



## **AGENDA**

## **CABINET**

**Thursday, 9th December, 2021, at 10.00 am** Ask for: **Emily Kennedy**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House, Telephone: Tel: 03000 419625**  
**County Hall, Maidstone** **emily.kennedy@kent.gov.uk**

### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

1. Apologies and Substitutes
2. Declaration of Interest
3. Minutes of the meetings held on 30 September 2021 and 28 October 2021 (Pages 1 - 42)
4. Cabinet Member Updates
5. Civil Society Strategy (Pages 43 - 130)
6. Corporate Risk Register (Pages 131 - 184)
7. Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2021-22 (Pages 185 - 240)
8. Quarterly Performance Report (Pages 241 - 292)
9. Border Readiness (Pages 293 - 306)

### **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

03000 416814

**Wednesday, 1 December 2021**

**KENT COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**CABINET**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 30 September 2021.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mr D L Brazier, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr D Murphy and Mr P J Oakford

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS****9. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 1)*

Apologies were received from Mrs Prendergast.

**10. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 June 2021**

*(Item 3)*

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on 24 June 2021 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair.

**11. Cabinet Member Updates**

*(Item 4)*

1) Mrs Chandler said that the community in Kent had come together to deliver a successful summer programme to help children and young people reconnect to things they had missed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Reconnect Programme received lots of positive messages regarding the opportunities available and how valuable these were to families. Thanks were given to all the clubs, companies, organisations and volunteers who were involved with the summer programme. It was clear that children and young people and their families were able to enjoy a wide range of activities, fun days, trips and support with everything from archery to yoga on offer.

Children also engaged with a variety of online learning opportunities to help them get a head start before the start of term and pupils in Kent represented 40% of the audience of the 82,500 learning opportunities presented by Invicta Academy. There were also visits to the local leisure centres, approximately 600 free school meals were delivered to children and holiday clubs were delivering free places for children on a weekly basis. There were also free bus passes for children and young people from Year 6 to age 18 and some family passes were issued as well.

The Big Ask Survey was launched in 2021 by the Children's Commissioner for England with the aim to ask children across England to set out their priorities for improving childhood. There were 500,000 responses and they reiterated the need to address the emotional wellbeing of young people.

Through HeadStart Kent, KCC had been addressing this need for a number of years and the scheme aimed to help young people facing difficult circumstances in their lives and prevent them from experiencing common mental health problems. HeadStart Kent had enabled better support through schools, families and communities and the support is designed to be implemented by young people for young people.

KCC was also leading on a number of emotional wellbeing initiatives through MoodSpark which is a website dedicated to promoting resilience and emotional wellbeing for 10 to 16 year olds.

A HeadStart Kent and Kent Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned programme had rolled out counselling available 365 days a year via the website, Kooth. Through the HeadStart Kent Programme, 52,423 young people had benefited, with nearly 15,000 accessing and completing online support through Kooth. HeadStart Kent were also project managing the roll out of the mental health support teams in schools in Kent and Medway. From September 2021 until March 2024, there were to be an additional 13 teams.

The government had funded the Wellbeing for Education Return Project which through The Education People had given training and resources to schools and colleges, supporting staff and pupils. 210 schools and 100% of colleges in Kent had accessed the training.

Kent and Medway Bereavement Service was to deliver a specialist bereavement service to children and young people between the ages of 3 ½ and 25 years old who were experiencing complex grief or traumatic bereavement.

2) Mrs Chandler reported on behalf of Mrs Prendergast.

From the extensive media coverage, people were aware that the transport industry had been suffering from significant shortages of skilled drivers. Much of the media attention had focussed on the HGV and delivery sector and the impact on the supply of goods. However, the public transport sector was equally affected and this had impacted on bus, coach and taxi operators. Earlier in the week, David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and Mrs Prendergast wrote to the Kent MPs highlighting the increasing impact on home to school transport. The problems with access to fuel had exacerbated the issue. KCC was struggling with home to school transport and it was acknowledged that parents would be angry and frustrated. Reassurance was given that everything possible was being done to mitigate this.

A letter had been written by the Cabinet Members for Education and for Integrated Children's Services to the Secretary of State for Education to raise concerns on high needs and special needs funding pressures. Local authorities were having to manage increasing demand under extreme budget deficits where spend has spiralled both nationally and locally to the point of unsustainability. The letter offered the Secretary of State an opportunity to meet to discuss this further.

The Kent Test was taken by Kent's pupils on Thursday, 9 September and testing for 'out of county' pupils took place on Saturday, 11 September. A significant amount of work was carried out by officers beforehand to ensure the testing environments

remained Covid-safe and were in line with government guidance. Where necessary alternative arrangements were made to ensure that no self-isolating child was compelled to attend their original test date. This year, additional training sessions were provided to schools on making the best use of the Head Teacher Assessment process and highlighted the importance of referring all suitable pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and provided with support, where requested. Results were to be made available on 21 October before the national closing date for secondary applications on 31 October. Unlike in 2020, it was not necessary to provide pupils with additional preferences as parents would be able to apply knowing whether their child was eligible to attend a Kent grammar school.

There was a 16 to 19 review which was taking place aiming to improve the options and life chances of Kent's young people by enhancing education, skills and training opportunities. The call for evidence closed on 31 July and the findings were being collated. The evidence, as well as other information was to be utilised to ensure that KCC worked in collaboration with employers, further and higher education. Work was being done with the Kent and Medway Employment Taskforce addressing issues around our 'youth offer' and was identifying areas of work with leverage to reduce the number of young people not in education, training or in employment.

On 13 September, following advice from the 4 UK Chief Medical Officers, the Health and Social Care Secretary announced that pupils aged 12 to 15 years old were to be offered one dose of the Pfizer/Biontech Covid-19 vaccine with the aim of protecting children from catching Covid-19 and reducing transmission in schools. Locally, health services had been preparing to deliver a school-based vaccination programme in line with the successful model used for other vaccinations such as tetanus and polio. This was to be supported by GPs and community pharmacies and with alternative provision for those who were educated at home, in secure services or in specialist settings. Invitations were due to go out and officers were engaged with health colleagues to support and advise on the roll out.

Kent Supported Employment Service had been doing excellent work supporting people with physical disabilities, learning difficulties, autism and sensory issues to move into paid, sustainable work. Working with people aged 16 to 70, the service also supported employers with recruitment. From September 2021, the team was moving into mainstream schools to help support them in providing employment opportunities for all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Children were to be encouraged to name employment on their ECHPs from year 9. Training was to include embedding supported employment into the curriculum through head teachers, SENCOs, parents and teacher buy-in. KCC was the first council in the UK to introduce this in all mainstream schools.

3) Mr Brazier said that Highways and Transport launched its Road Safety Strategy – Vision Zero on 15 September which showed how the target of 0 road deaths was to be achieved in Kent by 2050. The Strategy was about the whole of society working together for the safer operation of roads. KCC's partners attended the launch event at Manston Airport. Kent Police, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue, logistics companies and parish councils attended, amongst others. There were outside demonstrations of autonomous emergency braking, intelligence speed assistance and lane control. A series of speakers were programmed, chaired by the Leader, Mr Gough and the keynote speech was given by Prince Michael of Kent.

A group of officers and Members was being established to take the Strategy forward progress towards and measure progress towards 'EDWARD' -every day without a road death. The event was organised with great care and attention to detail and according to those who attended including the media, it was a great success.

Mr Brazier and the Leader had received a copy of the authority's Bus Service Improvement Plan which was due to be submitted to the Department for Transport by the end of October. Produced in cooperation with the bus operators in Kent, it was already considered to be a fine piece of work and by Spring 2022, KCC had to demonstrate an enhanced partnership with operators. Following adjudication, the Department for Transport would be making its funding offer. There had been extensive consultation with Kent's residents and they had said they wanted more buses, later running buses and improved timekeeping.

Mr Brazier and Mr Murphy were taking part in a series of district meetings to discuss how they can work with districts to mutual advantage.

Active Travel Tranche 3 proposals were being discussed with Members and these discussions had been robust and there would be further consultation. There had already been a formal decision relating to a cycle path linking two other existing cycleways between Dymchurch to Palmmarsh on the outskirts of Hythe. There was a scheme in Faversham to introduce 20 mph zones to a substantial part of the town and it was considered the town was in many ways ideal for the scheme.

A 'School Street' had successfully been installed in Southborough whereby trained school staff closed the road outside the school at arrival and departure for the safety of the children and to encourage journeys to schools without cars. This had involved several years of design work and extensive local consultation. Only particular locations were suitable for 'School Streets' and another in Margate had been working well for some time. Other schools had been applying to be considered for the further schemes.

There had been a meeting with a team from Moto, the motorway service area operators. Moto had been formulating a proposal to construct a 200 slot HGV parking facilities near Junction 2a of the M26. In simple terms, it was a matter for KCC in that this would need to connect to KCC's network though it would be subject to planning consent from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. This scheme would go some way to alleviating the deficit of HGV parking.

4) Miss Carey said the end of lockdown has led to the return of full capacity of household waste and recycling centres from 19 July. The demand had increased because some districts had suspended their garden waste collections. There were 105,100 visits a month. Despite the surge, KCC had been able to match demand to capacity because of the booking system. The booking system had been introduced to control the number of people on site at any one time, to ensure social distancing and reduce queues disrupting local traffic.

There were no longer any limits on the number of visits to centres. Bookings were available online 24 hours a day or by phone in office hours. A few letters had been received from people who had been under the impression they could only book online but this was not the case. Same day bookings were to be trialled at 4 sites and details were to be shared. The booking system had made it easier to survey users

and KCC had been able to get comments on individual sites. The majority of those who had responded said they valued the security and convenience of the booking system. There had been a consultation to canvass the public on whether to retain the booking system which had received more responses than any other KCC consultation. There had been over 42,000 views and over 10,000 responses. A report was to come to the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee and Members would be able to add their views. Thanks were given to everyone who had responded.

KCC had been shortlisted for the LGC award for Climate Response. The Flood and Water Management Team were one of the finalists in Green Europe RegioStars Awards. This was for work with the Interreg NSR BEGIN Project which enabled KCC to deliver blue-green infrastructure.

5) Mr Murphy said congratulations to Simon Jones as he had been appointed on a permanent basis as Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport. There were 3 matters that had come to the fore for the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation. The first of these was the decision on the Swanscombe Peninsula. It was hoped the government would come to a decision regarding the status of the Peninsula by mid-November.

Secondly, Eurostar had announced that they would not be stopping trains at Ebbsfleet or Ashford International for the foreseeable future. This was a disappointment for the county as Eurostar was seen as one of the enablers of growth in the area.

The other issue was the building of homes at Ebbsfleet and there was a target of 525 homes this year and 246 had been built. From dialogue with developers, there had been issues with labour and a lack of skilled workers. Labour costs have increased from 5 to 10% onto the build cost.

The Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit had also affected the buildings of new homes. Furlough had had an effect as many artisans working on sites were self-employed and some had chosen to wait until the end of the scheme to return to work.

There had been problems with the supply of materials such as timber, which was mostly imported to the UK and in some cases, there had been a 250% rise in the cost of the timber due to import costs. There had also been problems with obtaining cement base products, bricks and roof tiles. This was having the effect of developers having to look for alternatives and then having to go back to the planning authorities for permission. The lack of HGV drivers was also having an effect. It was thought that these issues applied across the country.

KCC was working closely with DEFRA, HRMC and Dover District Council to get the Inland Border Facilities at Dover running. The government had announced there would be a delay on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures on goods including live animals, products of animal origin, high risk foods, plants and plant materials. The government had announced that documentary checks due to commence on 21 October 2021 and physical checks due to commence on 1 January 2022 were postponed. From 1 January 2022, importers were to be required to make pre-notifications only with certification but it was unclear what this would mean in practice.

From 1 July 2022, all documentary and physical checks were to commence across the UK. In terms of Dover, 130 people had been recruited but there were concerns that following staff training, there might not be work for the staff.

