocks C and D.

6. The committee then considered the recommendations set out in the report, with the text of recommendation c) amended by Mr Chard's motion, set out above. This was agreed, with abstentions from Mr A Brady, Mr A Hook, Mr P Stepto and Dr L Sullivan.

7. It was RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to:-

a) agree that the political priorities in any preferred option for the future of Sessions House include:

i) the retention of the County Council's strategic headquarters in Maidstone,

ii) the modernisation and expansion of Invicta House as the main staff accommodation hub for Maidstone, with office hubs located in other districts, sized accordingly; and

iii) the provision of civic accommodation in Sessions House blocks C and D (Central Core);

b) agree to allocate £2,082,000 from the capital feasibility Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) allocation to enable further testing and development of a detailed financial and legal assessment and feasibility work to RIBA stage 3 for the preferred option before final detailed proposals are provided to Cabinet for a final decision to be taken; and

c) agree that the Director of Infrastructure shall work with key stakeholders to test the feasibility of future alternative uses for blocks A, B and E of Sessions House, with detailed proposals (financially and legally assessed) to be included as part of the proposals at b) above.

## **17. Motion to Exclude the Press and Public for Exempt Business**

The committee RESOLVED that, under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

## **SUMMARY OF EXEMPT BUSINESS**

(where access to this minute remains restricted)

### **18. 21/00060 - Disposal of Land at Langton Field, Langton Lane (off Nackington Road), Canterbury, Kent** *(Item 15)*

1. Mr Oakford, Ms Spore and Mr Dodd introduced the report and gave an overview of the proposed decision and the complexities arising from the land concerned being owned by a range of local authorities, the County Council's and the NHS's respective decision-making processes and the intended timetable for the project. They then responded to questions of detail from the committee.
2. Arising from concerns about those complexities, Mr R Love proposed and Mr G Cooke seconded that a recommendation be made to the Cabinet Member to include a clause in the documentation which would allow the County Council some flexibility if the project timetable was not able to proceed as planned. This was agreed by the committee and added to the recommendation set out in the report.
3. It was RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to approve the Director of Infrastructure to progress with and enter into the necessary documentation to complete the freehold disposal of the land, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, be endorsed, and a recommendation be made to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to include a clause in the documentation which would allow the County Council some flexibility if the project timetable was not able to proceed as planned.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

Zena Cooke, Corporate Director - Finance

To: Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee

Subject: Covid-19 Financial Monitoring

Key decision: No

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

**Summary:**

The attached report provides an update on the Covid-19 grants KCC has received to date and monitoring of expenditure from the grants including impact on council tax collection.

**Recommendations**

Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to note the report

**Contact details**

Report Author(s)

- Dave Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy)
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- [dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk](mailto:dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk)

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# Covid-19 Finance Update

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## Background Documents

Details of Grant Allocations (previously  
Appendix A to P&R report)

<http://kcc-app610:9070/documents/s105825/Details%20of%20Grant%20Allocations%20previous%20appendix%20A%20to%20PR%20report.pdf>

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Relevant Director	Corporate Director Finance, Zena Cooke
Report author(s)	Head of Finance Policy Planning and Strategy, Dave Shipton
Circulated to	
Classification	Unrestricted

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## Contact details

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**Summary**

<p>£359.2m additional grants provided by central government to support responding to the pandemic</p>	<p>Additional grants have come from a number of departmental announcements during the year. The main emergency grant from MHCLG has come in five tranches between March 2020 to April 2021 and is un-ringfenced (can be used for purposes determined locally in response to or recovery from the pandemic). Other grants have been specific grants (can only be used for purposes defined by government). Most of the grants have been allocated on a formulaic basis and some based on claims for costs incurred (including income losses).</p>
<p>Covid-19 monitoring return shows small net surplus between grants and forecast additional spending, delayed savings and income losses</p>	<p>KCC submits regular monitoring returns to Ministry of Housing and Local Government (MHCLG). The latest returns only show spending and income losses in 2021-22. At the end of 2020-21 there was a net surplus of £46.3m after roll forward of ring-fenced grants due to timing differences between receipt of grant and forecast spending. This surplus has also been rolled forward to fund forecast spend in 2021-22.</p>
<p>Estimated council tax base for 2021-22 shows overall reduction compared to 2020-21</p>	<p>The 1.04% reduction in KCC’s council tax base is the largest for any county council. This reduction is largely due to significant increases in the number and value of council tax reduction discounts, and lower collection rates. Both are consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent economic recession.</p>
<p>Council tax collection in the first quarter of 2021-22 shows higher than budgeted council tax reduction discounts and continued lower collection rates</p>	<p>Council tax reduction discounts have continued to increase since the tax base estimate was set. The number and value of discounts peaked at the end of April and since then have started to reduce but at the end of June remained higher than the amount identified in the tax base estimate. Collection rates in the first quarter have been better than the first quarter of 2020-21 but are still lower than collection rates prior to the pandemic. We will continue to closely monitor council tax collection (and include this in monitoring reports to Cabinet) as the pace and scale of council tax recovery from the pandemic/recession will be key to 2022-23 budget strategy</p>

2.1 Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic the government has provided significant additional financial assistance to support individuals, businesses and public services. The March 2021 budget identified that in total the Government will have provided £352bn over the course of 2020-21 and 2021-22 in response to the pandemic.

2.2 The Chancellor's March 2021 Budget identified that the government has provided an additional £6.5bn to help local authorities in England respond to the impacts of Covid-19 in 2020-21. This is in addition to £1.6bn made available in 2019-20. A further £3bn has been provided in 2021-22 taking the total support provided to local authorities to over £11bn since March 2020. This does not include specific departmental grants and support.

2.3 As soon as the pandemic was announced KCC finance put arrangements in place to capture information about the additional costs the Council would incur. Initially there was very little guidance on the expectations on local authorities.

2.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has asked local councils to provide a monthly return setting out estimates of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially this return was used by MHCLG to inform the allocation of additional tranches of the un-ringfenced emergency grant. The returns have evolved over time and include spending from specific grants as well as local spending decisions.

2.5 KCC's returns have identified actual and forecast costs to date. The forecasts have assumed that ring-fenced grants which have not been spent in full in 2020-21 roll forward to 2021-22.

2.6 The 2021-22 budget was approved by County Council on 11<sup>th</sup> February. This included additional spending associated with the Covid19 pandemic, spending growth due to business as usual activities, additional savings and income, a small net reduction in reserves (including assumed underspend rolled forward from 2020-21 underspend and strengthening general reserves). The increase in the net budget was funded from additional government grants (assumed largely one-off), increase in council tax charge up to but not exceeding the referendum limit (including further adult social care levy), and impact of tax base losses and collection deficits.

2.7 Local tax collection has been significantly disrupted due to the pandemic and economic recession. Kent districts have estimated some of the largest council tax losses among all county councils. Further analysis of national trends has shown a strong correlation between the largest tax losses and the need for the highest council tax charge increases for 2021-22.

3.1 Table 1 shows the latest amounts allocated from all the various grants provided by government departments in response to the pandemic. The amounts shown in red are estimates.

Table 1 – Covid-19 Grants

	National	KCC			TOTAL
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Un-ringfenced Grants</b>					
Emergency Grant	6,157.0	39.0	55.9	32.4	127.3
Compensation for irrecoverable tax losses	854.0		7.0		7.0
Compensation for Covid related Business Rate reliefs	6,527.4		25.6		25.6
Council Tax Support ( <i>national allocation incl PCC</i> )	670.0			14.3	14.3
Loss of Sales, Fees & Charges - tranche 1	528.3		0.9	0.0	0.9
Loss of Sales, Fees & Charges - tranches 2-4 *	402.6		10.4	-1.2	9.2
	<b>15,139.3</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>184.3</b>
<i>* the 2020-21 accounts included an estimate of compensation for the period Nov - Mar. Now that final figures are available, we have found that the estimate was too high, hence a reduction is now showing in 2021-22. We are expecting compensation for Q1 of 2021-22 which will offset this, but do not have details yet of how this will be calculated, so no estimate is provided as yet.</i>					
<b>Social Care Grants</b>					
Infection Control	1,491.0		34.8	11.3	46.1
Rapid testing/workforce	516.6		7.8	7.5	15.2
NHS Hospital Discharge	N/A		<b>10.6</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>11.9</b>
	<b>2,007.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>53.2</b>	<b>20.1</b>	<b>73.3</b>
<b>Public Health Grants</b>					
Contain Outbreak Management	1,817.1		8.4	39.7	48.1
Test & Trace	300.0		1.3	5.0	6.3
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable **	175.3		5.0	0.0	5.0
Asymptomatic Testing #	N/A		<b>7.2</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>16.8</b>
	<b>2,292.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>76.2</b>
<i>** £3.2m of the £5.0m Clinically Extremely Vulnerable grant is being rolled forward to be spent in 2021-22</i>					
<i># 2021-22 is a provisional estimate based on our initial application but this is likely to reduce</i>					
<b>Other Grants</b>					
Winter Support	269.1		4.5	<b>2.7</b>	<b>7.1</b>
Emergency Food Assistance	63.0		1.7		<b>1.7</b>
Home to School Transport	135.2		4.2	2.0	6.2
Bus Services	111.4		4.9	<b>1.3</b>	<b>6.2</b>
Targeted Support for UASC	6.0		0.8		<b>0.8</b>
Other ***	79.5		1.8	1.4	3.2
Other - reclaim of costs	N/A		0.1	0.0	0.1
	<b>664.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>25.4</b>
<i>*** £0.2m of the £1.8m grant in 2020-21 relates to Wellbeing for Education Return. £0.1m of this is to be rolled forward and spent in 2021-22</i>					
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,103.5</b>	<b>39.0</b>	<b>192.9</b>	<b>127.3</b>	<b>359.2</b>

3.2 Some of the grants have been accounted for in 2020-21 even though the income has not been received until after April. In these circumstances a debtor was included in the 2020-21 accounts which in some instances has been based on an estimated amount where the grant allocation had not been confirmed in time for the



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preparation of the accounts. This could result in variance in 2021-22 when the actual grant is confirmed and received.

3.3 Some of the ring-fenced grants received in 2020-21 were not spent in full in the last financial year and have been carried forward and included in the 2021-22 amounts in table 1. The largest amounts carried forward are within the grants for Contain Outbreak Management and Test & Trace.

3.4 Appendix A provides more detail about how the main grants have been allocated. The vast majority have been shared out to all authorities based on formulae. Some are subject to bids and some based on actual claims. The first tranche of the un-ringfenced emergency grant was received at the end of March 2020 and included in the 2019-20 accounts. Only £1.7m of this was spent/applied to income losses in the last weeks of 2019-20 in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic. The remaining £37.3m was held in a Covid-19 reserve to support further spending/income losses in 2020-21. Use of this reserve was included in the 2020-21 budget amendment approved by full Council in September.