A full briefing was to be given regarding broadband on 15 October. Building Digital UK (BDUK) had announced that there would be a £203million investment over 3 to 5 years to improve broadband connectivity. In 2019, the proportion of properties in Kent with gigabit capable broad capabilities was 7.8% but now it was 29.6% and tribute was paid to the Broadband Team. In terms of national voucher scheme, the take up had been £3.5million in Scotland, £3.3million in Wales and in Kent, it was £6.14million. This showed the importance of broadband to Kent's residents. The government was to publish a paper addressing 'hard to reach' areas.

Work was being done with the Head of Strategic Planning on a new entry level Town and Planning Apprenticeship. KCC was to bid on to get places for apprenticeships as there was a shortage of trained government officers in the county and these were needed to progress the economy of the county.

There had been a multi-disciplinary call about Stodmarsh, where there had been concerns about potential leakage of nitrates and phosphates into water systems. This was particularly affecting the Canterbury and Ashford areas as well as the North Downs. This issue had the potential to hold up development of up to 20,000-30,000. Kent has one of the highest densities of housing requirement in England and therefore, it was particularly important to resolve the problems at Stodmarsh.

6) Mr Hill said all 99 libraries were open after an enormous amount of work to re-open 56 libraries in August. There was to be an engagement process to inform future shape of the library service.

The Summer Reading Challenge was a success and there was still time for children to complete the challenge. Around 12,000 children participated, online or physically and over 6000 had completed the challenge. Mr Hill was making a visit to Brockhill Country Park to give out medals to the successful children.

There had been significant pressure on Ceremonies Services during the summer months, as many people had delayed their ceremonies due to the pandemic and the constraints on how many people could attend. However, the service was back to normal and open for bookings. 60% more ceremonies were carried out on top of the normal amount pre-pandemic. 3624 ceremonies had been completed since April 2021, of which around 2500 were during July, August and the first half of September.

Turner Contemporary had their tenth anniversary event on 16 September which attracted around 400 people down to Margate and many senior figures in Kent attended. The new director had been announced. Clarrie Wallis was a Senior Curator from the Tate and it was felt that it would be a very successful appointment.

Mr Hill went to Southborough on 18 September 2021 where there was a celebration of the opening of Southborough Town Council's hub. There was a positive reaction from the public to the library and medical centre within the new hub.



7) Mr Sweetland said steps were being taken to engage with Kent residents. KCC was a large organisation which covered a wide range of services and residents had questions on specific things we do and also more general questions about what KCC does and how. KCC had introduced 'Ask Us Anything' and the information coming from this would help to inform what messages need to be clearer for the public and what signposting was needed to other services. This was supplementary to the other ways KCC was engaging with residents and the trial had been successful.

KCC's e-newsletter had more than 2600 subscribers and there was an aim to get more subscribers and more residents involved. The next circulation challenge was to get 20,000 new subscribers.

As well as sharing information and guidance about KCC's activities, it was a great way for residents to get news and updates about the way KCC worked. The e-newsletter also was a source of advice and directed people where to get help and support, when needed. The 25<sup>th</sup> issue was to go out on 6 October 2021 and all were encouraged to sign up and to give feedback. Thanks were given to Andrew Bose and all others who put the e-newsletter together.

There was a residents' engagement website called 'Let's Talk Kent' and it had been busy with important consultations. An enormous number of responses had been received on the Household Waste Recycling Centres consultation which was to close on 30 September 2021 and it was the largest response KCC had ever received. There was a second round of Active Travel consultations closing on 25 October and the consultation on the Draft Adult Social Care Strategy was to close on 24 October 2021. There were 3 other key consultations live on the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy; Community Mental Health and Well-being Services; and the Civil Society Strategy.

Other ways that residents were able to stay informed including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram LinkedIn and NextDoor.

8) Mr Oakford said that the Budget Review Process had started and results from public consultation had come in and the public had indicated what was important to them. It was noted that 5 times the number of residents had commented on the consultation relating to Household Waste Recycling Centres than on the Budget Consultation.

KCC was seeing continuing pressures relating to Covid-19 through budget process and greater demand and this was of great concern. KCC was to review this with Cabinet Members and Directors through a set of Budget Pressure Review meetings. Work to explore how KCC uses buildings was progressing well. A new style of working environment was being trialled within Invicta House and feedback was to be obtained from staff.

There were pressures with regard to the construction of schools due to the lack of labour, inflation, lack of building materials, etc. The same issues discussed by Mr Murphy in his update around the construction industry had impacted KCC and the school build programme.

9) The Leader said KCC had sought to respond to the situation with fuel and the responsibility for leading on that matter was with central government. Nonetheless,

KCC had pursued the issue through the Kent Resilience Forum with a focus on the impact on KCC's services.

There had continued to be considerable interest in living standards for poorer residents with the impact of energy inflation, with some with ending of furlough and the end of £20 uplift of Universal Credit. The government had announced the Household Support Fund to be distributed through local authorities. The 'Levelling Up' White Paper was to be published by the government included in which was expected to be more information about 'County Deals'.

## **12. Revenue and Capital Monitoring**

*(Item 5)*

*Zena Cooke, Corporate Director, Finance and Mr Richard Smith, Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health were in attendance for this item.*

1) Mr Oakford said the report was in a revised format and contained additional information on reserves, the treasury position and council tax. The report was based on the position in May 2021, updated with significant items up until the end of July 2021. The forecast revenue position excluding schools and Covid-19 was a £9.7 million overspend. The majority of the overspend was within Adult Social Care. This included increased cost of care packages for people with learning difficulties and older people. There had been an increase in numbers and the cost for clients with mental health difficulties as well as changes in support for disabled clients with more receiving care through supported living services and less through direct payments. The reported Covid-19 position showed a forecast spend of £32.1million. There were corporately held Covid-19 related budgets of £16.1million and the remainder of the spend was to be met through the Emergency Covid-19 Reserve, resulting in a situation of 'breaking even' for the year. Without the additional government funding, KCC's forecast outturn would have been £32.1million higher.

The Capital Forecast showed an underspend of £42.7million, with £57.3million relating to re-phasing and £14.6million as a 'real' overspend. The Schools Delegated Budget had reported a £49.6million overspend which reflected the impact of high demand for additional SEN support and high cost per child of high need placements.

The Treasury Management position was consistent with regular reports to the Governance and Audit Committee which showed the council's level of external and internal debt and investments. The management of the council's Treasury was governed by the Treasury Strategy. KCC's strategy for borrowing was to seek an appropriate low risk balance between low interest rates and long-term certainty over financial cost.

Accumulated external borrowing had amounted to over £850million, largely consisting of long-term maturity debt of fixed rate interest. Only around 15% of the debt was due to mature over the next 5 years. The Investment Strategy sought to take an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses through defaults, maintain adequate liquidity and securing reasonable returns. The investments included internally managed short term and medium term investments and long term external investments in pooled funds.

Monitoring of district council tax collection had become even more important in the wake of reductions in the council tax base following the Covid-19 pandemic. There had been an impact from increased council tax reduction discounts and reduced collection rates. The scale and pace of recovery on both of these elements would be key in the 2022-23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan Strategy as compensation from government had so far only extended to extending the treatment of the in-year collection losses from 1 year to 3 years and for one grant in 2021-22 to compensate for the reduction in the collectible tax base.

2) Ms Cooke said the outcome of the Spending Review would be particularly important, given the point made that without the one-off Covid-19 grants that were received late in the last financial year, an overspend would have been reported. There was an ongoing impact of Covid-19 on the cost of services and this was to be monitored closely. The high needs budget deficit was the single biggest financial risk for KCC and work was being done with the service to stem, in particular, in-year increase in cost, which was not being experienced elsewhere in the country.

Cabinet Members commented and asked questions:

- Mrs Chandler said that changes to services for care leavers had not been about cutting costs and KCC as corporate parent were working to promote the independence of care leavers.
- The Leader said that there had been concerns that suppressed demand in social care would come back following the pandemic and if it was not in terms of numbers, that cases would increase in complexity.
- In response to the Leader's comments, Ms Cooke said that Finance was working closely with colleagues in the directorates and with analytics to look at modelling and forecasting moving forward.
- Mr Smith said that during the pandemic people had not been able to access preventative services so acuity of need of those coming into the system was greater. There had been a marked increase in need for mental health services. There had been pressures on the workforce and it had been difficult to recruit and retain staff. One of the strengths in Kent was the level of detail in the data held and this would help to look at what could be done to address the changes in demand. There had been changes relating to hospital discharge and people during the pandemic had been placed in very costly placements. Conversations were ongoing with NHS colleagues about working to address this issue and measures were in place to address the changes in demand.
- Mrs Bell said that an increase in activity was not always negative. An increase in supported living for people with learning disabilities meant that fewer people were in residential care and while this potentially cost more, the benefits for individuals needed to be taken into consideration. There were long term benefits from providing extra provision to allow more people to live independently in the community.
- Mr Oakford said there was a huge amount of concern about the level of overspend through the coming year and in real terms there was not more money for next year than the current year, unless something surprising was to

happen through the Spending Review. One of the greatest concerns was that some of £31million of Covid-19 money was one off and if related costs recurred, this would be on top of the other pressures and costs would need to offset during the budget setting process.

- Miss Carey said that people had a right to services and if people were eligible, the service had to be delivered. During lockdown, district authorities were collecting more waste with people being at home and therefore, there was more waste for processing. KCC had tried to manage demand and in working with district authorities, the amount of waste people were putting out for collection had reduced. However, recycling rates were still below 50% and the best recycling in the county was 65%. If waste was sorted and not contaminated, this material had value but ultimately, the best way forward is to reduce waste.

3) RESOLVED to note and agree the recommendations in the report.

### **13. Spending Review 2021** (Item 6)

*Dave Shipton, Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy was in attendance for this item.*

1) Mr Oakford said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a Spending Review on 7 September 2021 and was for the next 3 financial years which was a welcome change following recent 1 year settlements. A 3 year settlement would allow KCC to plan. The outcome was to be announced on 27 October with Autumn Budget. The deadline for submissions to review by external stakeholders was 30 September. Thanks were given to Dave Shipton and the Finance Team for the huge amount of work put into the report within a short time. It was hoped that government would take the submission into consideration.

2) Mr Shipton said that the responses from local authorities were likely to have commonality and cover similar points. KCC welcomed the 3 year settlement and KCC's submission included the impact of previous settlements since the last multi-year Spending Review, which covered 2016-2019. There had been two subsequent 1 year settlements in 2020-21 and 2021-22. In revenue terms, the submission notes that over this period an additional £221million was raised in Kent through council tax, which had increased KCC's budget in cash terms but there had been a £40.5million reduction in grants from central government (excluding Covid-19). The submission questioned whether this mix of council tax and grants was sustainable moving forward and it was felt there had been an over reliance on council tax. Spending had increased by £500million over the same period and therefore, there was a shortfall in real terms.

Total capital spending had been £1.6billion over that period, of which over £324 million had been funded by borrowing which had an effect on revenue budgets. KCC had a comparatively high level of long-term legacy debt to fund previous capital spending, and if KCC had to take out additional borrowing to fund future capital investment, the financing cost of that could take a significant proportion of any future council tax receipts, if there was not adequate grant funding as part of the Spending Review settlement.

Most of the focus in the submission was on the overall quantum to make sure that local authorities had sufficient resources to meet the demand.

Other comments made in the submission included:

- The adequacy of dedicated schools grant (DSG) and reference was made to the high needs block.
- Evidence was given around social care pressures with increasing complexity of cases and higher costs from clients coming into the system.
- Focus had also been given to the additional £5.4 billion for new social care reforms and whether that was adequate.
- Council tax reform was long overdue.
- Funding reforms through the Fair Funding Review which had been delayed.

3) The Leader said that he welcomed the points made in the report regarding the importance of areas such as infrastructure, economic development, 'levelling up'. KCC's ability to play a role in this was dependent on the degree of increasing demand-led expenditures and the ability to flex some resources into those other areas.

The Leader asked for the wording on 6<sup>th</sup> paragraph of page 16 of the submission which said:

*The plan to allow self-funders to access care at the same personal cost as local authority supported clients is likely to lead to increased costs for existing and new local authority clients and needs to be funded as part of the £5.4bn package for social care over 2022-23 to 2024-25.*

to be changed to reflect that clients would need to be funded regardless of the adequacy of the allocation from the £5.4billion package.

4) RESOLVED to note the timetable for SR2021 and endorse the Spending Review submission.

#### **14. Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report** (Item 7)

*Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst was in attendance for this item.*

1) Rachel Kennard outlined the report for Quarter 1, reporting results until the end of June 2021. Overall, the position was positive. 22 of the KPIs were 'RAG' rated as green, 9 rated as amber and 2 performing below target rated as red.

2) The 2 areas that had been 'RAG' rated as red were:

- Under customer services percentage of calls to contact point which were answered. The service had been impacted by staff leaving and a high sickness rate with Covid-19 being a contributing factor. A recruitment drive had started in June, with some new advisors put in post by the end of June and others in early July. Improvements to the answer rate were expected for Quarter 2.

- There had been an improvement for the KPI under Children, Young People and Education, 'ECHPs issued within 20 weeks'. The KPI was based on a 12 month rolling average and there had been an increase of 4 percentage points on the figure for the year to end of Quarter 4. The trend over the last 4 Quarters was significantly statistically upward.

3) Further positive points from the report were noted:

- The KPI relating to developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought had improved from RAG-rated as red in Quarter 4 to green in Quarter 1.
- In Public Health, NHS Health Checks were rated green for Quarter 1 following the introduction of amended targets which reflected the disruption to delivery due to Covid-19.

4) It was also noted during Members' discussion of the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report:

- There had been good results in terms of customer satisfaction of 94% for the Registration Service.
- The figure was improving for ECHPs issued within 20 weeks and the numbers going forward from Quarter 1 were to improve more. There had been increased demand and there was preventative work ongoing.
- There had been significant achievements in the measures in the Children's Social Care area, particularly in the light of the pandemic.
- The improvement in the KPI relating to developer contributions was welcomed as these were contributing towards the cost of waste-related infrastructure.
- It was highlighted that Kent's Plan Bee Facebook page had 950 followers.
- It was anticipated that the KPI relating to customer services percentage of calls to contact point which were answered, would see significant improvement in the next Quarter.
- Improvements to the KPI relating to FOI requests were sought as there were legal and reputational repercussions.

5) Resolved that the Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 1 be noted.

## **15. Building Back Better - Our Plan for Health and Social Care** (Item 8)

1) Mrs Bell introduced the report regarding 'Building Back Better' and advised that the government had announced its plans for Health and Social Care, particularly in relation to funding. It had been proposed that £5.4billion was to be invested into

Adult Social Care over the following 3 years but it was not clear how this would be allocated to local authorities. There were elements that would need to be taken into consideration such as client contributions to their care, funding of the cap, the effect of demand as more people become eligible for council support for their care. KCC awaited further details and the White Paper but consideration was being given to the potential impact on the Budget.

Almost all self-funding clients paid higher fees for care costs than those funded by the local authority. The proposed changes would possibly lead to the reduction or elimination of the fee differential between self-funders and those funded by the local authority. It was unclear whether the risk was to be borne by providers whose income would be reduced or by the local authority paying higher fees. It was acknowledged that either scenario would potentially have a big impact on the sustainability of the provider market or severe additional pressure on council budgets.

Spending on social care accounted for half of KCC's budget, supporting not only older people but people of working age with disabilities. The additional funding from the National Insurance Contributions Levy was to cover the cost of implementing the changes set out in the proposals but there was still an expectation that the demographic and cost pressures would have to be met through council tax, the social care precept and long-term efficiencies.

The appendix to the report highlighted situation with regard to care in rural areas and the challenges including high demand for services for people over 65 and a recent decrease in contracting of residential care provision. It recommended to the government that as well as increasing funding in the Spending Review to meet rising cost and unmet need before 2023, the government enshrine in law that a dedicated proportion of the levy be allocated to social care.

2) The Leader said thanked Dave Shipton and Michael Thomas-Sam for the report.

3) RESOLVED to note the report.

## **16. Kent County Council Net Zero Target Progress Report**

*(Item 9)*

*Ben Watts, General Counsel; Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director for Growth and Communities and Deborah Kapaj, Sustainable Estates Programme Manager were in attendance for this item.*

1) Miss Carey introduced the report which was focused on the work KCC was doing to achieve Net Zero for KCC services and estates by 2030. It was important that there was proper measurement of what was achieved but the achievement of Net Zero was a clear aim. KCC had been measuring its carbon emissions since 2005 and these were reported as part of the Quarterly Performance Monitoring. The pace and focus on reduction of carbon emissions had increased here, nationally and internationally. £20.6million of funding had been awarded to KCC projects from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, which was significantly more than other local authorities in the south east had been awarded.

There was an obligation to spend the funding and deliver the projects before the end of March 2022 and the team had been working across the whole council to delivering the projects and to reduce KCC's carbon emissions.

2) Ms Kapaj said that a huge amount of progress had been made since the target had been set. There was a very detailed action plan and much of the action plan had been initiated and progress was being made on reducing KCC's emissions. Details of the plan and roadmap were included as appendices to the report.

Wider work was ongoing through the Climate Change Network which was overseen by the Kent & Medway Environment Group. Alongside KCC's commitments, the districts had plans for their areas. More would need to be done to support businesses who would not have the expertise or resources.

3) Ms Holt-Castle said there were 3 areas that would need to be tackled in order to meet the Kent target of Net Zero by 2050: roads and transport, domestic housing and industrial commercial buildings. These areas made up 90% of emissions and support was needed from central government in terms of national legislation and in terms of funding to incentivise in those areas.

4) Mr Watts said it was vital that KCC stayed within the legal and governance confines. The projects were complicated to deliver and work was moving at pace, requiring significant resources.

In response to questions, it was noted:

- The climate had already changed and there would be more work with adapting to climate change. KCC was ahead of other local authorities and in a strong position in terms of the climate change agenda. KCC had identified the risks and mitigations to be put in place to deal with climate change. It was acknowledged that even when targets are met, climate change would still have an effect in the county.
- KCC's fleet of vehicles were moving towards being fully electric and there was a fleet of 39 (soon to be 48) electric vans which were being lent out to businesses for free. This was done through Highways England funding the capital costs and KCC meeting the revenue costs. Low Carbon Across the South East (LoCASE) had tremendous reach in terms of helping businesses move into low energy sectors but also in supporting them to reduce their carbon emissions. It was felt there was increased interest as businesses could save money and measures such as 'greening' also meet social responsibility. New technology and innovations would assist in reaching the 2050 target.
- It was noted that the grants from government came with very tight timescales, it was difficult for local authorities to respond thoroughly. KCC was lobbying government on this point so that quality projects with long-lasting impacts could be delivered.

5) RESOLVED to note the report.





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## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### CABINET

MINUTES of a meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 28 October 2021.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Miss S J Carey, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P M Hill, OBE, Mr D Murphy, Mr P J Oakford and Mrs S Prendergast

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

**17. Mrs Ann Allen, MBE**

*(Item )*

Members stood to observe a moment of silence in memory of Mrs Allen.

**18. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 1)*

Apologies were received from Mrs Bell.

**19. Cabinet Member Updates**

*(Item 3)*

1) The Leader read Mrs Bell's update:

Informed by a range of engagement events and co-production workshops earlier in the year, formal consultation on the new Adult Social Care Strategy 2022 - 2027 ran between 13 October and 24 October. The person-centred strategy summarises how it was planned to make changes over the coming years, focussed on putting the person first, improving and innovating across services, and measuring what matters. Contributions to the consultation were being evaluated and reviewed. A report on the feedback and the updated strategy was to be discussed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 1 December.

Sunday 10 October was World Mental Health Day and to mark the occasion this year, KCC's Public Health team launched the Kent and Medway Listens project. The project aimed to uncover and explore the issues that were impacting on the mental health and wellbeing of communities across Kent and to create a multi-agency action plan. Contributions to the project could be made at [www.kent.gov.uk/kentandmedwaylistens](http://www.kent.gov.uk/kentandmedwaylistens)

Congratulations were given to the KCC Public Health team whose suicide prevention programme won the Suicide Prevention Services category at the recent National Mental Health Awards. This was a remarkable achievement and was testimony to the approach adopted in Kent which highlights initiatives to encourage multi-agency working.

Mrs Bell was delighted by the success of the Rethink Partners organisation who gained national recognition at the HealthTech Awards in September by winning the Major Project Go Live category. Rethink Partners together with Alcove delivered a £1.5million digital care project “Kara” on behalf of the council last year. By the end of July 2020, they had successfully equipped over 1,700 vulnerable and digitally disadvantaged adults in Kent with video ‘carephones’, so that they could talk to friends, family, carers and other professionals, via video, when they were unable to meet due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Princess Christian’s Farm in Hildenborough was to stay open under new management. A new provider, KASBAH (Kent Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus), had been awarded the contract to provide services to disabled people at the farm and they were to take over management of the service on 1 November. Thanks were given to those using the farm and their families. KCC had gone through the process of engaging a new provider and it was acknowledged it had been a worrying and unsettling time for many people. It was felt that Princess Christian's would go from strength to strength under its new management and Mrs Bell was looking forward to visiting the farm in the near future.

2) Mrs Chandler said that earlier in October, KCC had provided oral evidence to the Work and Pensions Committees inquiry into Children in Poverty: No Recourse to Public Funds, giving an account of Kent’s experience of assisting children and families subject to NRPF conditions, particularly those who were born in the UK. Kent’s evidence was presented by the Assistant Director for Integrated Children’s Services. The key areas addressed included discretionary welfare payments, the Household Support Fund and the challenges presented on how KCC would support NRPF through this fund. The burden placed on KCC’s Care Leavers was also addressed. Thanks were given to Penny Ademuyiwa, Assistant Director, for representing Kent County Council at the Select Committee and Mrs Chandler was looking forward to the seeing the outcome of that piece of work carried out by the Work and Pensions Committee.

It was National Carers Week and there were posts on KNet and on KCC’s social media pages which shared the views and experiences of our apprentices within the 18+ Care Leavers Service. A survey had been sent out to all the young adults KCC supported, to get feedback on their experiences. KCC needed to ensure that the utmost was being done to support young people in achieving the best possible outcomes as they move into independence.

On 1 November, it was the Regional Adoption Agency’s 1st Birthday. Adoption Partnership South East (APSE) was committed to timely decisions regarding ‘matching’ and securing permanence for children and during the last 12 months a significant number of adoptive homes for children within the South East had been secured, meaning children were kept close by and offered support directly both before and after the adoption order was granted. Adoption Partnership South East was supporting over 500 adopted children and their families either directly or indirectly and thanks were given to all teams involved, particularly the Participation & Engagement Team whose commitment to this work had been paramount.

The nominations for 2021’s Try Angle awards were open and were to close on 5 November. The Try Angle Awards recognised the outstanding efforts and

achievements of young people and groups who really tried their best whether at school, work, college, in business or in their wider community across Kent. Nominations could be made at the Try Angle Awards website.

Mrs Chandler attended the Kent Fostering, Foster Carer Award ceremony which was held on 13 October at Detling Showground which celebrated the achievements of foster carers and KCC staff for their outstanding contribution to the lives of our children and young people in care. Children, social workers, and other foster carers had put forward a record number of 204 nominations to a panel of judges who presented a total of 41 awards, including outstanding care of children, care of disabled children, keeping brothers and sisters together and permanency. Mrs Chandler expressed her gratitude for all our wonderful foster carers in Kent, and her pleasure in attending the awards to meet them and hear their stories.

Tribute was paid to Ann Allen who also attended the event. Ann worked tirelessly and selflessly as a corporate parent on behalf of Kent's most vulnerable children for many years and would be missed enormously.