3.5 The majority of the grants in table 1 are reported in the MHCLG monitoring returns including:

- Emergency Covid-19 Grant
- Public Health grants (Test & Trace and Contain Outbreak Management Fund)
- Adult Social Care grants (infection control, hospital discharge, rapid testing, workforce capacity fund)
- Other grants (clinically extremely vulnerable, emergency food assistance, winter grant scheme, home to school transport, emergency active travel fund)

3.6 Un-ringfenced grants can be used for any purpose to support the council's response to the pandemic. Specific grants can only be used for prescribed purposes determined by government under the conditions for grant.

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### Covid-19 Monitoring – Key Numbers from July Submission

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£32.4m	Un-ringfenced emergency grant funding
£44.7m	Public Health ring-fenced grants (Outbreak Management, Test & Trace)
£18.8m	Social Care ring-fenced grants (Care Homes Infection Control, Rapid Testing)
£6.8m	Other ring-fenced grants (Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, Winter Support, Home to School Transport)
£1.4m	Hospital discharge
£46.3m	Surplus from 2020-21
<b>£150.4m</b>	<b>Net funding available</b>
£142.8m	Forecast additional spending (including spending from ring-fenced grants)
£5.9m	Forecast loss of income
<b>£148.7m</b>	<b>Total change in KCC spend and income</b>
<b>£1.7m</b>	<b>Net surplus</b>

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4.1 The latest MHCLG returns now only include the impact of Covid-19 in the current financial year (2021-22) with previous years now closed. The most recent return for July includes actual spending and income losses and commitments recorded on the Covid-19 monitoring system together with forecasts for the remainder of the year.

4.2 The final return for 2020-21 showed a surplus of un-ringfenced grant (after carry forward of unspent ring-fenced grants) of £46.3m, this too has been carried forward for comparison purposes. Overall, across 2019-20 to 2021-22 shows that after the carry forward of the surplus from 2020-21 the additional Covid-19 grants are slightly more than the additional actual/forecast costs including delayed savings and income losses leaving a forecast net surplus of £1.7m.

4.3 The main areas of additional spending in 2021-22 include the following:

- Adult social care – additional demand for care including placements and assessment costs for clients discharged from hospitals, market sustainability for care providers (including infection control) and PPE/rapid testing costs
- Children’s services – forecast demand for additional placements and assessment costs due to the impact on vulnerable families from sustained lockdown and school closures, and Reconnect programme
- Education – market sustainability payments to home to school transport providers
- Public transport – market sustainability for transport providers
- Public Health – spending on Contain Outbreak Management, Test & Trace, Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and Winter Support
- Environment – waste management
- Other – delays to savings plans and assumed spending through Helping Hands scheme

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4.4 Main income losses come from sales, fees and charges (Kent Travel Saver, Registration and libraries, and adult social care day centres), and investment income.

5.1 The council tax precept is agreed each year as part of the annual budget. The precept is based on the estimated council tax base notified by the 12 district councils in Kent (expressed as the net number of band D equivalent properties) and the County Council's share of the band D council tax charge for the year. The tax base is determined from the number of dwellings recorded on the valuation lists maintained by the valuation office agency less the impact of exemptions, discounts, premiums and estimated new dwellings during the year and collection rates. Any variations in the amount collected (due to changes from the estimated tax base) are recorded in a district's local collection fund account. At year end the county's share of any over collection from the collection account is accrued as a surplus (or any under collection accrued as a deficit).

5.2 Table 2 shows the composition of the 2021-22 tax base and council tax precept.

Table 2

	Band D Equivalent	Total Precept @ £1,418.76 £m
Number of Dwellings (684,240)	676,913.44	960.4
Less Exemptions & Disabled	-15,070.89	-21.4
Less Single Persons Discount	-49,938.11	-70.9
Less Council Tax Reduction Discounts	-56,027.89	-79.5
Less Other Discounts	-2,617.35	-3.7
Add Premiums, New Builds, etc	7,982.71	11.3
Less Collection Losses	-12,377.44	-17.6
Net Tax Base/Precept	548,862.48	778.7

5.2 Table 3 shows the changes in in the council tax base since 2015-16. In most years we have seen increases ranging from 2.4% to 1.5%. For 2021-22 we had a reduction in the tax base of 1.04% (equivalent to reduction in the precept of £7.8m).

Table 3 – Council Tax Base Changes since 2015-16

Financial Year	Band D equivalent taxbase	Change on previous year Band D	%
<b>2021-22</b>	<b>548,862.48</b>	<b>-5,736.13</b>	<b>-1.04%</b>
2020-21	554,625.61	8,230.80	1.51%
2019-20	546,394.81	8,505.10	1.58%
2018-19	537,889.71	11,493.15	2.18%
2017-18	526,396.56	11,923.26	2.37%
2016-17	514,473.30	10,767.76	2.14%
2015-16	503,704.54		

5.4 The main reasons for the reduction in the council tax base for 2021-22 are due to fewer new dwellings than in previous years, significant increase in the number of households eligible for low income discounts under council tax reduction schemes (CTRS), and a significant reduction in estimated collection rates. These are related to the Covid-19 pandemic and economic recession. A more detailed breakdown of the changes in the council tax base 2021-22 and 2020-21 is shown in table 4.

Table 4 – Composition of Council Tax Base 2021-22 and 2020-21

	2020-21 to 2021-22 Band D equivalents	2019-20 to 2020-21 Band D equivalents
Previous year final taxbase	554,625.61	546,394.81
Change in number of dwellings	+5,991.33	+6,976.23
Change in CTRS discounts	-5,221.15	+1,548.95
Change in estimated collection rate	-5,358.41	-541.59
Change in single person discounts	-1,336.36	-853.18
Changes in exemptions	-563.78	-1,157.56
Changes in other discounts, premiums and adjustments	725.4	2,257.94
<b>Current taxbase</b>	<b>548,862.48</b>	<b>554,625.61</b>

5.5 We will be closely monitoring council tax collections during the course of 2021-22. This will be included in the budget monitoring report to Cabinet. Initial analysis has shown that the number and value of Council Tax Reduction discounts has continued to increase since the original tax base estimates in most districts, peaking at the end of April. Since April the number and value of council tax reductions has started to decline but as at end of June were still higher than the fifty six thousand band D equivalents (£79.5m reduction in precept). At this stage we do not have sufficient information to forecast the recovery of council tax reduction discounts due to the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, economic recovery and phasing out of Furlough Scheme.

5.6 In the first quarter of 2021-22 collection rates have improved by 0.5% to 1% in most districts compared to quarter 1 in 2020-21, but are still around 0.5% lower than collection rates in quarter 1 of 2019-20. As monitoring progresses we will be estimating the impact of lower council tax reduction discounts and improved collection rates on the collection fund balance and estimated tax base for 2022-23. The pace and level of recovery of council tax losses will be crucial to 2022-23 budget strategy.

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From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council  
Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance,  
Corporate and Traded Services  
Bryan Sweetland, Cabinet Member for Communications,  
Engagement, People and Partnerships  
David Cockburn, Corporate Director for Strategic and Corporate  
Services

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 22 September 2021

Subject: Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard shows progress made against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

13 of the 25 KPIs achieved target for the latest month and were RAG rated Green, 6 were below target but did achieve the floor standard (Amber) and 5 did not achieve the floor standard (Red). 1 KPI is currently suspended due to Coronavirus.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance position for Strategic and Corporate Services.

**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 first report for the 2021/22 financial year.

**2. Performance Dashboard**

2.1. The current Strategic and Corporate Services Performance dashboard provides results up to the end of June/July 2021 and is attached in Appendix 1.

2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance against target for the 25 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2021/22. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.

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. Of the 25 KPIs, the latest RAG status is as follows:

- 13 are rated Green – the target was achieved or exceeded;
- 6 are rated Amber – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet the target for Green;
- 5 are rated Red – performance did not meet the expected floor standard:
  - CS04a: Daytime calls to Contact Point answered
  - CS04b: Out of hours calls to Contact Point answered
  - GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days.
  - GL03: Data Protection Act Subject Access requests completed within statutory timescales
  - FN02: Retirement benefits paid within 20 working days of all paperwork received
- 1 is currently suspended due to Coronavirus and has no RAG rating.

### 3. Recommendation(s)

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance position for Strategic and Corporate Services

### 4. Contact details

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# **Strategic and Corporate Services Performance Dashboard**

## **Financial Year 2021/22**

### **Results up to June/July 2021**

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**Produced by Kent Analytics**

**Publication Date: August 2021**



## Guidance Notes

### Key Performance Indicators

All Key Performance Indicators are provided with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings.

RAG ratings are based on Targets and Floor Standards brought before the Cabinet Committee in July 2021.

Where relevant, RAG ratings are given for both the latest month and year to date (YTD).

### RAG Ratings

<b>GREEN</b>	Target has been achieved
<b>AMBER</b>	Floor Standard* achieved but Target has not been met
<b>RED</b>	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 where appropriate, they are tracked within an expected range represented by Upper and Lower Thresholds. The Alert provided for Activity Indicators is whether results are within the expected range or not. Results can either be in expected range (**Yes**) or they could be **Above** or **Below**. Expected activity thresholds are based on previous years' trends.

When activity indicators do not have expected thresholds, they are shown in the report to provide context for the Key Performance Indicators. In such cases the activity indicators are simply shown with comparison to activity for the previous year.

## Key Performance Indicator Summary

People and Communications	Latest RAG	YTD RAG
CS01: Callers who rate the advisors in Contact Point as good	GREEN	GREEN
CS04a: Daytime calls to Contact Point answered	RED	RED
CS04b: Out of hours calls to Contact Point answered	RED	RED
CS06a: Daytime calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	GREEN	GREEN
CS06b: Out of hours calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	GREEN	GREEN
CS07: Complaints responded to in timescale	AMBER	AMBER
HR25: Completed corporate themed Health and Safety audits	Audits suspended	
HR09: Training evaluated by participants as having delivered stated learning outcomes	GREEN	GREEN

Governance and Law	Latest RAG	YTD RAG
GL01: Council and Committee papers published at least five days before meetings	GREEN	GREEN
GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days	RED	RED
GL03: Data Protection Act Subject Access requests completed within statutory timescales	RED	RED

Finance	Latest RAG	YTD RAG
FN01: Pension correspondence processed within 15 working days	GREEN	GREEN
FN02: Retirement benefits paid within 20 working days of all paperwork received	RED	RED
FN07: Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 30 days of KCC received date	AMBER	GREEN
FN11: Financial assessments fully completed within 15 days of referral	GREEN	RED
FN05: Sundry debt due to KCC which is under 60 days old	AMBER	n/a
FN06: Sundry debt due to KCC outstanding over 6 months old	AMBER	n/a
FN08: Invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days	GREEN	GREEN

Infrastructure	Latest RAG	YTD RAG
ICT01: Calls to ICT Help Desk resolved at the first point of contact	GREEN	GREEN
ICT02: Positive feedback rating with the ICT help desk	AMBER	AMBER
ICT03: Working hours where Kent Public Sector Network is available to staff	GREEN	GREEN
ICT04: Working hours where ICT Services available to staff	GREEN	GREEN
ICT05: Working hours where email is available to staff	GREEN	GREEN
PI01: Rent due to KCC outstanding over 60 days	GREEN	n/a
PI04: Reactive tasks completed in Service Level Agreement standards	AMBER	AMBER

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
People & Communications	Amanda Beer	Bryan Sweetland	Agilisys

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	Jun-21 YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
CS01	Percentage of callers who rate the advisors in Contact Point as good	96%	97%	97%	98%	98%	GREEN	97%	GREEN	97%	90%
CS04a	Percentage of daytime calls to Contact Point answered	95%	96%	96%	93%	78%	RED	88%	RED	95%	90%
CS04b	Percentage of out of hours calls to Contact Point answered	95%	98%	96%	84%	87%	RED	89%	RED	95%	90%
CS06a	Percentage of daytime calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	76%	77%	79%	78%	79%	GREEN	79%	GREEN	70%	65%
CS06b	Percentage of out of hours calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	75%	76%	80%	76%	78%	GREEN	78%	GREEN	70%	65%

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CS04a&b – Whilst call quality has been maintained, call answer rates within Contact Point have been impacted by staff leaving, as well as high sickness rates (COVID-19 being a contributing factor). The easing of restrictions has opened up other industry sectors with comparable salaries, and these roles have been attractive to some advisors causing higher employee turnover than usual. A recruitment drive started in June, with new advisors in post at the end of June, and others in early July. Given the complex training and multiskilling required of call advisors, gradual improvements in the answer rate are therefore expected during Quarter 2.

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Year to Date	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper   Lower		Previous Year
CS08	Number of calls answered by Contact Point	36,784	42,706	37,142	35,598	36,572	109,312	Yes	151,776	104,000	101,716

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
People & Communications	Amanda Beer	Bryan Sweetland	People & Communications

### Key Performance Indicators - Quarterly

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	RAG	Year to Date	RAG	Target	Floor
CS07	Percentage of complaints responded to in timescale	83%	84%	78%	83%	82%	AMBER	82%	AMBER	85%	80%
HR25	Percentage of corporate themed Health and Safety audits sent in 7days	Audits suspended due to Covid-19								90%	85%

CS07 – The Quarter to June saw 1,421 complaints, a 6% increase on the previous quarter. Although most complaints were received by the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate, they dealt with 91% within timescale. Children, Young People and Education dealt with 57% within timescale, and Adult Social Care and Health, 65%. Complaints to the latter two Directorates tend to be more complex, requiring additional time for a complete response.

### Key Performance Indicators – Monthly

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	YTD	RAG	Target	Floor
HR09	Training evaluated by participants as having delivered stated learning outcomes	100%	99%	98%	99%	98%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	97%	95%

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	YTD	In expected range?	Expected Activity Upper   Lower		Previous YTD
CS12	Number of visits to the KCC website, kent.gov (000s)	1,213	1,074	842	843	873	2,558	Above	2,500	2,000	1,837

CS12 – Visits to the KCC website decreased from the highs seen after January, with fewer people accessing Covid related pages. Visits still remain above expectations however, with pages on visiting Household Waste Recycling Centres, Coronavirus cases and testing, and school term dates, the most popular.

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
People & Communications	Amanda Beer	Bryan Sweetland	People & Communications

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	In expected range?	Expected Range		Prev. Yr same month
								Upper	Lower	
HR12	Number of current change activities being supported	80	70	86	93	92	Above	75	65	57
HR13	Total number of e-learning training programmes completed (YTD)	57,469	62,214	4,293	9,629	16,032	Above	15,000	12,500	20,355
HR16	Number of registered users of Kent Rewards	24,302	24,409	24,315	24,374	24,378	Yes	25,000	24,000	24,154
HR21	Number of current people management cases being supported	98	99	99	96	97	Yes	100	90	115
HR23	Percentage of staff who have completed all 3 mandatory learning events	77%	77%	79%	82%	81%	Yes	90%	80%	73%

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HR12 - Change activity is driven by demand from the wider business and will fluctuate from month to month, some change activities will also span more than one month. Change activities also vary significantly in complexity, requiring different levels of resource and work to be carried out.

HR13 – The total number of courses completed during Quarter 1 is above the expected range and shows that staff continue to engage in this valuable resource for development purposes. Courses continue to be accessible to the workforce through the Delta learning platform.

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Finance	Zena Cooke	Peter Oakford	Finance

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
FN01	Pension correspondence processed within 15 working days	98%	99%	98%	97%	99%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	98%	95%
FN02	Retirement benefits paid within 20 working days of all paperwork received	90%	79%	28%	58%	63%	RED	50%	RED	90%	85%
FN07	Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 30 days of KCC received date	86%	84%	87%	84%	83%	AMBER	85%	GREEN	85%	80%
FN11	Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral	99%	98%	56%	87%	97%	GREEN	82%	RED	90%	85%

FN02 – A number of issues have contributed to the low performance since April - ICT issues, including connectivity issues with the pensions system; the regrettable increase in deaths of scheme members, with every death taking a considerable time to process; pressure of annual benefit illustrations, which are a statutory requirement and take priority, meaning staff were unavailable to deal with the benefits. This exercise for the staff finishes at the end of July which will then allow more resource can be put into the benefit cases.

FN07 - Three payment dashboard training courses have been run to increase Directorate awareness regarding late invoices. To help to further raise awareness, the first quarter monitoring is due to go DMTs and CMT in the coming months.

FN11 – For a one-week period in April, Assessment Officers were reassigned to assist with answering the large volumes of calls received from customers (in the region of 15,000) following the annual reassessment process. This new approach had a negative impact on the KPI during April because the Assessment Officers were not able to complete financial assessments. The recovery plan put in place following the drop in performance has worked effectively with the KPI improving in May and exceeding target in June.

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Finance	Zena Cooke	Peter Oakford	Finance

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Year to date	Previous year YTD
FN01b	Number of pension correspondences processed	397	472	587	725	592	<b>1,904</b>	917
FN02b	Number of retirement benefits paid	124	198	214	240	202	<b>656</b>	581
FN07b	Number of invoices received by KCC	6,775	11,332	8,158	9,109	10,064	<b>27,331</b>	25,816
FN11b	Number of financial assessments received	574	682	524	801	706	<b>2,031</b>	1,989

FN01b – The increase in pension correspondence compared to the previous year is most likely due to the follow reasons: System issues at the beginning of 2021 have created a backlog of work, and if scheme members send any additional correspondence, including follow-ups to earlier emails, then this will be treated as additional correspondence; problems with the telephone helpline has meant more people have used online forms and email to contact the Service; the increase in deaths earlier in the year are reflected in additional correspondence several months later; finally, a change in the transfer-out process which now requires a form to be completed.



Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Finance	Zena Cooke	Peter Oakford	Cantium Business Services

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
FN05	Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC which is under 60 days old	59%	79%	74%	55%	62%	AMBER	n/a		75%	57%
FN06	Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC outstanding over 6 months old	6%	6%	6%	7%	17%	AMBER	n/a		15%	20%
FN08	Percentage of invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days	98%	98%	97%	98%	98%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	97%	94%

FN05 - There is 1 large debt totalling £7.0m equating to 64% of the total debt in the 60-180 day bracket. There's a further large debt totalling £5.7m that is currently within the over 6-month bracket and still affecting the total sundry debt figure. Both of these are being dealt with by the GET Directorate and are out of Cantium's control until a decision has been made. Recovering these debts would reduce the overall debt value to £37.9m and the under 60-day KPI would increase to 82.7%.

FN06 - This moved into Amber following the previously mentioned £5.7m debt currently with the GET Directorate falling into the over 6-month category. Recovering these debts would reduce the overall debt value to £37.9m; and the over 6-month debt value to £2.6m, and the over 6-month KPI would decrease to 7%.

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Previous Year
FN05b	Value of debt due to KCC (£000s)	44,750	44,945	39,916	37,298	50,731	32,497

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Governance and Law	Ben Watts	Peter Oakford / Bryan Sweetland	Governance and Law

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Month RAG	YTD	Year RAG	Target	Floor
GL01	Council and Committee papers published at least five clear days before meetings	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	GREEN	100%	96%
GL02	Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests completed within 20 working days	76%	80%	79%	80%	72%	RED	78%	RED	92%	90%
GL03	Data Protection Act Subject Access requests completed within timescales	51%	54%	56%	53%	53%	RED	54%	RED	90%	85%

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	YTD	In expected range?	Expected Activity		Previous Year
									Upper	Lower	
GL01b	Committee meetings	21	3	19	15	12	49		N/a		27
GL02b	Freedom of Information requests	204	167	188	172	151	678	Yes	867	667	489
GL03b	Data Protection Act Subject Access requests	53	63	45	53	60	221	Above	173	147	104

GL02 – The need for services to prioritise frontline service delivery is likely having an impact on time taken to respond to FOI/EIR requests. 23% of cases closed late related to Highways, Transportation and Waste, with the next highest being 12% for Education. At the end of July, 26 FOI-EIR requests were overdue and 5 were being investigated by the Information Commissioner.

GL03 - There continue to be access issues to office facilities, which is necessary to deal with some requests in good time. Some teams do not possess redacting tools (e.g. Adobe Pro) which are required for some electronically held records. And again, staff prioritising front line service delivery. The vast majority of Subject Access Requests relate to Children's Social Care. At the end of July, 31 SARs were overdue and 8 were being investigated by the Information Commissioner.

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Infrastructure - ICT	Rebecca Spore	Peter Oakford	Cantium Business Services

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	Year to Date	Year RAG	Target	Floor
ICT01	Calls to ICT Help Desk resolved at the first point of contact	74%	75%	67%	74%	73%	GREEN	71%	GREEN	70%	65%
ICT02	Positive feedback rating with the ICT help desk	95%	94%	95%	94%	91%	AMBER	94%	AMBER	95%	90%
ICT03	Working hours where Kent Public Sector Network is available to staff	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	GREEN	99.8%	99.0%
ICT04	Working hours where ICT Services are available to staff	96.9%	100.0%	100%	99.1%	100%	GREEN	99.7%	GREEN	99.0%	98.0%
ICT05	Working hours where email is available to staff	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	GREEN	99.0%	98.0%

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ICT02 – The target has been missed for the past two months. A low participation of callers continues to be an issue, with less than 10% of callers leaving feedback. Infrastructure continues to monitor the performance of this KPI through the Service Review Group with Cantium. A wider customer satisfaction survey that will cover more than just help calls is being considered.

### Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Year to Jun-21	Year to Jun-20
ICT01b	Calls to ICT Help Desk	5,303	6,287	6,283	6,419	5,575	18,277	20,005
ICT02b	Feedback responses provided for ICT Help Desk	321	386	437	652	382	1,471	1,321

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Infrastructure - Property	Rebecca Spore	Peter Oakford	Infrastructure

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	Target	Floor
PI01	Percentage of rent due to KCC outstanding over 60 days (including rent deferment invoices)	1.5%	2.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	GREEN	5%	15%

### Activity Indicator

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Year to Date	Previous YTD
PI01b	Total rent invoiced (£000s)	676.0	67.8	130.3	501.1	124	755	565
PI03c	Capital receipts banked (£000s)	720.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	107.0	107	3,084

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member	Delivery by:
Infrastructure - Property	Rebecca Spore	Peter Oakford	Kier, Amey, and Skanska

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
PI04	Percentage of reactive tasks completed within Service Level Agreement standards	80%	83%	80%	83%	87%	AMBER	84%	AMBER	90%	80%

PI04 – The KCC Recovery Programme (reopening of the estate) resulted in additional workload for TFM which in turn impacted on usual response times. In addition, TFM has had a number of staff leave and are in the process of recruiting replacements. Finally, there have been some delays with supplies/materials due to COVID and Brexit.

### Activity Indicator

Ref	Indicator description	Feb-21	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Year to Date	Previous YTD
PI04b	Number of reactive tasks responded to	614	828	678	837	919	2,434	1,761

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By: Ben Watts, General Counsel (Data Protection Officer)

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021

Subject: **Information Governance Update**

Classification: Unrestricted

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**Summary:** This report provides an update regarding the challenges faced Kent County Council in relation to our obligations to comply with the information governance legislation.

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1. Members of this Cabinet Committee and Governance and Audit Committee have received updates over the past four years in relation to a number of information governance issues. Additionally, the Performance Report highlights key metrics relating to compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act.
2. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is the officer responsible across the whole Council for ensuring compliance with information governance legislation. The DPO's minimum tasks, as set out in the legislation, are;
  - a. To inform and advise the organisation and its employees about their obligations to comply with the GDPR and other data protection laws.
  - b. To monitor compliance with the GDPR and other data protection laws, including managing internal data protection activities, advise on data protection impact assessments; train staff and conduct internal audits.
  - c. To be the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed (employees, customers etc).
3. At the last meeting of this Committee, Members asked for a more detailed update relating to the challenges faced in complying with requests made under information governance legislation. Accordingly, a presentation relating to this issue will also be made at the meeting. This presentation will include a range of information and data about the types of requests that the council has received in recent times. The presentation slides will be made available to Members ahead of the meeting and published on the Council's website.
4. This paper and the presentation should be read in conjunction with the statistical data contained in the Performance Report that appears on the agenda for this meeting.

5. Given the resources available to the Council, we continue to face considerable challenges in providing information to satisfy the requests made.
6. It has been noted that performance has fallen during the period of the pandemic. In relation to Subject Access Requests that was initially driven by the availability of physical documents during the lockdown periods. Both Subject Access Requests and FOI responses have been directly impacted over the past 18 months by the prioritisation of operational service activity.
7. The above notwithstanding, service directorates have been apprised of the performance issues and the need to comply fully with this statutory duty and have committed to improve performance which should show in the coming months.
8. It should also be noted that at the same time, the complexity of requests continues to grow reflecting the increasingly challenging operating environment for the Council. Similarly, the resources available to triage, manage and respond to requests has faced further real terms reductions.
9. In addition to the increased prioritisation, work has started to review the processes for information governance requests and further detail on the planned activity will be provided to the next meeting of this Committee. This will also see increased granularity of data that this Cabinet Committee receives. We will provide greater detail on the types of request that are received along with the timescales and a breakdown of the directorates responsible. This will increase the opportunity for Members to exercise oversight and scrutiny of timescales with an understanding of the relevant areas and the challenges faced.
10. The next meeting of this Cabinet Committee will receive a further update with the new information and an outline of the changes that

## **Recommendations**

11. It is recommended that Members **NOTE** the report and **COMMENT** accordingly on both the report and presentation.



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

To: Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee – 22 September 2021

Subject: **Decision 21/00082 - Insurance Tender – Award of Insurance Programme Contracts**

Key Decision: Involves expenditure or savings of over £1m and represents significant policy decision

Future Pathway: Cabinet Member Decision

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:**

This report seeks endorsement and / or comments on the Key Decision to be taken in relation to the award of insurance programme contracts that are due to commence on 1 January 2022.

**Recommendation:**

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services on the proposed decision.

**Proposed decision:**

As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, I agree;

- To confirm the policy position and KCC insurance requirements which make up the KCC Insurance Programme,
- To the undertaking of the necessary procurement, via an insurance broker, of the relevant Insurance Programme contracts
- To award the contracts to the successful bidders, as identified via the procurement process
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director to, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, consider and approve any extensions of the awarded contracts provided for as part of the original contract award and related arrangements.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Finance, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to take the necessary actions, including but not limited to, entering

into necessary contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's insurance programme is extensive and designed to protect its financial position in respect of losses it may suffer when undertaking the diverse nature of activities required to meet statutory duties and general business functions and income generating operations.
- 1.2 The current programme is held under a 5-year Long Term Agreement. This agreement ended on 31 December 2020 and a new programme was due to be tendered for 2021 but was postponed due to pressures placed on the authority by the Covid-19 pandemic and the volatility of the insurance market. Instead, a decision was taken to agree 12-month extensions with existing insurers and to resume the tender exercise this year, with a view to arranging new contracts from 1 January 2022.
- 1.3 This report outlines the tender exercise and seeks endorsement for the proposed decision to be taken by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services.

## 2. The Current Programme

- 2.1 The main insurance programme is currently held with Zurich Municipal under a 5-year Long Term Agreement. This agreement requires Zurich Municipal to provide cover by way of Casualty (*Public Liability, Employer's Liability, Officials Indemnity, Libel & Slander and Professional Indemnity*), Property and Motor policies.
- 2.2 In addition, the Council purchases several smaller policies with various other insurers. These include –
  - Industrial & Commercial Properties – AIG
  - Personal Accident / Business Travel – AIG
  - Personal Accident / School Travel – Chubb European Group
  - Terrorism – Lloyds Market
- 2.3 The objectives of the programme are to:
  - Provide financial certainty in relation to the Council's maximum exposure to individual high value claims and the overall cost of claims in any one year.
  - Provide financial certainty for claims that have been incurred but may not be reported for many years in the future.

- Comply with the terms and conditions of contracts / agreements entered into by the Council.

It should be noted that in the absence of an appropriate insurance programme, the Council will be at risk of significant financial loss.

### **3 Value**

- 3.1 The overall cost of external premiums currently exceeds £3 million. The cost of premiums is met from the Kent Insurance Fund which is financed from corporate contributions and a school recharge programme.
- 3.2 The cost of premiums is controlled by KCC retaining the first part of any loss through variable levels of self-insurance (excess). This is currently £500k for every Public Liability and Employers Liability claim and up to £250k for claims involving damage to Council owned establishments.

### **4 Options for 2022**

- 4.1 When the policies expire on 31 December 2021, the Council has three options –
  - To seek a further 12-month extension to the current programme.
  - To do nothing and self-insure without additional insurance cover.
  - To undertake a tender exercise to procure a new insurance programme.
- 4.2 It is recommended the Council proceeds with a tender exercise to procure a new insurance programme. Whilst a further extension might be available, the proposed terms are currently unknown, and it is likely that prices would be increased in the absence of competition. Proceeding without insurance cover is not recommended as the Council would risk significant claims spend – particularly if a total property loss was to be suffered or a catastrophic personal injury claim was to be received.
- 4.3 Completing a tender exercise will allow the Council to explore all available market options, which is considered advantageous whilst the insurance market remains unsettled. The market has hardened since Covid-19 due to global uncertainty and limited investment opportunities, making re-insurance more expensive. However, there has been the emergence of several new companies since 2015 that are prepared to offer cover for local authorities and it is hoped this will present more competitive pricing options – particularly as the Council chose to accept a higher excess (£500k) on its Public Liability and Employer’s Liability policies in 2018, that has yet to be evaluated in the open market.

## 5 Tender

- 5.1 The cost of obtaining new insurance arrangements will exceed the current OJEU thresholds and the Council is therefore required to competitively tender for new policies.  
The process will ensure the Council purchases the widest ranging cover that meets the varied needs of the organisation and ensures that all services are adequately protected.
- 5.2 Due to the specialist nature of the insurance market sector, the process will be overseen by the Council's broker – Gallagher. The Council has traditionally procured its own contracts through a specialist local authority insurance broker and proposes to again follow this model.
- 5.3 With the assistance of the Council's Commissioning Team, Gallagher has developed an 'Invitation To Tender' document. Cover will be divided into lots and insurers will be invited to bid for all or any of the following lots:
- Property - Material Damage (*to include Business Interruption, Money, Glass, Specified All Risks, and Theft*).
  - Casualty (*to include Public Liability, Employer's Liability, Officials Indemnity, Libel & Slander, Land Charges, Public Health Act, Hirers Liability*).
  - Motor Fleet
  - Property Owners
  - Fine Art
  - Works in Progress
  - Terrorism
  - Professional Indemnity
  - Crime
  - Personal Accident / Business Travel
  - Schools Offsite Activities
  - Computer
  - Marine
  - Package (combining two or more of the above).
- 5.4 It is proposed for the 'Invitation To Tender' to be open for a period of 7 weeks. Once this deadline has passed, an evaluation process will consider submissions against agreed selection criteria. The evaluation will be considered on a '50% price / 50% quality' basis and will assess aspects such as financial certainty, depth of cover, service delivery and claims handling. Gallagher will ultimately present a final report setting out the recommendations for cover.

## **6 Contract Award and Start Date**

- 6.1 Contracts will be awarded based on the most economically advantageous bid, with consideration being given to price and quality in line with the published evaluation matrix.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the Council will agree one or more contract(s) for a period of 3 years, with the option to extend for two further periods of one year (i.e. 3+1+1).
- 6.3 Successful bidders will be notified week commencing 22 November 2021 and all agreements will be subject to a 10-day standstill agreement.
- 6.4 Contracts will be awarded on 2 December 2021.
- 6.5 Cover for all policies will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022.

## **7 Financial Implications**

The three available options are set out below and all carry financial uncertainty. The insurance fund provides cover for these but the recommended option of proceeding to tender, is considered to carry the least amount of risk in terms of financial impact.

- Extending current contracts – the terms of these extensions would be unknown at this stage, and it is likely that premium prices would further increase in the absence of competition.
- To do nothing and self-insure – the Council would have no insurance cover and be totally exposed to unpredictable expenditure. The premium spend would be saved but there would be potential for significant claims spend.
- Complete the tender exercise – the market remains unsettled but there has been the emergence of several new insurance companies since the last tender in 2015 and a tender provides the opportunity for the Council to test the market and hopefully reduce premium spend.