3) Mrs Prendergast said that KCC had welcomed newly appointed headteachers - a first face-to-face meeting of this type since the lockdown. Mrs Chandler and Mrs Prendergast met just under 40 headteachers to talk about their roles and share their appreciation of the vital role head teachers play in the education of our children and young people. As part of a yearlong induction programme for new headteachers, Matt Dunkley – our Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education – the Directors of Education and other key staff shared some useful information about Kent, the education directorate structures, the key services and the wide range of support on offer to schools. The feedback from the headteachers was very positive.

A number of schools had expressed concern that defunding the International Baccalaureate Career Related Programme and the individual subjects would have a devastating impact on the provision of post-16 pathways and progression opportunities in schools offering these qualifications. Flexibility and a variety of pathways were considered important elements for post-16 education in the public sector - the implementation of the Careers Pathway and Diploma subject courses had been a model of collaboration between the County, schools, teachers and the awarding organisation - which was at risk if funding was removed from these programmes.

A joint letter had been sent to the Secretary of State, Nadim Zahawi, stating that whilst it was understood that government policy was to encourage the uptake of T-Levels, it was KCC's view that a more flexible pathway was still necessary for students who were uncertain of their future intentions at the age of 15/16 and were looking for programmes of study covering multiple pathways.

KCC had continued to offer support to schools around Covid measures to help mitigate the risk of children missing education. As schools returned following half term and in the runup to Christmas, KCC was to provide through various channels, guidance to Headteachers, reminding them about the DfE guidance and encouraging them to continue carrying out their own risk assessments to protect the school community.

4) Mr Brazier said that a Key Decision was to be enacted on 29 October regarding the publication and submission of a pre-settlement funding for Kent's bus services improvement plan to the Department for Transport (DfT). The Plan described in detail how bus services were to work, how they could be improved and what funding would be required. The funding that was sought was in excess of £200 million and it was not certain when the DfT's decision would be expected. It would have been convenient if this was before the draft budget was agreed, as the cost of the Kent Travel Saver and Supported buses had been included.

Public Transport has successfully bid to the DfT for £9.5 million funding For Zebra (Zero Emissions Buses Regional Areas) Programme to provide electric buses on the Thameside and future Dover fast-track bus networks.

The Kent Rail Summit was chaired by Mr Brazier on 20 October 2021 which was held online. At the Summit, there were updates on the Southeastern services, a presentation of Southeastern and Network Rail's improvements to stations in Kent including the new booking offices at Maidstone East and at Swanley. There was also a presentation by C2E, a campaign to extend the Crossrail line from its truncated terminus at Abbey Wood to Dartford, Ebbsfleet and ultimately to Gravesend. The intention was to open up substantial areas of the London Borough of Bexley and north west Kent to growth. There was a presentation from the Kent Community Rail Partnership regarding work underway to improve services and grow patronage on the lesser used lines in Kent.

Mr Brazier, Mr Murphy and Simon Jones were meeting with district councils, including Tunbridge Wells, Swale and Sevenoaks regarding cooperation, growth and partnership working.

Mr Brazier had visited the Sevington Inland Border Facility to meet Lord Agnew from the Cabinet Office and leaders of the various organisations; HMRC, Border Force, the Department for Transport and DEFRA.

5) Miss Carey said the Kent Downs and Heritage Coast had been selected as the fourth best region in the world to visit in 2022 by Lonely Planet, in their 'Best in Travel 2022 Guide'.

6) Mr Murphy said that on 15 October, the Broadband Team had given a briefing to Members and 44 Members had attended, with another 5 watching the recording after the event.

The Department of International Trade had announced 8 Kent business leaders and firms as 'export champions' as part of a national peer-to-peer network for companies looking to export. The firms were Fudge Kitchen, Kent Crisps, Beck & Pollitzer, TPS Global Logistics, the Great Outdoors Gym Company, AbBaltis and Tenterden Old Dairy Brewery.

The Kent Developers Contributions Team at KCC along with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and the company, Panattoni had finished Section 106 contribution negotiations which was to allow Panattoni to build up to 1.9 million square million feet of high-quality warehousing and distribution space on the vacant Aylesford newsprint site. Panattoni would also be funding the construction of a £7 million road link. They would also be assisting KCC to upgrade the local bus service for a further 5 years

and there would also be a contribution to a cycle scheme. Low and zero carbon technology was to be installed on the site.

The government had announced Levelling Up funding for: Ashford, Thanet and Medway which was total of £48.9 million.

7) Mr Hill said KCC's Country Parks team was celebrating the news that eight of its parks, one more than previously, had been recognised with the prestigious Green Flag Award. Parks and green spaces across the country were to raise their Green Flag Award with pride in a year when millions of people had seen the value of having great quality green spaces on their doorstep. The Country Parks were Shorne Woods, Lullingstone, Trosley, Teston, Manor Park, Brockhill, Pegwell Bay Country Parks and, new for this year, Grove Ferry Country Park, near Canterbury.

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, recognised and rewarded well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for their management across the United Kingdom and around the world. The eight Kent Country Parks were among the more than 2,000 sites across the country to collect the award for 2021.

The official opening of the Shorne Woods Changing Places Facility was on 14 October 2021. A similar facility was to be opened at Lullingstone and work was being done on getting another facility at a third Country Park.

7) Mr Sweetland said the Communications teams at KCC had been working on a campaign to highlight the 'twin' Public Health threats of Covid-19, Flu and other respiratory viruses and bugs.

Residents, staff, and vulnerable groups and individuals would be provided with information and advice on how to avoid Covid-19 and the other respiratory viruses and bugs that were common in cold weather.

KCC had worked with partners, including district councils, Kent Resilience forum and Kent Police to develop an information campaign which could be used to deliver simple, clear messages about what could be done to help stop the spread of Covid-19 and other diseases. If simple steps were taken, this would significantly reduce the strain on the care and health systems in Kent and Medway over the winter period.

Residents were to be encouraged to wear face coverings when inside public places. Although this was not mandated, it was known that masks helped to protect people from the transmission of airborne disease. KCC staff were required to wear face coverings when moving around the offices and public buildings as part of KCC's efforts to keep staff well, ensuring they could continue to deliver services to the public.

The KCC website was to be regularly updated with the latest information on how to stay safe. It was suggested that people meet up outdoors (or opened windows) when joining friends or family to celebrate Halloween, Fireworks Night or other events.

The information campaign was also to highlight the importance of communities working together – wearing face coverings, washing hands regularly, etc – to stop the spread of Covid-19 and protect key workers such as teachers and transport operators.

KCC was taking a number of steps to support Kent residents deal with the pandemic and its aftermath. Vulnerable people who needed access to support were advised to contact the Kent Together helpline on 03000 419292 or to visit the Kent Together page on the KCC website.

8) Mr Oakford said the announcements from the Spending Review had given better news than was expected but it was short of what was needed to offset the current budget pressures within KCC. It was estimated that an additional £20-30 million would come to KCC but there were additional pressures, for example, through the National Insurance increase and the increase in the National Living Wage. The referendum limit for council tax had not been increased. Further work was required to look at the detail of the various government department announcements.

## **20. Spending Review - Verbal Update**

*(Item 4)*

*Dave Shipton, Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy was in attendance for this item.*

1) Mr Shipton said that the government had announced the settlement for local government within the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. KCC was to receive an additional un-ringfenced grant that could be used towards general budget spending pressures. The grant was to amount to £1.6 billion nationally in each of the next 3 years, £4.8 billion in total over the period. It was estimated that KCC's share of the grant would be £20-30 million per year but it had not yet been announced how the grant would be allocated. The grant could be built into the general budget and could be used towards closing the budget gap. It was noted that it would be the same amount in each of the 3 years and would not be increased to take account of further spending growth in 2023-24 and 2024-25.

Information was not yet available to clarify whether the grant would have to be used to fund spending increases or income losses imposed by other measures from within the Spending Review. For example, the measures included freezing the inflationary uplift on business rates for all businesses. Normally, local authorities retained 50% of the increase in business rates coming through the uplift and this went towards funding KCC's and Kent's district budgets. In usual circumstances, KCC would be compensated and it had been announced that authorities would be compensated but it was not clear if it was within the grant or on top of it.

It was anticipated that there would be a further announcement in the next few weeks about the grant allocation and what would need to be funded from the grant.

2) Mr Shipton said that the second announcement from the government was about additional funding for social care reforms. KCC was to receive a separate allocation from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities towards social care reforms. In total, this was to amount to £3.6 billion over 3 years, nationally. Unlike the



un-ringfenced grant, this would be increased in incremental amounts: £0.2 billion in 2022-23, a further £1.2 billion in 2023-24 (taking the total to £1.4 billion) and a further £0.6 billion in 2024-25 (taking the total to £2.0 billion) and this was principally to do with the timings of the cap on the care costs for individuals due to come into force in October 2023, part-way through the 2023-24 financial year.

It had been estimated that KCC's share of the social care reform grant in the first year of allocation would be £4-5 million, reflecting that most of the costs in the first year would be preparation costs. It was estimated that this would then rise to £30-33 million in 2023-24 and then £42-47 million in 2024-25. These were estimated numbers as it had not been announced how grants would be distributed but the grant would need to fund the cost of the reforms, including the cost of limiting individual client contributions and the additional workplace pressures needed to implement the reforms. KCC was not able to forecast the full cost of reforms as more information was needed. Further government consultation was expected on the reforms in the coming months.

3) As part of the Department of Health and Social Care departmental funding settlement, a ringfenced grant was anticipated. A further £1.7 billion was to be made available to improve the wider social care system including the quality and integration of care. When the Social Care reforms had been announced, it had been indicated that £5.4 billion was to be made available to fund the reforms out of the National Insurance increase. The vast majority of the remainder of the National Insurance increase was to fund the backlogs in health services. £3.6 billion of the total £5.4 billion was to go into 'Levelling Up' and the remainder was to be a ringfenced grant for social care.

It had been outlined that at least £500 million of the grant would be used to improve qualifications, skills and wellbeing across the adult social care workforce.

It had been indicated that the general referendum threshold for Council Tax looked to be 2%. The adult social care precept was to allow a further 1% meaning a 3% increase in total. Confirmation of details would be in the provisional local government finance settlement.

The local government spending power document produced by central government indicated what would be in KCC's net budget and for local government as a whole, there would be annual increases in spending power. The local government spending power nationally in 2019-20 was £46.2 billion, which was raised to £49.1 billion in 2020-21 and £50.4 billion in 2021-22. In 2022-23, it was expected to increase to £53.7 billion.

The focus of the update was the core settlement but the department announcements were yet to be made and would give detail of any additional grants. It was unclear if spending demands would be met even though the settlement from government was better than expected. However, KCC's ability to raise funds through council tax was less than had been assumed. The challenge for 2022-23 would be to find savings or find ways to reduce spending pressures to close the budget gap.

Further to questions and comments, it was noted:

- The underlying settlement was similar to previous years but with more coming from grants and less from council tax. There were additional costs and pressures associated with the adult social care reforms. It was felt that the government had recognised that there were spending pressures for local authorities that were outside of their control.
- Concerns were raised that other areas in Kent would have benefited from funding in addition to the areas that had engaged in the competitive process and were awarded 'Levelling Up' funding.

4) Mr Oakford said that the headline news was good and the additional money through grants was welcomed but the 1% lower than anticipated from the social care precept would have to be covered from the grant as would the NI increase. There would be spending pressures within the directorates and these would need to be looked at very closely.

5) The update was noted.

## **21. Supporting Kent Residents Through the Covid-19 Pandemic and Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) - Support for Residents and Businesses (Item 5)**

*Lucy Alesbrook, Helping Hands Programme Manager was in attendance for this item.*

1) The Leader introduced the report and proposed that Agenda Items 5 and 6 be presented together. In the extraordinary circumstances created by the pandemic, one-off grants were given to KCC and work had been done to consider how to best use those grants to build a legacy and resilience for the future.

There had been various sources of funding and what started as the Winter Fund later became the Covid Local Support Grant and the latest incarnation was the Household Support Grant.

There had been £95 million Covid-19 grants in various tranches which covered a range of different support. KCC had launched the Helping Hands initiative which covered various areas but there had been four points of particular focus: low-income households and those in financial distress, business and the self-employed, digital poverty and exclusion and match-funding for crowdfunding of local projects. Close work had been undertaken with Kent Support and Assistance Service (KSAS), district and borough councils and the voluntary sector.

There was also the Contain Outbreak Management Fund which made an important contribution across a number of areas.

The Household Support Grant had to be spent by the end of the 2021-22 financial year and was worth £11 million to Kent. A quick decision was made as an officer decision under delegated authority regarding free school meals over October half term to ensure this was deliverable. Future arrangements through to spring of 2022 were forthcoming as part of an urgent decision.

The Leader had asked the Monitoring Officer to write to government regarding the timing of grant announcements and the way in which local government decision making processes are impacted in order to make full use of the grants.

2) Ms Alesbrook outlined the reports and presented the attached slides.

3) Members asked questions and the following points were noted:

- Work had been done by KCC with energy and water companies around poverty. It was hoped that there would be a change to energy provision and how services were delivered.
- Congratulations and thanks were given to Ms Alesbrook and others working on support for Kent residents. Local government at all levels had been successful at delivering at speed and ensuring funding reached families and businesses.

4) RESOLVED to note the reports, endorse the current and future programme of work for supporting Kent residents through the Covid-19 pandemic, endorse the proposed future use of the remaining grant and for Cabinet to receive updates as to how it is spent.

## **22. Kent County Council COP26 Environment Paper** (Item 7)

*Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director for Growth and Communities was in attendance for this item.*

1) Miss Carey introduced the report. KCC had aligned its work with the 4 key goals of COP26. The 26<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties was to be held in Glasgow and had raised the profile of the environmental agenda. It was hoped that by aligning with the goals, significant progress could be made for Kent and for the planet.

2) Ms Holt-Castle said that work had been done to align and look at what areas KCC were taking forward in line with the 4 key objectives of COP26. Goal 1 of COP26 was focussed on the Net Zero agenda which had been discussed at the meeting of Cabinet in September 2021. Goal 2 of COP26 was around adaptation; KCC was a national leader in this area and had been shortlisted by the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) National Awards on Climate Response.

KCC had been invited to present to the government's Climate Change Committee – Adaptations Sub-Committee. KCC had made practical adaptations in response to the challenge of climate change and had engaged partners and public. There were 3 key areas of adaptation: methodology and analysis; application on the ground and different tools that partners could use - maximising the ability of everyone to look at adaptation.

The 3-pronged approach included Plan Bee – pollinator plan; Plan Tree and Natural Solutions to Climate Change. KCC was pioneering in having a Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment in 2019 as one of the first local authorities in England to have this assessment. The Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment had been refreshed. It was thought that for Kent, climate change would result in warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. It was expected that extreme weather events would occur more frequently. As well as challenging impacts to Kent and Medway,

there would also be opportunities. There would be challenges in terms of the impact to agricultural land, changes to some of the crops, overheating in public buildings, habitat loss, flooding and disruption to travel. In terms of opportunities, it was expected that there would be decreased excess winter mortality amongst the elderly, reduced energy in buildings, longer growing seasons, increased soft fruit production and viticulture.

There was an adaptation programme across 7 key sectors: agriculture, natural environment, people and the built environment, local government, transport, industry and utility. A report was being taken to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 3 November 2021 and there would be a consultation in 2022.

The government had announced funding which would support work on climate change: sustainable transport, support for businesses to adopt low carbon technologies, decarbonisation of public buildings, grants for housing including social housing amongst other funding streams.

Work was being done with finance colleagues to understand the impact of the budget announcements on existing capital and revenue plans for meeting Net Zero and for climate change.

Partnership working was important for meeting the challenges of climate change. KCC worked with partners in the Kent and Medway Environment Group, which was chaired by Canterbury City Council.

Kent Green Action was KCC's public-facing campaign, which took all the strategies, analysis and tools and translated these for Kent individuals and communities so that they would feel inspired and empowered to play their part.

3) Members asked questions and the following points were noted:

- Concerns were raised that some of the most serious 'polluters' were not engaged and involved with COP26. Global impacts are driven by others but it was important for KCC to do everything possible to achieve Net Zero.
- Concerns were raised that not enough funding was forthcoming for school adaptations but it was noted that work helping schools to lower emissions had already been undertaken and had delivered good results.
- It was also noted that there were environmental champions whose role had been updated, work had been undertaken with developers and Kent Developers' Group and on the Kent Design Guide.
- Plan Bee and the Plant a Tree scheme had caught people's imaginations and had been very successful. There were challenges in assisting individuals to know how they were able to contribute and it was important to embed these concepts across the organisation.
- Further work around flood resilience was to be taken forward and it was noted there were implications for the KCC estate
- KCC had undertaken extensive work to reduce carbon emissions by 73% in the previous 10 years and was to be reduced by a further 40% by March 2022.

4) RESOLVED to note the report.



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# Cabinet

## 28 October 2021

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Strategic & Corporate Services –  
Strategy, Policy, Relationships and  
Corporate Assurance



Minute Item 21

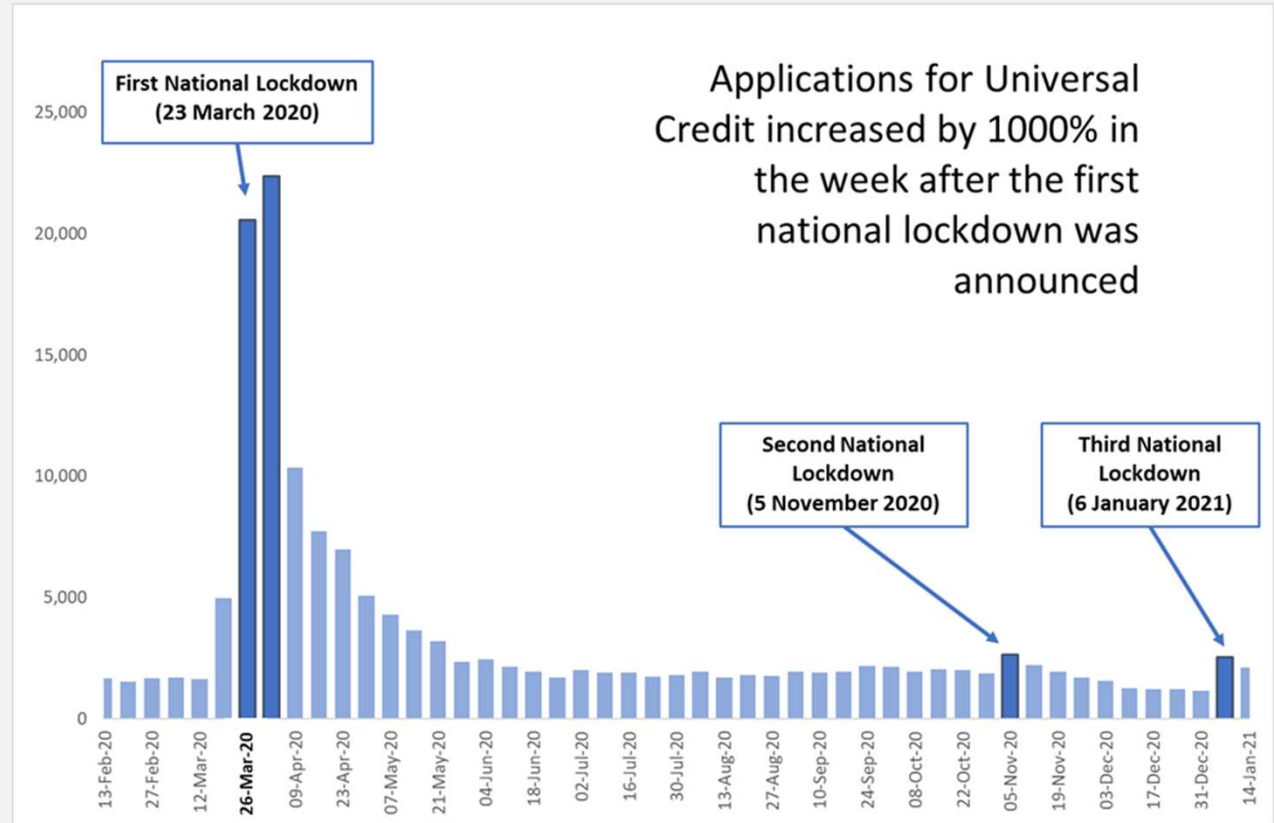
# Impact of COVID-19



At the peak, more than 132,000 households in Kent relied on Universal Credit.



Claimant rates are still double pre-pandemic levels.





- Kent Together is a helpline, **available 24/7 online or by phone**, that provides a single, convenient point of contact for Kent residents in urgent need of help during the pandemic.
- Launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020, Kent Together has received over **6,300** referrals to date.

**Kent Together HELPLINE**  
kent.gov.uk/kenttogether 03000 41 92 92



- **In partnership with the local district hubs**, support offered at launch included food deliveries, collecting prescriptions, dog walking or a friendly chat for anyone feeling lonely.
- As the pandemic evolved the helpline provided additional areas of support including **financial and mental health and wellbeing advice**.
- Kent Together has been **promoted across Kent** through organic channels as well as print, radio, social media and a targeted leaflet drop.

Kent Together has received **6,300 referrals** for over **8,600 requests for support**.

Requests received by type from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 10 October 2021:

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Support Requested	Total Requests	% of Total Requests
Basic tasks	600	7%
Energy	192	2%
Food	5,265	61%
Loneliness	531	6%
Prescriptions	1,859	22%
Something else	161	2%



# Winter Grant Fund and Local Support Grant

## Winter Grant Fund

- Support for Families with Children - £4.9m
- Support for Families without children and individuals - £0.79m

**Estimated Number of people helped through Winter Grant Fund – 178,181 in Kent**

People helped through partnership work with utility companies – 3,720

## Local Covid Support Grant

- Support for Families with Children - £5.8m
- Support for Families without children and individuals - £0.26m

**Estimated Number of people helped through Local Covid Support Grant – 103,461**

## Free School Meals

- Through all grant funding received, approximately £2.9m has been spent on Free School Meals

# Current Climate

There are some key factors impacting financial hardship this Autumn:

- A higher **energy price cap** came into force from 1 October, with about 15 million households facing a 12% rise in energy bills
- The **Universal Credit uplift** (£20 per week) implemented during COVID-19 ended 6 October 2021
- **Furlough Schemes** came to an end 30 September 2021
- General increase in cost of living e.g food, fuel

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# Helping Hands & Financial Hardship

**Residential**  
£4m

**Digital**  
£5m  
(£2.5m + £2.5m COMF)

**Business**  
£3m  
Economic  
Development

**Referrals**  
£28k (COMF)

**Data**  
£0.4m (COMF)

**#DigitalKent**  
Together improving digital inclusion and capabilities

**Crowd  
Funding**  
£0.5m

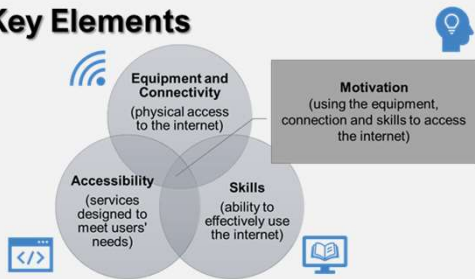
**ReferKent**  
Together delivering cohesive support

- Provided an additional **£50 reduction** for working age households already in receipt of discounts under Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes (in total £3.6m)
- **£2.4m** provided to increase local hardship funds to enable districts to help other households facing financial difficulty and struggling to pay council tax bills

# Helping Hands: Digital Inclusion & Capability



## Key Elements



## Key Barriers



## Key Principles



## Key Projects/Schemes



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# Helping Hands: Residential Schemes

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## Fuel Poverty

- Crisis Support Payments
  - Debt Advice
  - Training
- One-off item support

## Water Poverty

Work with providers to identify people in water poverty and provide support and access to services.

## Debt Advice

Linking residents to Debt Advice agencies to help provide support on managing debt.