## **8 Legal Implications**

The Council will be supported throughout the tender process by its broker Gallagher, who will complete the evaluation process on its behalf and ensure that all legal requirements are upheld appropriately.

## 9 Equalities Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and no adverse impacts have been identified.

### 10. Recommendation

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services on the proposed decision.

#### **Proposed decision:**

As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, I agree;

- To confirm the policy position and KCC insurance requirements which make up the KCC Insurance Programme,
- To the undertaking of the necessary procurement, via an insurance broker, of the relevant Insurance Programme contracts
- To award the contracts to the successful bidders, as identified via the procurement process
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director to, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, consider and approve any extensions of the awarded contracts provided for as part of the original contract award and related arrangements
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Finance, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to take the necessary actions, including but not limited to, entering into necessary contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

### **Contact Details**

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From: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services  
 David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 22 September 2021

Decision No: N/A – For information only

Subject: **Decision taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings – Interim infrastructure support to the Voluntary Sector**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** County-wide

**Summary:** A decision to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the county and a Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent was taken by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services between meetings of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee. This decision could not be reasonably deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee which had been re-scheduled from 7 September to 22 September for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.2 below.

**Recommendation:**

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to note that Decision 21/00074 to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the county and a Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent 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 Community and Regulatory Services has taken 21/00074 to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the county and a Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent. The budget for this is contained within the 2021/22 KCC revenue budget, approved by County Council on 11th February 2021.
- 1.1 The decision was taken between meetings of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, as it could not reasonably be deferred. It was agreed at Cabinet on 24 June that this support for the voluntary and community sector would be in place by September and delaying the decision any longer than early September would mean that support would not be available until well

into October. This support is an interim measure for this financial year until the final draft of the Civil Society Strategy is adopted later in the year, which will set the framework for our ongoing and long-term support to the sector.

2. The report submitted to the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services in advance of the decision being made is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The signed Record of Decision is attached as Appendix 2.

### 3. Recommendation(s)

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to note that Decision 21/00074 to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the county and a Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent was taken between meetings of the cabinet committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

### 4. Background Documents

- Equalities Impact Assessment (appended)
- Record of Decision
- Report 21-00074 Interim support

### 5. Contact Details

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To: Mike Hill- Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services

From: David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance

Decision No: **21/00074**

Subject: **Interim infrastructure support offer for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)**

Classification: **unrestricted**

Date: 25 August 2021

**Past Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** Countywide- all divisions affected

**Summary:**

This report provides an update on the proposed interim infrastructure support we propose to put in place for this financial year (2021-2022) and asks for Cabinet Committee to comment on and endorse this decision.

**Recommendation(s):** The Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services is asked to agree to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the County and the Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 An update report was brought to Policy and Resources (P&R) Cabinet Committee in January 2021, setting out the support we had put in place for the Voluntary, Community sector (VCS) during the pandemic and our intention to put in place interim support measures whilst we revised the Civil Society Strategy (CSS). This Strategy was consulted on in early 2020 but subsequently paused due to Covid. The CSS, as set out in our report in January, will provide our long-term framework for providing infrastructure support to the VCS and a report is due to come to P&R in November on the final strategy.
- 1.2 However, this report sets out our proposal for funding interim support to the sector through a Strategic Recovery Fund (SRF) and Volunteering infrastructure pilot. Whilst the total value of this support is below the delegation threshold with a combined value of only £500K, this must be approved by the Cabinet Member as set out in the Corporate Grant Procedure within the Financial Regulations and therefore must be considered as a non-key decision by Committee. *Corporate Grant Procedure: Any grants above £15,000 must be approved by the relevant Cabinet Member*

**2. Proposed Interim Support Funding**

- 2.1 This funding is intended to provide support to the Voluntary Sector over the next 12 months until the adoption of KCC's Civil Society Strategy in December, which will set

out the framework for our longer-term infrastructure support. The Council's Interim Strategic Plan (ISP) set out our commitment to meeting the challenges identified during Recovery and to:

*Develop a support offer for the VCSE which responds to the challenges identified during COVID-19 recovery to help maintain the local VCSE network whilst supporting it to be sustainable and revitalised within a post COVID-19 environment.*

- 2.2 The proposals set out in this report have been informed by extensive engagement with the Voluntary Sector; prior to Covid this was through engagement forums and the consultation on the draft CSS but more recently through the VCS Recovery Cell as part of the Kent Resilience Forum Architecture. This cell has since been transitioned into a VCS Steering Group made up of VCS representatives and chaired independently to KCC and they have been engaged in the early development of the revised CSS and the support offer.
- 2.3 There are two elements to this infrastructure funding:

#### **The Strategic Recovery Fund:**

This Fund was run in 2020 as emergency support to the Voluntary Sector providing small grants to organisations to help them adapt their business plans and organisational model to meet the demands of Covid and was outlined in the P&R report in January. The Fund was run by Kent Community Foundation (KCF) as a recognised, grant making organisation and it is proposed to run this fund again with KCF for 2021 given the success of the Fund. The total value of the funding is £330K. The Fund will open by late September.

We know that organisations will be struggling to adapt post Covid particularly with the ending of Covid emergency grants and an increase in demand for services and therefore will feel it is important to keep access to organisational and business support in place whilst we develop out longer-term strategy. This Fund will enable organisations to access support and expertise to adapt their business model, organisations plan, funding strategies as well as digital skills. It will also look to support relatively new organisations (over 12 months) that may be looking to diversity or need support to develop. We know that to adapt to the funding environment with many traditional fundraising events still not taking place, that revising business plans and financial strategies is vitally important for sector sustainability.

This Fund is demand led so organisations can buy in the support they need from organisations they trust and that understand their organisational needs. This is in recognition that the sector's needs are diverse and that no single organisation can meet those needs. We will therefore use the impact monitoring provided by this Fund, both in terms of who provided the support and the impact this had to inform our future, long term business support to the Voluntary Sector.

#### **Volunteering infrastructure Pilot.**

The need for a well-resourced and co-ordinated volunteering network across the County was highlighted in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan developed in response to Covid. The Volunteer Centres provided advice and support to hubs supporting those that are shielding, whilst continuing to co-ordinate those that volunteered within their local communities throughout the pandemic. They also supported volunteers who were not able to volunteer for health reasons; ensuring they remained connected and engaged.

To deliver against the action plan and the ISP we intend to work with the volunteering infrastructure to develop a pilot for county wide volunteering infrastructure, that is sustainable but offers some consistency of resource across the County. This will be run as a grant funded pilot led by Ashford Volunteer Centre so that we can develop the best approach alongside the organisations themselves. The total value of this pilot will be £170K and will be split between the lead organisation, the activity needed to deliver the pilot and locality leads.

By volunteering infrastructure, we mean organisations who focus on supporting and promoting volunteering across the county and provide the support and guidance organisations require to effectively recruit and retain volunteers. The intention is to support a consistent offer of volunteering infrastructure across the County, whereby organisations who deliver this support can work in partnership to ensure that good quality advice and guidance is available to organisations who wish to recruit and retain volunteers. Part of this infrastructure will be the developing the Kent Volunteers digital platform for easier access to volunteer opportunities, advice, guidance, and templates for volunteer recruitment.

Whilst there is a need for local intelligence and a geographical presence for volunteering infrastructure, there is also a need for a consistent offer of support for volunteers and organisations who wish to engage volunteers. It will be for the lead organisation in the pilot to bring others into the partnership, in agreement with KCC and ensure that there is access to volunteer infrastructure support across the County. This will not necessarily mean funding an organisation in each district but there will be a locality lead that covers each district area and the organisations involved will need to provide local networks across organisations providing local volunteering infrastructure support.

The pilot will be evaluated working with KCC analytics, and the findings will inform our future arrangements, however our commitment to supporting volunteering infrastructure and the framework for providing this will be embedded in the Civil Society Strategy (once adopted).

### **3. Conclusion:**

- 3.1 The support outlined in this report is an interim proposal, however given the impact of the last year on the VCS and the likely demand for support delivered by these organisations to our communities, it was felt necessary to act now to put in place support that the sector has identified as a priority.
- 3.2 Once the strategy consultation has taken place and we have the findings of the interim support, our future support offer will be embedded in the strategy framework and set out over the 3-year life of the strategy.

### **4. Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services is asked to agree to fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the County and the Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent.

### **5. Contact details**

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

## DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

**Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services**

## DECISION NO:

21/00074

**For publication** [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

**Key decision: NO**

### Subject Matter / Title of Decision

To fund a Volunteering Infrastructure pilot and Strategic Recovery Fund to support the Voluntary sector over the next 12 months.

### Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services I agree to: fund a pilot for Volunteering Infrastructure across the County and the Strategic Recovery Fund to support the voluntary sector in Kent.

### Reason(s) for decision:

This funding is intended to provide support to the Voluntary Sector over the next 12 months until the adoption of KCC's Civil Society Strategy in December, which will set out the framework for our longer-term infrastructure support.

The Council's Interim Strategic Plan (ISP) set out our commitment to meeting the challenges identified during Recovery and to:

*Develop a support offer for the VCSE which responds to the challenges identified during COVID-19 recovery to help maintain the local VCSE network whilst supporting it to be sustainable and revitalised within a post COVID-19 environment.*

There are two elements to this funding:

**The Strategic Recovery Fund** was run in 2020 as emergency support to the Voluntary Sector providing small grants to organisations to help them adapt their business plans and organisational model to meet the demands of Covid.

This Fund was run by Kent Community Foundation (KCF) as a recognised, grant making organisation. It is proposed to run this fund again with KCF for 2021 given the success of the Fund and as result of the challenges voluntary organisations are now facing particularly with the ending of Covid emergency grants and an increase in demand for services. Organisations have also had to adapt to the use of digital platforms and remote working. The impact monitoring provided by this Fund, for both rounds will be used to inform our future, long term business support to the Voluntary Sector.

### Volunteering infrastructure Pilot.

The need for a well-resourced and co-ordinated volunteering network across the County was

highlighted in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan developed in response to Covid as part of the Kent Resilience Forum Architecture. The Volunteer Centres provided advice and support to hubs supporting those that are shielding, whilst continuing to co-ordinate those that volunteered within their local communities throughout the pandemic. They also supported volunteers who were not able to volunteer for health reasons; ensuring they remained connected and engaged.

To deliver against the action plan and the ISP we intend to work with the volunteering infrastructure to develop a pilot for county wide volunteering infrastructure, that is sustainable but offers some consistency of resource across the County. This will be run as a grant funded pilot led by Ashford Volunteer Centre so that we can develop the best approach alongside the organisations themselves. This approach will be embedded in the Civil Society Strategy (once adopted) and future arrangements for supporting volunteering infrastructure will be informed by the pilot's evaluation findings and in line with the strategy framework

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Proposed and agreed by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> June.  
This decision was taken between meetings of the cabinet committee in accordance with the procedure set out in Sections 12.31-12.36 of the Constitution.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

N/A

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



.....

signed

3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

.....

date

## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

EQIA Title	Interim infrastructure support to the Voluntary Sector 2021
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Responsible Officer	Lydia Jackson - ST SPRCA
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### Type of Activity

Service Change	No
Service Redesign	No
Project/Programme	Project/Programme
Commissioning/Procurement	No
Strategy/Policy	No
Details of other Service Activity	No

### Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate	Strategic and Corporate Services
Responsible Service	Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance
Responsible Head of Service	David Whittle - ST SPRCA
Responsible Director	David Whittle - ST SPRCA

### Aims and Objectives

This is to fund activity to support the Voluntary Sector in Kent through a Strategic Recovery Fund and Volunteering infrastructure pilot.

The purpose of these projects is to support the voluntary and community sector (VCS) to adapt post Covid and to recognise the significant contribution of volunteers over the last year in particular.

This activity will discharge a commitment made in KCC's Interim Strategic Plan to:

Develop a support offer for the VCSE which responds to the challenges identified during COVID-19 recovery to help maintain the local VCSE network whilst supporting it to be sustainable and revitalised within a post COVID-19 environment.

The Strategic Recovery Fund:

This fund was launched in collaboration with Kent Community Foundation in 2020 in response to Covid 19 and will be run again for 2021, providing small grants to VCS organisations to help them adapt their plans and strategies post Covid, enabling them to access support and expertise on topics such as:

- Business planning/operational review & strategy
- Income generation review & strategy
- Financial review & strategy
- Website upgrade/digital skills
- Marketing/social media

Based on feedback from Round 1 of this Fund we have changed the eligibility criteria to enable organisations that have been in operation for just 12 months to access the fund and stipulated that we wish to support organisations that are relatively new, with the intention of making this fund more inclusive to a range of organisations.

The Volunteering Infrastructure pilot:

The need for a well-resourced and co-ordinated volunteering network across the County was highlighted in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan developed in response to Covid. This funding will enable us to work with

the volunteering infrastructure to develop a pilot for county wide volunteering infrastructure, that is sustainable but offers some consistency of resource across the County.

By volunteering infrastructure, we mean organisations who focus on supporting and promoting volunteering across the county and provide the support and guidance organisations require to effectively recruit and retain volunteers. This could also include training and advice for businesses or public sector organisations looking to volunteer or work with volunteers.

There is a specific requirement for the pilot to look at: Ensuring volunteering is inclusive and is reaching across diverse communities, for example, support in the recruitment and retention of volunteers within BAME communities and BAME community organisations.

Both these funding proposals are based on extensive engagement with the VCS over the last 18 months through the VCS Recovery Cell, established as part of the Kent Resilience Forum architecture in response to Covid and the newly established VCS Steering Group. Both of these groups are made up of VCS representatives from a range of organisations and are independent to KCC.

The funding to be put in place recognises the diversity across the County and within the VCS; meaning that one organisation is not able to meet the support needs of a range of organisations. The intention is for the learning from these interim arrangements to inform our longer-term infrastructure support offer. This will be put in place once the Civil Society Strategy is adopted by the County Council (Dec 2021) and will provide the strategic framework for ongoing infrastructure support.

## Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?	Yes
It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?	Yes
Is there national evidence/data that you can use?	Yes
Have you consulted with stakeholders?	Yes
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?	
Voluntary organisation representatives	
Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?	No
Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?	Yes

## Section C – Impact

### Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients	No
Staff	Staff/Volunteers
Residents/Communities/Citizens	No
Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?	Yes

### Details of Positive Impacts

We believe this funding will support the voluntary sector to develop and adapt post Covid and meet the challenges ahead. By providing this support we believe that it will in turn help to enable VCS organisations to better meet the needs of their beneficiaries. It will also enable the volunteering effort we have seen during a pandemic to be continued in a sustainable and effective way into recovery and beyond. We know



that the demand for Voluntary sector organisations is predicted to increase and that these organisations are often supporting those most vulnerable in our communities and indeed many groups with protected characteristics. It is the intention of this funding to go some way to helping those organisations meet that demand.

### Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

#### 19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?	No
Details of negative impacts for Age	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating Actions for Age	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age	Not Applicable

#### 20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?	No
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Disability	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Disability	Not Applicable

#### 21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

Are there negative impacts for Sex	No
Details of negative impacts for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Sex	Not Applicable

#### 22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	Not Applicable

#### 23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race

Are there negative impacts for Race	No
Negative impacts for Race	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race	Not Applicable

#### 24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief

Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	

Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	Not Applicable
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>	
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	Not Applicable
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	Not Applicable
<b>27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>	
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	Not Applicable
<b>28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>	
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities	Not Applicable

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

Ben Watts, General Counsel

**To:** Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 22 September 2021

**Subject:** **Work Programme 2021/22**

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** None

**Future Pathway of Paper:** Standard item

**Summary:** This report gives details of the proposed work programme for the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

**Recommendation:** The **Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee** is asked to **consider** and **agree** its planned work programme for 2021/22

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme has been compiled from items on the Forthcoming Executive Decision List, from actions arising from previous meetings and from topics identified at agenda setting meetings, held 6 weeks before each Cabinet Committee meeting, in accordance with the Constitution, and attended by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and group spokesmen.
- 1.2 Whilst the Chairman, in consultation with the Cabinet Members, is responsible for the final selection of items for the agenda, this item gives all Members of the Cabinet Committee the opportunity to suggest amendments and additional agenda items where appropriate.

## 2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 27 March 2014, the County Council agreed the following terms of reference for the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee “To be responsible for those functions that fall within the Strategic and Corporate Services Directorate” and these should also inform the suggestions made by Members for appropriate matters for consideration.

## 3. Work Programme 2021/22

- 3.1 The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in the appendix to this report, and to suggest any additional topics to be considered for inclusion on the agenda of future meetings.
- 3.2 The schedule of commissioning activity that falls within the remit of this Cabinet Committee will be included in the Work Programme and is considered at

agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow Members to have oversight of significant services delivery decisions in advance.

- 3.3 When selecting future items, the Cabinet Committee should consider performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' or briefing items will be sent to Members of the Cabinet Committee separately to the agenda or separate member briefings will be arranged where appropriate.

#### 4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is important for the Cabinet Committee process that the Committee takes ownership of its work programme to help the Cabinet Members to deliver informed and considered decisions. A regular report will be submitted to each meeting of the Cabinet Committee to give updates on 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.

**5. Recommendation:** The **Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee** is asked to **consider** and **agree** its planned work programme for 2021/22

#### 6. Background Documents

None.

#### 7. Contact details

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General Counsel  
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## POLICY & RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

<b>9 November 2021</b> * <a href="#">this date is planned to stay the same</a>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work Programme 2022</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilities Management Procurement Update</li> </ul>	Agreed at P&R CC on 29 July 2020 by Rebecca Spore. <i>Likely to be a key decision</i> (James Sanderson and Karen Ripley)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Covid Finance update – <i>at 13 July mtg request for more detailed listing of underspend/carry forward to allow comparison with previous years, and ongoing monitoring of impact of covid on KCC schools' finances</i></li> </ul>	Standing item to every meeting (Zena Cooke and Dave Shipton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Society Strategy</li> </ul>	Lydia Jackson / Sarah Nichols	Added 19 July 2021
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-size: small; margin-right: 5px;">Page 65</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Inclusion and Capability</li> </ul> </div>	Sam Lain-Rose/David Whittle – to set out work going on around digital inclusion and capabilities and seek the committee's direction on the emerging strategy for this.	Added 13 July 2021 Moved from September agenda at the advice of Zena Cooke as it needs to go to CMM first.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Equality and Diversity Report</li> </ul>	Annual – standing item	Moved from September meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construction Partnership Framework – For Decision <i>incl update on framework requested at 13 July mtg</i></li> </ul>		Moved from September meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision No. TBC – Proposed freehold acquisition of the school land (Simon Langton for Boys) how does this/does this relate to the Langton Lane decision item in July?</li> </ul>	Key Decision (Rebecca Spore)	Moved from September meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kent Connects Update</li> </ul>	Phil Murphy	Moved from September meeting
<b>21 January 2022</b> * <a href="#">meeting dates are currently being reviewed – any revised dates will be confirmed as soon as possible</a>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan</li> </ul>	Annual (Zena Cooke and Dave Shipton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid Finance update – <i>at 13 July mtg request for more detailed listing of underspend/carry forward to allow comparison with previous years, and ongoing monitoring of impact of covid on KCC schools' finances</i></li> </ul>	Standing item to every meeting (Zena Cooke and Dave Shipton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Performance Dashboard - <i>at 13 July mtg request for future reports to incl a reason for any targets which have been lowered.</i></li> </ul>	Every other meeting (Rachel Kennard)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on SHQ Following discussion on 13 July, and before a key decision is made by cabinet in Jan/ Feb 22. <i>place high up agenda this time.</i></li> </ul>		Moved from September meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme 2022</li> </ul>		
<b>23 March 2022 *</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid Finance update – <i>at 13 July mtg request for more detailed listing of underspend/carry forward to allow comparison with previous years, and ongoing monitoring of impact of covid on KCC schools' finances</i></li> </ul>	Standing item to every meeting (Zena Cooke and Dave Shipton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk Management (Incl RAG ratings)</li> </ul>	Annual - Mark Scrivener	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract Management Review Group update (Exempt)</li> </ul>	Bi-annual – standing item (Michael Bridger)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme 2022</li> </ul>		
<b>10 June 2022 *</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Performance Dashboard - <i>at 13 July mtg request for future reports to incl a reason for any targets which have been lowered.</i></li> </ul>	Every other meeting (Rachel Kennard)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covid Finance update – <i>at 13 July mtg request for more detailed listing of underspend/carry forward to allow comparison with previous years, and ongoing monitoring of impact of covid on KCC schools' finances</i></li> </ul>	Standing item to every meeting (Zena Cooke and Dave Shipton)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Programme 2022</li> </ul>		

**PATTERN OF REGULAR ITEMS** (this is the pattern in a 'normal' year – 2020/21 is different due to covid-19)

<b>JANUARY</b>	<b>Annual</b>	Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
	<b>Annual</b>	Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent	Debra Exall
	<b>Six-monthly</b>	Total Facilities Management	Rebecca Spore
	<b>Quarterly</b> <b>TBC</b>	Covid Finance (as long as is needed) and then regular MTFP update – <i>will not need in Jan as well as Budget item?</i>	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
	<b>Every other meeting</b>	Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Performance Dashboard	David Whittle Rachel Kennard
<b>MARCH</b>	<b>Annual</b>	Risk Management (Including RAG ratings)	David Whittle Mark Scrivener
	<b>Annual</b>	Cyber Security	<i>Rebecca Spore?</i>
	<b>Six-monthly</b>	Contract Management Review Group update	Clare Maynard Michael Bridger
<b>MAY</b>	<b>Quarterly</b> <b>TBC</b>	Covid Finance (as long as is needed) and then regular MTFP update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
	<b>Every other meeting</b>	Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Performance Dashboard	David Whittle Rachel Kennard
<b>JULY</b>			
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>Annual</b>	Annual Equality and Diversity Report	David Whittle
	<b>Six-monthly</b>	Contract Management Review Group update	Clare Maynard Michael Bridger