## Underwritten Loan Scheme

Working with Citizens Advice Bureau and Kent Savers to provide underwritten loans to residents in high interest debt.

# Helping Hands: Referrals

- When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, many individuals were furloughed, lost their job or had to stay at home resulting in an increase in pressure on finances.
- Many organisations were sign-posting individuals to support – however, this is entirely reliant on the individual making onward contact.
- The referral workstream aims to strengthen referrals across Kent.

## Referrals Outputs



### Refernet

A robust online system that is safe and secure to send referrals through, replacing the need to sign-post.

### STP Website

An online county-wide repository of information.

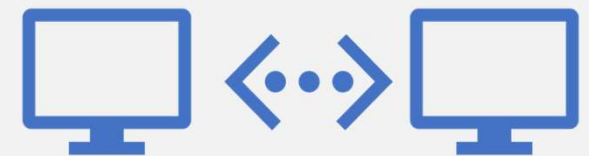
### MAN

The Money Advice Network service will link in with Refernet to offer financial support through advisors at no cost.



# Helping Hands: Data Sharing

- At both County and District level, support services often struggle to identify those at most risk before they enter into crisis.
- There is a need to understand individual financial circumstances and debt in a more complete way, as well as what social risks they may be vulnerable to because of this.
- Combining data from organisations enables Local Authorities to better refer and sign-post people, engage with residents in a more sensitive way, and intervene with targeted supported before people reach crisis.



# Support to Residents and Businesses via COMF



## Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) Context

Prevent or contain the spread of COVID-19 and/or support those disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Total Funding £48.1m

Example initiatives that have been funded under the Contain Outbreak Management that have supported residents and businesses in Kent

### Support for Residents

Page 10

- 1,659 assistive technology devices distributed to enable vulnerable individuals to enable them to continue to connect with the world.
- £2.5m of funding to support residents with rent arrears that are in private rented accommodation and are at risk of eviction
  - 82,000 learning opportunities delivered through the Reconnect Programme
- Funding to districts to enable funding to be directed to foodbanks and to house their homeless communities.

### Support for Businesses

- Free COVID-19 Safe Training for Kent Businesses - 60 organisations trained. Opportunity for a further 975 organisations between now and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- 100 grants of up to £5k to the Creative, Cultural and Voluntary sector to adapt business models to support safe/alternative delivery.
- Funding to VisitKent to support the promotion and uptake of the 'We're Good to Go' mark
- Funding to Districts to support local efforts such as increased wardens to support businesses in enforcing COVID-19 legislation

# Next Steps

- We will use the Helping Hands scheme and Contain Outbreak Management Fund to continue supporting residents experiencing financial hardship and those disproportionately affected by Covid-19
- Subject to the formal key decision, we will maximise the use of the Household Support Fund to continue funding free school meals for eligible children in the school holidays, through to Easter and to help residents over the coming winter
- We will continue to work to deliver effective support to residents in financial hardship and build a sustainable legacy of community resilience

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From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council  
 Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services  
 David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance

To: **Cabinet- 9th December 2021**

Subject: **Key Decision to adopt KCC's Civil Society Strategy**

Classification: Unrestricted

**Future Pathway of Paper:**

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

**Summary:**

KCC's Civil Society Strategy (CSS), will be a key strategy for the County Council and is a commitment under the Interim Strategic Plan. The CSS has undergone a 4-week consultation period; prior to this we undertook a 9-week consultation on the previous draft, which was written pre-Covid. The decision was taken to pause the development of the strategy, revise, and re-consult to reflect the impact of the pandemic.

The strategy has now been updated to reflect the insights gathered and this report provides an overview of the consultation, the feedback, and the subsequent changes to the final strategy to be adopted by Cabinet.

**Recommendation(s):**

**For Cabinet to:**

1. Agree the adoption of KCC's Civil Society Strategy
2. Agree that the infrastructure budget will be allocated in accordance with the strategy framework; any decisions on expenditure will be made by the relevant Cabinet Members
3. Agree to undertake appropriate Member engagement as we develop the plans for our infrastructure support.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Kent County Council made a commitment to adopt a new Civil Society Strategy<sup>1</sup> (CSS) in 2019; the proposal for this came to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in November 2019 and formal consultation on the draft strategy began in February 2020, running until April. However, the events of the pandemic overtook this, and it was agreed to pause the final development of the strategy and concentrate on Covid response and recovery and to give time to reflect on the impact of the pandemic. Since this time, a great deal of work has taken place with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) to improve

<sup>1</sup> By Civil society we mean all those individual, informal, and formal groups and organisations that operate outside of state control and for the primary purpose of social good.

partnership working and engagement and this development of the final strategy has been informed by that.

- 1.2 The decision to move to a Civil Society Strategy was informed partly by the publication of the first Government Civil Society Strategy, however, 'Civil Society' also allowed us to recognise the contribution of both the registered charities, social enterprises, and voluntary organisations but also the many informal groups and individual volunteers who play an important role in our communities. This also reflected the conversations we had with the sector since the publication of the VCS policy. We therefore took the decision in 2019 to broaden out the VCS policy into a new Civil Society Strategy, with the social sector at the core.

## **2. Context:**

- 2.1 The Civil Society Strategy discharges the commitment made in the Interim Strategic Plan agreed by County Council on 10 December to support a strong Civil Society and the Voluntary sector as a core part of that. As detailed in the strategy we have put in place interim plans to support the social sector for this financial year (2021-22), but the strategy will provide the framework for our long-term infrastructure support.
- 2.2 The budget allocation for support is £700Kp.a. or £2.1m over the life of the strategy. The budget for the support is held by Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance (SPRCA) as the strategy owners and is allocated from base budget and the Public Health budget, with a 50% split. Whilst both a Civil Society Strategy and infrastructure support offer to the VCS is not a statutory responsibility it remains a significant political priority that has only strengthened in the last year. The intention of our infrastructure support budget is to help to build a sustainable and resilient voluntary sector and civil society; given the challenges of the last 18 months and going forward this has become increasingly important. This funding is a contribution and is not intended to create dependency or dictate the direction of activity.
- 2.3 As set out in the strategy, we believe that the importance of this strategy has only grown in the last year. Not only because of the incredible response we have seen from our communities, voluntary organisations, and local people but because of the undeniable impact the pandemic has and will continue to have on us as individuals, communities and as organisations and the need to recognise and respond to that. We have reflected on the events of the last year and updated the strategy to respond to the challenges we have faced and will continue to face as we recover. The final strategy is provided in Annex 1 and an Executive Summary has been produced in Annex 2; we hope this will provide a useful reference document for the sector.

## **3 Consultation process**

- 3.1 The consultation on the final strategy began on the 6<sup>th</sup> September and ran until the 3<sup>rd</sup> October and was undertaken as an online survey. Prior to this consultation we carried out a 9-week consultation on the original draft strategy back in February 2020 and we have taken the findings from both consultations to inform this final draft.
- 3.2 A VCS Recovery Cell was established during the pandemic as part of the Kent Resilience Forum architecture and the impact assessment and action plan developed by that group of VCS representatives (facilitated by KCC and Medway officers) was used to revise the strategy.

As set out in the strategy itself, since then we have established a VCSE Steering Group, which is made up of VCS representatives and is independent of KCC. We have worked

collaboratively with this group prior to the formal consultation to revise the strategy, sharing early drafts for comment and these discussions were reflected in the draft which we have consulted on. The feedback set out in this report therefore reflects a combination of all the consultation and engagement undertaken

- 3.3 It is worth reflecting on the considerable pressure organisations have faced over the last 18 months and to thank all those that have taken the time to respond to the most recent consultation. Whilst the number of responses to the second consultation was lower than we had hoped – 9 submissions, we widely circulated the strategy through the VCSE Steering Group (asking them to cascade), colleagues in KCC, District Councils and through social media. We believe this response reflects not only the demands on organisations at this time and their ability to partake but also that we had already consulted on the original draft when responses were much higher. Given we have worked alongside the sector to develop the strategy over the last year through our engagement channels and the responses to the consultation, we are confident that it has been well socialised and reflects both the needs of the sector and the relationship, which KCC is wanting to establish.

#### **4. Main consultation findings**

- 4.1 The findings from the consultation are summarised under each of the following headings and any subsequent changes to the strategy are provided. In addition, the consultation report, 'You said, we did' provided in Annex 3, sets out in more detail the responses and how these were used.

#### **4.2 Demographics of respondents:**

***Caveat:** The consultation was open to any organisation to respond and therefore not intended to be a representative survey of the sector. It was specifically targeted at VCSE organisations as opposed to the wider public.*

Over the course of the two formal consultations a total of 78 individual responses were received. This does not include the engagement undertaken with the VCSE Steering Group. Most responses (69%) were either from individuals responding on behalf of a registered charity, community group, social enterprise, or a trustee/volunteer.

#### **4.3 Terminology**

The shift to a Civil Society Strategy was intended to acknowledge the diversity in the social sector and that many organisations operating in our communities are not funded by KCC, may be very informal or comprise of just one or two individuals volunteering in their local area to do social good. The intention of this strategy was to move past a transactional relationship of the past, where primarily our strategic engagement was with those we have some funding arrangement with, to a wider relationship. This strategy acknowledges that most activities, which promote social good are not funded by KCC and yet play an important part in our communities but also that it is entirely appropriate that this activity, whilst important to the County Council, is independent.

We also took the decision, through engagement with the sector, to use the term 'social sector' rather than 'voluntary sector'. The sector had challenged, in particular the VCSE Steering group, the use of the term 'voluntary' and felt it sometimes undervalued the economic contribution the sector makes to the local economy and can give the impression the sector can exist on little or minimal funding.

### **4.3.1 Feedback and proposed changes**

This use of terminology and the rationale was supported by the consultation responses, with most respondents across both consultations supporting the move to a 'civil society' strategy and with the use of the phrase 'social sector'. A small minority felt that it was difficult to know exactly what we meant by these terms and so we have added a more detailed section on terminology to be clear. Following feedback from Members at Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee we have also added 'VCSE' to our definitions. We also acknowledge that there will always be a range of terms used to describe the 'sector' and not all will agree with this use of language but for this strategy and the relationship it sets out, 'social sector' is the right term.

## **4.4 Challenges and opportunities facing the sector post Covid.**

The strategy sets out the diverse ways the sector supports our communities, through both the People and Place chapters.

The strategy highlights the role of civil society in supporting people through both formal services, funded by KCC but also through the wider safety net it provides. It also recognises that the impact of Covid will see an increase in demand for this support and the challenges this may bring. It highlights the role of volunteers within our communities and the increasing role this informal infrastructure has played over the past 18 months, and the opportunities this could bring if we support or facilitate this 'social action' in our communities outside of a pandemic.

The Place section of the strategy highlights the role of the sector in building resilient communities and the range of ways that civil society supports our community assets, positive activities for young people and importantly the contribution it makes to our local economy.

The opportunities to work collaboratively in partnership with civil society to deliver services, develop innovative solutions to the challenges we collectively face and the need for this to be a key part of the place-based approach are set out. Whilst it is acknowledged that our infrastructure support, set out in Chapter 3 must help to enable this.

### **4.4.1 Feedback and proposed changes**

The VCSE Steering group provided insights into the challenges facing the sector, whilst the action plan developed by the VCS Recovery Cell was also used to shape the revised strategy and direction of these sections. Therefore, the draft was informed by first-hand experience of the sector, and we are pleased that the consultation responses supported the direction set out and found that it accurately reflected the challenges facing the sector post Covid. However, some respondents felt that the opportunities to work more collaboratively could be further emphasised and we have now set out in the strategy our commitment to working more collaboratively with the sector through our engagement and in our commissioning approach. We have also recognised in the strategy the need to work with partners as we look to take forward this work and how we can facilitate engagement and collaboration at the local level. Some respondents felt that our aspiration to value the sector as an equal partner could be strengthened and we have now reflected this in our aims and objectives and in our approach to engagement.