	<b>Six-monthly</b>	Total Facilities Management	Rebecca Spore
	<b>Quarterly</b> <b>TBC</b>	Covid Finance (as long as is needed) and then regular MTFP update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
	<b>Every other meeting</b>	Strategic and Corporate Service Directorate Performance Dashboard	David Whittle Rachel Kennard
<b>DECEMBER</b>			



By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 11

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**From:** Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services  
 Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

**To:** Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021

**Subject:** Disposal of land at Bensted House, Kiln Court, Osbourne Court & Former SEC, Faversham ME13 7NY

**Classification:** UNRESTRICTED Report

**EXEMPT Appendix 2 – not for publication. Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers.**

**Electoral Division:** Faversham

**Summary:**

The report considers the proposed disposal of Land at Bensted House, Kiln Court, Osbourne Court & Former SEC, Lower Road, Faversham, ME13 7NY

**Recommendation(s):**

**The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee** is asked to consider **and endorse or make recommendations** to **The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services** on the proposed decision to agree to the disposal of the sites and delegate authority to:

1. The **Director of Infrastructure** in consultation with the **Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services**, to finalise the contractual terms of the disposal.
2. The **Director of Infrastructure** to authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreements required to implement the above.

**1. Introduction**

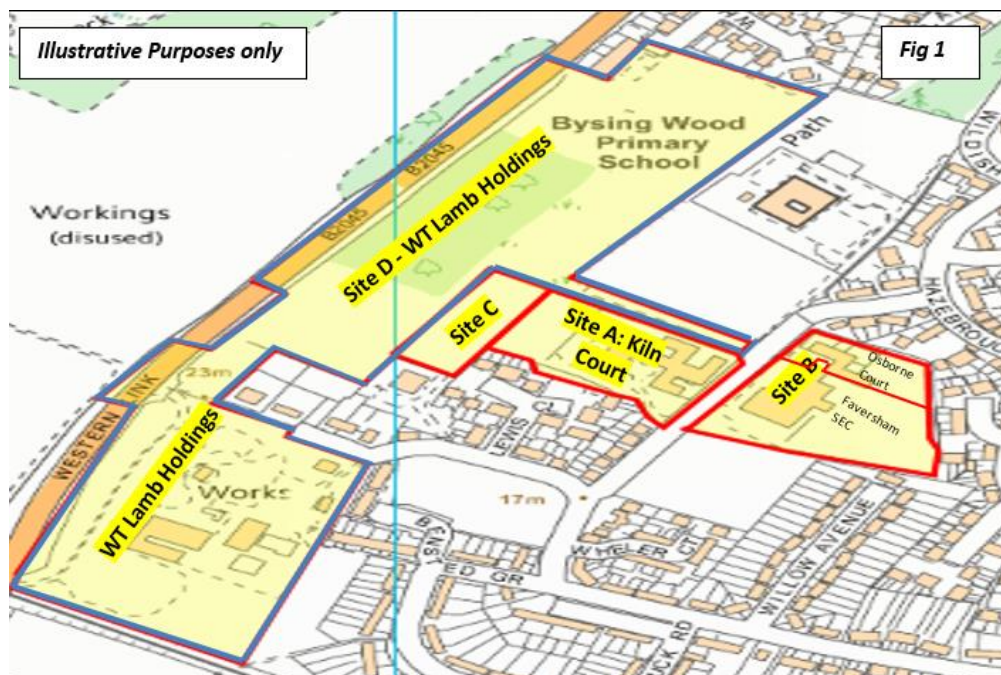
1.1. This paper relates to Kent County Council’s intention to dispose of 2 sites (6.77 acres) at Lower Road, Faversham in one transaction (“the site”):

1.1.1. Approximately 3.42 acres - Kiln Court (vacant former KCC care home) and Land at Bensted House (vacant land behind Kiln Court).

1.1.2. Approximately 3.35 acres. Osborne Court (former respite accommodation for adults with learning difficulties - occupied temporarily by guardians) and former Social Enterprise Centre (SEC). The site lies on either side of Lower Road, adjacent to Bysing Wood primary School.

## 2. Location

- 2.1 As illustrated on the site plan below and Appendix 1, Kiln Court (Site A) and the Land at Bensted House (Site C) effectively form one combined site which is located directly opposite Osborne Court and Faversham SEC (Site B).
- 2.2 The immediate surrounding area is a mixture of residential two storey detached, semi-detached and terraced primary/secondary residential housing stock.
- 2.3 Due to the split nature of the site, coupled with the state of the existing buildings, the site attracts holding costs of circa £240,000 pa.
- 2.3 To the south of the sites is an open green area / park and a primary school (Bysing Wood Primary School) to the north.
- 2.4 Site D known as the Western Link former Brickworks Site (not owned by KCC), received planning consent for 248 new residential homes under planning reference number: 14/502729/OUT and is currently under construction by Bovis Homes.
- 2.5 Site Plan showing sites A, B, C and D.



## 3. History

- 3.1. The site was declared surplus to operational requirements and suitable for disposal in 2016/17.
- 3.2. In November 2018 KCC disposals officers undertook a marketing programme for the site through an experienced local agent (Martine Waghorn) inviting offers conditional on planning consent for residential development. KCC placed the sale on hold due to uncertain market conditions at the time together with KCC's Development Company & Joint Venture arrangement business case work which

considered different disposal approaches. Following consideration of the options the site was re-released for disposal in late 2019.

3.3. KCC disposal officers obtained a highways and transport report, initial ecological report and worked up a basic design with the appointed planning consultant for a development of 99 units, to include 35% affordable housing, in line with the Swale Borough Council planning guidance.

#### **4. Marketing**

4.1. A marketing campaign was undertaken by appointed agents in April 2021 culminating in offers being requested from interested parties in May.

4.2. Considerable interest was shown during the marketing and multiple offers were received. Following bid appraisal and due diligence, a current preferred bidder has been identified as set out in the exempt appendix 2.

#### **5. Financial Considerations**

5.1 The site is surplus to KCC requirements and will generate a capital receipt to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the delivery of KCC's capital programme.

5.2 Further development fees are being kept to a minimum due to the structuring of a conditional contract with further consultant fees being initially borne by the developer.

5.3 Once the transaction completes (estimated to be in October 2022 subject to securing planning), KCC will no longer have the holding costs and liabilities associated with a vacant property.

#### **6. Asset of Community Value status**

6.1. The site was registered as an Asset of Community Value ("ACV") in 2016.

6.2. As required, notification of the proposed sale of the site was lodged with Swale Borough Council.

6.3. The relevant moratorium periods elapsed without any bids being received from community groups.

#### **7. Options**

7.1. Options for mixed uses on the site were considered during appraisals, however none were commercially viable given the site constraints.

7.2. Kent County Council was also directly approached by a national charity, and separately a neighbouring landowner, however both approaches were established to render the redevelopment unviable.

## 8. Governance

8.1. Appropriate processes have been followed to ensure best value through the open marketing of the property. Solicitors have been appointed in consultation with General Counsel, with Freeths acting on behalf of KCC.

8.2. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA). KCC will not be handling any personal data. The appointed agent is sighted of the personal data for any interested parties and the agent does not pass personal data to KCC.

8.3. Equalities Impact Assessment (EQUIA). There are no equalities impacts as a result of this decision.

## 9. Consultations

9.1. Local Member consultations were undertaken prior to marketing, no comments were received and the Local Member has been kept aware of progress regarding the site.

## 10. Recommendation(s)

### Recommendation(s):

**The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services** on the proposed decision to agree to the disposal of the sites and delegate authority to:

1. The **Director of Infrastructure** in consultation with the **Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services**, to finalise the contractual terms of the disposal.
2. The **Director of Infrastructure** to authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreements required to implement the above.

## 11. Background documents

Appendix 1 – Site plan

**12. Author Details**

<p><b>Alister Fawley – Disposal and Investment</b> 03000 419951 <a href="mailto:alister.fawley@kent.gov.uk">alister.fawley@kent.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Simon Hocken – Consultant Disposals Surveyor</b> 07824 504426 <a href="mailto:Simon.hocken@kent.gov.uk">Simon.hocken@kent.gov.uk</a></p>	<p><b>Rebecca Spore – Director of Infrastructure</b> 03000 416716 <a href="mailto:rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk">rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk</a></p>
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1 to 8  
John Goldfinch  
Court

Brickfield  
Lodge

LEWIS CLOSE

LOWER ROAD

Play Area

EI Sub Sta

BENSTED  
GROVE

Kiln Court

Training Centre

Osborne Court

Bysing Wood  
Primary School

HAZEBROUCK ROAD

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WHEELER COURT



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Kent County Council



PROPERTY AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT  
SESSIONS HOUSE  
MAIDSTONE  
ME14 1XQ

KILN COURT,  
OSBORNE COURT,  
FAVERSHAM SEC.  
AND LAND AT  
BENSTED HOUSE  
LOWER ROAD  
FAVERSHAM  
KENT  
ME13 7NY

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Faversham Sites 2



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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

**To:** Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, September 2021

**Subject:** Disposal of KCC's interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, 98 Sandling Road and Cantium House, 99-102 Sandling Road, Maidstone, Kent to Maidstone Borough Council.

**Key decision:** Yes - Expenditure or savings (capital receipt) of over £1m

**Classification:** NON-EXEMPT Report and Appendix 1 for publication.

**Past Pathway of report:**

- Property Sub-Committee, Sept 2019 (decision to conditionally acquire National Rail Land not taken)
- Property Sub-Committee Update, June 2019
- Property Sub-Committee Update, March 2018
- Property Sub-Committee Update, Sept 2016
- Property Sub-Committee, Sept 2015 (Decision No: 15/00069)

**Future Pathway of report:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** Maidstone North-East

**Summary:** In September 2016, KCC entered into a 50/50 partnership with Maidstone Borough Council to acquire the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office as discussed at the Property Sub-Committee, in September 2015.

This report considers the current position and the proposed disposal of the Council's 50% interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site to Maidstone Borough Council, plus its freehold interest of its adjoining Cantium House office building.

**Recommendation(s):**

**The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services** on the proposed decision to agree to complete the freehold disposal of KCC's interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office and Cantium House and delegate authority to:

1. The Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to finalise the contractual terms of the disposal.
2. The Director of Infrastructure to authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreement required to implement the above.

**1. Background**

- 1.1. In September 2016, the Council entered into a 50/50 partnership with Maidstone Borough Council, to acquire the freehold interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office. This was with the agreed long-term objective of intervening in the market to facilitate a comprehensive, high quality and commercially viable mixed-use redevelopment of this part of Maidstone town centre, directly opposite County Hall / SHQ, incorporating adjoining land owned by Network Rail, a project informally known as “Maidstone East Gateway”.
- 1.2. This report considers the current position of this project in the context of KCC’s strategies and financial requirements and sets out the option of selling KCC’s 50% interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site, plus its freehold interest of its adjoining Cantium House Office Building to Maidstone Borough Council.
- 1.3. The Maidstone East Gateway area comprises of:
  - The Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, c.3.5 acres jointly acquired by KCC/MBC in Sept 2016. Currently arranged as a temporary car park, warehouse and offices.
  - Cantium House, c.0.3 acres (c.18,000sqft net internal area), owned freehold by KCC. Currently occupied temporarily by KCC staff and partner organisations.
  - Maidstone East Station commuter car parks, c.3.93 acres (c.485 spaces), owned freehold by Network Rail. This operational station site forms part of the Solum Regeneration Partnership, which is a Joint Venture between Network Rail and Kier.
- 1.4. The above three properties as illustrated on the site plan at Appendix 1, are considered a key town centre regeneration site currently allocated for retail led mixed-use development within Maidstone Borough Council’s 2017 Local Plan (RMX1 (2)).
- 1.5. Since project inception, KCC has remained firmly of the view that the future redevelopment of the Maidstone East Gateway area should both incorporate and have a positive impact upon the setting of the adjacent County Hall Estate (i.e. Invicta House, Sessions House & Sessions Square) and the newly improved station setting.
- 1.6. Since the site was acquired, KCC with Maidstone Borough Council have:
  - Implemented a holding strategy of the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site comprising of the creation of a temporary car park (for general public and KCC staff use) and short-term charity lettings of existing buildings (under a temporary planning consent which expires in Jan 22) to mitigate holding costs and generate revenue.
  - Developed a comprehensive residential led RIBA stage 1 Masterplan through an appointment with Savills in relation to the Former Royal Mail

Sorting Office, Cantium House and Network Rail land following key stakeholder and market engagement.

- Explored the delivery of a comprehensive masterplan with Network Rail and its delivery partner, Solum Regeneration.
- Corporately promoted the Council owned land for quality, mixed use redevelopment within Maidstone Borough Council's Local Plan.

## 2. Options Considered

The partnership is now at a critical point and moving into delivery and the following options have been considered:

- 2.1. **Option 1** – KCC to sell its 50% stake of the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office plus its freehold interest in Cantium House to Maidstone Borough Council.
- 2.2. **Option 2** – KCC to acquire Maidstone Borough Council's 50% stake of the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office Site.
- 2.3. **Option 3** – KCC/MBC to continue to work in partnership to deliver a scheme through to practical completion (direct development or via securing a development partner).
- 2.4. A more detailed assessment is set out in the exempt appendix 2, along with the associated risk. Options have been considered and it is recommended that the Council proceed with Option 1, to dispose of the Council's 50% stake in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site plus the freehold interest in Cantium House to Maidstone Borough Council. This will enable the Council to recoup capital invested to date; meet its S.123 best consideration obligations; and enable it to focus its resources on other priority projects.

## 3. Timeline

3.1. Indicative timeline for the disposals is as follows:

Negotiation and agreement of principle heads of terms	July 21 (completed)
Appointment of external solicitors to quality assure terms	July 21 (completed)
Consultation & endorsement by KCC Property Board	July 21 (completed)
Key Decision (KCC & MBC)	Sept 21
Simultaneous Exchange on both Former Royal Mail Sorting Office & Cantium House	Dec 21
Completion & capital receipt payment for Former Royal Mail Sorting Office	Dec 21
Deferred Completion (& capital receipt payment) of Cantium House	Dec 23
Expiry of Overage provisions to capture any planning gain value (if applicable)	Dec 31

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1. As a result of the proposed disposal transactions, the Council will generate a capital receipt in relation to the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office within this 2021/22 financial year and a further capital receipt in relation to the deferred completion of Cantium House in 2023/24 towards its medium-term financial plan. The sums payable are subject to formal independent valuations to ensure the Council discharges its s.123 best consideration obligation and fiduciary duties and are set out in more detail in the exempt appendix.
- 4.2. Furthermore, there is the potential to generate a further capital receipt up to year end 2031/32 via proposed overage provisions within the proposed sale contracts.
- 4.3. In terms of revenue, the Council will also benefit from savings to its running costs, as a result of the disposal of the two properties upon completion.

#### **5. Equalities implications**

- 5.1. There are no equalities implications.

#### **6. Governance**

- 6.1. The site has been declared surplus to KCC's requirements with a key decision being sought in line with the Council's governance processes. External legal advice has been sought following discussion with General Counsel on the proposed transaction.
- 6.2. Upon completion of the sale of the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office, targeted for December 2021, it is intended that the Maidstone East Strategic Board will be disbanded which has to date been overseeing the project development.
- 6.3. To replace this, it is intended there will be different layers of governance as follows:
  - 6.3.1. A Maidstone Town Centre Strategic Board is to be established by Maidstone Borough Council, on which KCC Members and senior officer representatives will be invited as board members. Details of which are to be confirmed.
  - 6.3.2. A sub-steering group/board, focused on the regeneration, master planning and delivery of the Maidstone East area (i.e. the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office/Cantium House site led by Maidstone Borough Council and KCC's County Hall Estate) will be established. It is envisaged elected Members and senior officers from both councils will sit on this group and meet at least 6-monthly. The intention being to ensure both councils continue to collaborate positively; remain aligned; and add value/synergy to each other's respective projects.



## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1. It is considered that the disposal of KCC's 50% interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office and freehold interest in Cantium House to Maidstone Borough Council is in the best interest of the Council and best enables the development of the site to be brought forward in accordance with the emerging local plan.
- 7.2. This way forward will support housing delivery in the town with KCC continuing to have a strategic stewardship role, whilst allowing KCC to focus its resources on its strategic priorities.

## 8. Recommendation(s)

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**The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services** on the proposed decision to agree to complete the freehold disposal of KCC's interest in the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office and Cantium House and delegate authority to:

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## 9. Background Documents

- Appendix 1 – Maidstone East land ownership with site areas.  
Appendix 2 – Exempt Appendix

## 10. Contact Details

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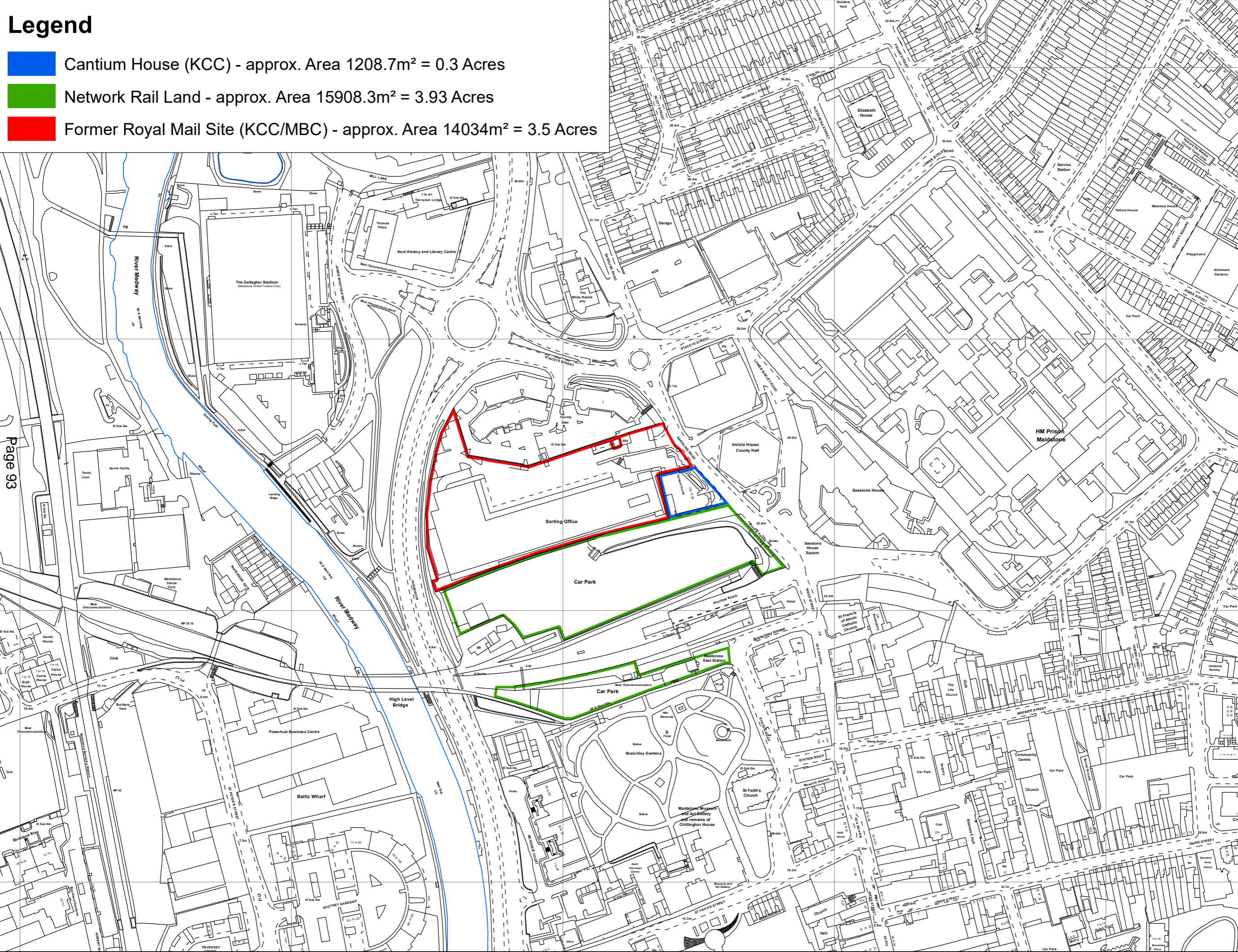
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# Legend

-  Cantium House (KCC) - approx. Area 1208.7m<sup>2</sup> = 0.3 Acres
-  Network Rail Land - approx. Area 15908.3m<sup>2</sup> = 3.93 Acres
-  Former Royal Mail Site (KCC/MBC) - approx. Area 14034m<sup>2</sup> = 3.5 Acres



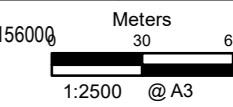
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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL  
COUNTY HALL  
MAIDSTONE  
KENT  
ME14 1XQ

MAIDSTONE EAST AREA

Drawn By	Date
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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
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