## **4.5 Support to the Sector**

Alongside this strategy is a budget commitment over the 3 years, which will be used to deliver infrastructure support to the sector through the strategy framework. A summary of



how this support will be provided and what it will focus on is provided in the Executive summary but is set out in more detail in Chapter 3 of the Strategy.

### **Objectives of KCC support for the social sector:**

- *Establishing a strategic relationship with the social sector- so that it can effectively engage and influence.*
- *Enabling a sustainable, diverse, and independent social sector in Kent, which can grow and develop.*
- *Enabling a coordinated, properly resourced, and sustainable volunteering system across the county.*
- *Creating the right conditions for small community organisations to respond to communities' needs and for communities to be empowered.*

#### **4.5.1 Engagement**

A strategic relationship through more open and honest dialogue is a key part of our support offer. As set out in the strategy we have established a VCS Strategic Partnership Board (KCC, district, NHS and VCSE representation) and an independent VCSE Steering Group. As part of our infrastructure offer, we propose to evolve the VCSE Steering Group into a more formal representative body and to look at other ways to improve collaboration and engagement with the sector. This will mean ensuring that there is transparency in the membership and that the groups are accessible and visible to the wider sector. This will also include working with partners such as the NHS to create more meaningful engagement channels and considering how this links up with forums at the local level for example, through district councils.

#### **4.5.2 Feedback and proposed changes**

In the first consultation the majority of respondents agreed that more open dialogue was needed, which did not purely focus on commissioning and funding. Since then, we have as stated improved our engagement through the now established VCSE Steering Group and Partnership Board, which is allowing a flow of information, collaboration and partnership working.

Responses from the second consultation and discussions with the Steering Group showed the introduction of these engagement channels as a positive step; however, not all were aware of the Steering Group and therefore more work is required to ensure that this forum is accessible and established as a trusted route for sector engagement- this means that the membership must be transparent. This is recognised in the strategy and will be taken forward as we develop our infrastructure.

The majority agreed with an independent Steering Group, nominated or elected by the sector but stated that how this works in practice is truly independent and with the right expertise is a challenge. These challenges are recognised in the strategy and will be taken forward as we work to evolve and improve the model alongside the sector.

Respondents also felt that more engagement mechanisms to support collaboration were most likely needed. We have updated the strategy to ensure it seeks to address this and as part of our support offer, we will evolve our engagement alongside our partners such as the NHS and district councils to ensure that we are working with other engagement channels and not duplicating.

#### **4.6 Business Support**

Access to appropriate business support such as developing funding strategies organisational plans, a digital approach and governance advice will be a key plank of our support offer. For 21/22 this will be delivered through the Strategic Recovery Fund as set out and the impact monitoring from this fund will help to inform how we take this forward and the funding mechanism that will be used.

#### **4.6.1 Feedback and proposed changes**

In both consultations access to financial advice and support was considered most important. There were mixed responses regarding access to business support, where some felt able to access the right support whilst others had not been able to. The main barrier to accessing support across both consultations was the ability to fund it alongside time constraints.

KCC's commitment in the strategy to contribute to business support, initially through the Strategic Recovery Fund, is intended to tackle the challenges organisations face in availability of funds to buy in expertise but also free up time of those running the charity by using outside support and expertise.

We also received feedback that access to good advice for new organisations to start up and develop was important, especially as we have seen new organisations emerge during the pandemic, which will look to continue. This type of governance advice and organisational support will be a feature of our 'business support' offer and is included in our Strategic Recovery Fund.

#### **4.7 Volunteering**

Volunteers, or 'social action' are an intrinsic part of the strategy and mentioned throughout in the many roles they play in our communities, often underpinning the many groups and organisations that make up civil society.

The need for a well-resourced and co-ordinated volunteering network across the County was highlighted in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan. The Volunteer Centres provided advice and support to hubs supporting those that were 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.

The strategy therefore sets out a specific commitment to supporting volunteer infrastructure as part of our support offer. We have committed in the strategy and already funded a volunteering infrastructure pilot for this financial year, which will be evaluated to inform our future support for volunteering.

#### **4.7.1 Feedback and proposed changes**

This area of support has been developed as a direct result of the pandemic and from priorities set out in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan and informed by engagement with the VCSE Steering Group.

Responses to the consultation welcomed this addition to the strategy and most respondents reported they had accessed support to recruit volunteers, had concerns about recruiting and retaining volunteers in the future and identified a need for advice and support to assist them in doing so. As a result, no further changes were made to this section of the strategy.

## 4.8 Creating the right conditions for small organisations to respond to communities needs

The strategy recognises the important role of grassroots organisations in supporting our local communities, providing activities for young people and in running many community assets. It is this social infrastructure, which has provided resilience over the last 18 months and will continue to do so. The support offer therefore includes funding to support this infrastructure in a way that is sustainable and does not seek to formalise or control local projects. We have funded a 2-year pilot of Crowdfunding – Crowdfund Kent to support locally led and locally supported projects and community groups. This will be evaluated to inform our future support to meet his objective.

### 4.8.1 Feedback and proposed changes

During the first consultation organisations reported the need for access to grants for small organisations as the most important priority for infrastructure support. At the time we were exploring options such as Crowdfunding to enable this and felt it was important that the mechanism did not create formal arrangements with the Council and was sustainable, drawing in funding from various sources not just KCC. Since then, we have established Crowdfund Kent to support local organisations and community projects and the strategy has been updated to reflect this.

## 4.9 Fair Funding

Of course, there will be financial challenges ahead, but fair funding practices can help to support the social sector even through uncertain times; our approach to commissioning and funding helps to set a tone for our relationship and partnership working with the sector. Therefore, the strategy considers a ‘fair funding’ approach as a key part of our support offer; this is about transparency, accessibility, and proportionate processes.

The strategy recognises that there has been differing practice in the past with our grant funding, which we have addressed through the grant framework from 2015 and which has been slightly revised but reinforced in this strategy.

However, there remains some criticism from the sector in relation to elements of our commissioning and the challenges faced by the sector when either bidding for KCC services or when in receipt of funding under contract.

Through engagement with the VCSE Steering Group we have strengthened references to some of the challenges faced by the sector when delivering services under contract and the need to address these. These are well debated issues around sustainability and costs, which are not unique to Kent; however, the strategy commits to undertaking work to look at these issues in more detail alongside the sector, which will discharge the action from the VCS Recovery Cell. This will be part of the work we undertake to evolve our commissioning model to ensure it has a greater emphasis on locality and to look at how our commissioning can work with communities to build resilience and improve the focus on place.

**VCSE Recovery Cell Action Plan, action 20:** *Commissioning: review and reflect on service delivery models and the culture of commissioning - lessons learnt from COVID-19 to inform future strategy. Particularly consider the impact of a reduction in voluntary income during COVID-19 and the fragilities that has exposed e.g., issues around full cost recovery. Look at opportunities for more innovative, sustainable and flexible commissioning and service delivery. Treating the VCSE as an equal partner and involving the sector in discussions to improve and reform service delivery.*

## 5. Next steps

- 5.1 On decision to adopt the strategy an internal communication exercise will be undertaken to ensure that all KCC staff, are aware of the strategy and its implications for our relationship with and support for the social sector and civil society. We will also send out external communications and upload the strategy on Kent.gov to make partners and the social sector aware that the strategy is now adopted. The consultation report in Annex 3 'You said, we did' will be provided to all who registered to take part in the online consultation and to the VCSE Steering Group. and will be accompanied by the final strategy document when published on our website.
- 5.2 We will continue to review the support we have put in place such as the Crowdfunding pilot, Volunteering pilot and the Strategic Recovery Fund. The evaluation of each of these will be used to define the long-term arrangements for support underpinned by the strategy framework. The budget committed against this strategy to provide infrastructure support will be allocated accordingly in line with the evaluation findings. However, following discussions with Members at Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee we are also proposing to undertake appropriate Member engagement as we develop our infrastructure offer further. This will also ensure that Members can make organisations in their communities aware of the availability of this support.
- 5.3 As part of our infrastructure offer, we will also be reviewing our engagement mechanisms, namely the VCSE Steering Group alongside the Chair and the group members, over the next 6 months and will look to have refined these arrangements as a result by the start of the new financial year. We will ensure there is transparency around the membership of this group so that is accessible to the wider sector.
- 5.4 A report outlining our progress against the Measures of Success defined in the strategy will be brought to Cabinet and P&R Cabinet Committee by the end of 2022 as set out in the strategy. The information used to monitor progress will as set out in the model, be collated through partnership working; using a range of sources and the intelligence and insights of partners, the VCS Strategic Partnership Board will provide the mechanism for this.

### Recommendations:

#### For Cabinet to:

1. Agree the adoption of KCC's Civil Society Strategy
2. Agree that the infrastructure budget will be allocated in accordance with the strategy framework any decisions on expenditure will be made by the relevant Cabinet Members
3. Agree to undertake appropriate Member engagement as we develop the plans for our infrastructure support.

## 6. Additional Documents:

**Annex 1:** Final Civil Society Strategy

**Annex 2:** Final Executive Summary

**Annex 3:** Consultation report – 'You said we did'

## **Annex 4:** Proposed Record of Decision

### **7. Contact Details**

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**Kent County Council**



# **Society**

**Strategy for Kent 2021-2024**

Supporting connected communities  
and a sustainable social sector in Kent

## Foreword

I am delighted to introduce Kent County Council's (KCC) Civil Society Strategy. This replaces our Voluntary, Community Sector (VCS) policy adopted in 2015 and is a key strategic document for the County Council.



We first drafted this strategy in 2019 to recognise the role of civil society in Kent in supporting connected communities and the importance of the informal and formal groups that provide opportunities for people to come together. Since then, we have experienced challenges we would not have foreseen and whilst this strategy has been revised amongst many uncertainties, what we have most certainly seen over the last 18 months is the important role civil society plays in our communities. I am convinced more than ever of the importance of this strategy and the commitments it sets out for the County Council.

I would also like to take this opportunity to highlight the work of the Voluntary Sector Recovery Cell, established at the beginning of the pandemic in 2020 as part of the Kent Resilience Forum architecture. This cell, made up of several VCSE representatives, developed an impact assessment and subsequent action plan, which mapped out the steps to recovery and which we have used to revise this strategy post Covid. The establishment of the cell has led to much improved partnership working, which we believe paves the way for a more strategic and mature relationship with the sector. It has also led to the formation of the VCSE Steering Group who have provided invaluable insights in refreshing this strategy.

I need to give special thanks to Josephine McCartney, Chief Executive of Kent Community Foundation, who Chairs the Steering Group and has worked tirelessly as a representative of the sector over the last year, providing a point of contact and expertise on the sector to KCC throughout.

And finally I would like to thank all those organisations and individuals who took the time to contribute to the strategy consultation. Your insights have been invaluable in helping to shape a strategy that will enable us to continue to develop effective partnership working and collaboration with civil society in Kent.

### **Mike Hill**

Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services



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## Definitions and Terminology

### **What do we mean by civil society?**

By civil society, we mean all those individuals, informal and formal groups and organisations that operate outside of state control and for the primary purpose of social good. Whilst we recognise that private business can be socially motivated, this strategy focuses on those organisations that do not distribute profits and are not part of the statutory sector.

Whilst 'social sector' as we refer to it, is at the heart of a strong civil society we believe the terminology of civil society is important in establishing that social good happens outside of the state and in many different forms. This is not always through the traditional organisational structures, such as registered charities that we have referred to as the social sector. It also includes the more informal and often un-constituted community groups and individuals taking an active role in their local community, to improve their local area or champion a particular cause with a primary aim of delivering social good.

'Civil society' recognises the important independence of all individuals and organisations when undertaking activities for social good and distinguishes it from the state or the public sector. However, it is not possible to put firm boundaries around civil society, for example, we know that a proportion of the social sector is an important provider of KCC services and in that sense has a relationship with the state. This is though, a minority of organisations; most organisations and activities to deliver social good are not funded by KCC. In part, moving to a civil society strategy was to move away from the narrow view of the past, where KCC's relationship with the social sector has been funnelled through its funding and to recognise the vibrant civil society that exists in many forms across our communities independent of public sector funding.

### **VCSE**

When we refer to organisations in the strategy as opposed to the 'sector' we use the term 'VCSE', which relates to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

### **Social sector**

We have used the term 'social sector' in this strategy, where referring to the 'sector' as opposed to organisations. This is informed by engagement we have undertaken with the sector but also because we believe the term 'voluntary' sector can sometimes undervalue the economic contribution of charities and social enterprises to the local economy. It can also give the impression that the sector can deliver with little or minimal cost.

We also wanted to broaden out the definition of 'voluntary sector' to recognise the important contribution that social enterprises make to our local

communities. Whilst fundamentally different from charities they share the objective to complete a social mission. The future relationship set out in this strategy, therefore, looks beyond structures of organisations and recognises that a strong civil society, in many forms is central to the concept of 'place' within our communities and makes an invaluable contribution to the Kent economy and society.

**Social enterprises** have many definitions, but they generally have the following characteristics:

- They have an enshrined primary social or environmental mission (through legal form, governing documents, or ownership)
- They principally direct their surpluses towards that mission
- They are independent of government
- They primarily earn income through trading, selling goods or services.

*(Hidden Revolution: Social Enterprise in 2018)*

It is also important to point out that whilst there are many charities and social enterprises operating in the KCC area, which are not Kent based, this strategy very much focuses on the local. It is primarily concerned with the Kent based charities, community groups and social enterprises that are part of the Kent economy, that bring jobs and economic value into Kent and make up our local communities.



## Introduction

This strategy recognises the role of civil society in Kent and sets out how Kent County Council (KCC) will work to support a strong and vibrant civil society across our communities. This strategy replaces our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) policy agreed in 2015 and is the first Civil Society Strategy for KCC.

We originally developed and consulted on this strategy in early 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic. We subsequently decided to pause the development due to Covid and allow time to reflect on the challenges and impact of the last year. However, we believe that the importance of this strategy has only grown in the last year. Not only because of the incredible response we have seen from our communities, voluntary organisations, and local people but because of the undeniable impact the pandemic has and will continue to have on us as individuals, communities and as organisations and the need to recognise and respond to that.

Prior to this we had seen the publication of the first Government Civil Society Strategy and indeed a shift in areas of the voluntary sector, to more entrepreneurial models of operating – by this we mean diversification of income, trading and incorporating social enterprise models. The national strategy shift and the diversification of the sector informed our decision to broaden out the VCS policy into a new Civil Society Strategy. ‘Civil Society’ allowed us to recognise the contribution of both the registered charities and voluntary organisations but also the many informal groups and individual volunteers who play an important role in our communities. This also reflected the conversations we had with the sector since the publication of the VCS policy.

This direction still feels right; we have seen evidence of the resilience and innovation that exists both within the social sector and when our communities or ‘civil society’ come together. This strategy we hope celebrates that civic activity and community spirit and sets out our ambitions for the County Council’s relationship with Civil Society in Kent.

Finally, but importantly this strategy sets out how we will support the social sector, not only through our funding practice such as our approach to grant funding but also through our funding of infrastructure support to the sector.

The KCC Civil Society strategy is an important document for the authority, reflecting the crucial role the social sector plays in achieving strong and resilient communities across our county. It is also a key strategy in delivering against the outcomes of the Council’s [Interim Strategic plan](#).

## **Aims and objectives of this strategy:**

- ① a recognition of the contribution of civil society in Kent and the VCSE (the 'social sector') as a core part of that
- ② a commitment to supporting civil society to flourish
- ③ a commitment to a strategic relationship with the social sector that recognises its diversity and goes beyond those that have a financial relationship with the Council
- ④ a commitment to build on the partnership working we have seen over the last year between both public sector partners social sector, which recognises the sector as an equal partner
- ⑤ a commitment to support the social sector to be sustainable
- ⑥ a commitment to safeguarding the independence of VCSE organisations.

## **How will this strategy be used?**

- to shape our relationship with civil society in the future and the social sector as a core part of that
- to provide a framework to guide the approach to the Council's engagement with the social sector
- to provide consistency in our approach to grant funding to the social sector
- to shape our commitment to an offer of support to the social sector, and the principles which underpin it including fair funding.



How will we measure our progress and success?

We will have succeeded when:



## National context

### **Policy landscape**

When writing the first draft of this strategy in 2019, we would not have foreseen a pandemic and the additional challenges this then brought. However, these challenges have also presented opportunities; to rethink the way we work in partnership, how we meet demand, the way services are delivered across the public sector and indeed perhaps made us all re-evaluate what we value. The importance of social connections, our physical assets and green spaces have been strengthened over the last year as too has our sense of community.

We had already seen pre-Covid an increased desire for people to want to influence and have a say in the way services are run and in what happens in their local communities. However, the identification of place and a feeling of pride and connectedness to your local area has become increasingly important particularly as our worlds have shrunk to the very local at times over the last year.

### **A national civil society strategy**

In 2018 the government published its first Civil Society Strategy, this set out a direction for government policy and the intention to strengthen the organisations, large and small which hold society together. It was complemented by the government's strategy on tackling loneliness, which set out how we can support strong connections between people. The Integrated Communities Green paper and subsequent action plan similarly focused on resilient and cohesive communities.

More recently the Prime Minister invited Danny Kruger MP to lead a piece of work to develop proposals on how to maximise the role of volunteers, community groups, faith groups, charities and social enterprise and contribute actively to the governments levelling up agenda. The subsequent report *Levelling Up Our Communities* was published in September 2020 and emphasised the importance of local connections, of empowering local people in their communities and the role of civil society. It also recognised the role of local government as convenor and enabler whilst needing to ensure that this does not inhibit the independent social action we should be supporting.

### **Financial health of the charity sector**

Whilst civil society refers to a much broader group than charities, there is no single database of organisations and the most comprehensive available is the Charity Commission.

What we cannot yet tell is the impact of Covid on the long-term health of the sector. However, research carried out by Nottingham Trent University, NCVO



and Sheffield Hallam University<sup>1</sup> predicts that income from trading is expected to drop more than 17% next year and whilst 47% of respondents said their income had dropped, 31% have reported an increase in total income since last year; reflecting the Covid recovery funding that has been available. However, the extent of the longer-term impact of Covid varies significantly depending on the size, location and type of organisation and the real test will be as recovery funding comes to an end.

In terms of the charity sector's<sup>2</sup> overall health nationally, we can only base this on the last full set of charity accounts; the most recent data available at a national level is from 2017/18. Therefore, this data does not reflect the impact of the last year and should be read with some caution. This data is provided in *annex 1* of this strategy.

## Social enterprise

There has been a diversification in the sector, with some charities setting up trading arms to free themselves from the constraints of public funding. Although charities are fundamentally different from social enterprises, they are both socially motivated. Social enterprises have grown in prominence over the last 20 years and particularly in the public sector landscape in the last decade, but their origins are much older. Social Enterprise UK reports that there has been a significant rise in community interest company (CIC) registration over the last 12 months<sup>3</sup>. By March 2021, the number of CICs grew to 23,839. There are however, around 100,000 social enterprises and the sector is worth £60bn to the UK economy and employs 2 million people (this includes co-operatives and building societies)<sup>4</sup>. They also estimate that 52% of social enterprises grew their turnover in the last 12 months (2019).

Over the last year despite acute challenges 65% of CICs are now expecting to retain their position or grow (compared to all SMEs where around 50% expected turnover growth in the last 12 months), and only 1% expect to close (compared to 11% of business as a whole).



1 [NTU-Covid-voluntary-sector-report-May-2021\\_DIGITAL.pdf \(cpwop.org.uk\)](#)

2 this is based on the 'general charities' definition and does not include those that are not registered charities or social enterprises

3 [SEUK-Year-of-COVID-report-v3.pdf \(socialenterprise.org.uk\)](#)

4 [Build-Back-Britain-Report-February-2021.pdf \(socialenterprise.org.uk\)](#)

## Local context

Kent has a vibrant and diverse voluntary sector. **There are over 2,845 active voluntary organisations in Kent with a combined income of over £300m<sup>5</sup>.** The majority of organisations are micro and small in terms of income. In contrast to the national picture, there are no super-major organisations and income is concentrated in medium and large organisations as opposed to major. Charities are distributed unevenly with a concentration in major urban areas across individual districts. Sevenoaks has the highest number of registered charities per 1,000 residents and Dartford the lowest.

**In real terms, the sector has seen an income increase of 5.8% since 2014/15, in cash terms, this is an increase of £15.5m<sup>6</sup>.**

KCC funds a significant number of VCSE organisations with a spend of around £124m<sup>7</sup> for a range of services, £7.2 m of this is currently in grant contributions. This is evidence of the significance of the VCSE in providing services and community based activities in Kent and the council is proud to work with the sector in this way as part of a diverse provider base.

Local data on social enterprises are less available, however, work undertaken by the Southeast Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)<sup>8</sup>, estimated that between 4,500 and 6,300 social enterprises are trading in the SELEP area contributing £2.3bn to the economy. **For Kent and Medway, the estimated number of organisations is between 2,135 and 2,774. 44% of social enterprises in the area state they are improving a specific community and 28% supporting vulnerable people<sup>9</sup>, as their main objectives<sup>10</sup>.**

Whilst the challenges of the last year cannot be underestimated a recent survey by Kent Community Foundation<sup>11</sup> has found that the confidence of organisations of being in operation in the future is up with 76% of respondents saying they are 100% confident they will still be in operation in March 2022, this is compared to 68% in a previous survey undertaken in November 2020. However, the demand for services has also continued to rise and ¼ of those who said it had increased say they had been unable to meet the demand. The road ahead we know will be difficult and we will inevitably lose some organisations, but the resilience of the social sector in Kent has been clearly demonstrated over the last year more than ever.

5 KCC VCS annual report 2021 based on 'general charities definition, based on those who are registered in Kent and on 2018-19 data, some charities have not filed accounts for this period so data may be incomplete.

6 KCC VCS annual report 2021, based on those organisations which have been registered for the full 5 years and submitted accounts for the full 5 years

7 KCC 2020-21 spend, includes all payments for services and grants to registered charities, community interest companies, industrial and provident societies

8 Social Enterprise – a Prospectus, (2019) South East Local Enterprise Partnership

9 This is based on data from Social Enterprise, 2017, Social Enterprise UK and relates to East Sussex and Kent

10 This is based on data from Social Enterprise, 2017, Social Enterprise UK and relates to East Sussex and Kent

11 [Kent Community Foundation Survey of Kent's Community Sector \(kentcf.org.uk\)](https://www.kentcf.org.uk)

## The Kent Partners Compact

The National Compact, the agreement which governs relations between the government and civil society organisations in England and set the direction for local compacts, was last updated in 2010. Since then, the government has committed to renewing its commitment to the principles of the Compact, however, this has yet to happen and feels unlikely to be forthcoming given other pressures.

In the past, our relationship and engagement with the sector were defined solely through the Kent Partners Compact, first agreed in 2009 and which was refreshed in 2012. The VCS policy in 2015 endorsed the principles of the Compact but recognised the need to go beyond this and indeed to review what was now a very out of date document.

The Kent Partners Compact was a partnership document signed by KCC on behalf of public sector partners. This strategy sets out KCC's relationship with the sector and is not intended to speak for our partners.

We believe that the Kent Partners Compact, some twelve years since it was first published does not reflect the current climate. It does not portray how the social sector or public sector has evolved, or the relationship we are striving to establish with the sector, importantly it also does not recognise legislation such as the Social Value Act, 2012, which has been adopted since it was agreed. In the initial consultation on the draft strategy in 2020 of the 69 respondents, 47 agreed that we should close the Compact and include the principles in this strategy. 21 answered 'do not know' and only 1 disagreed.

**We have therefore decided to replace the Compact with this strategy as we believe that the principles within the Compact are embedded or sit within legislation such as the Best Value Duty.**

**KCC is committed to upholding the Best Value Duty and will adhere to the principle of three months' notice on funding decisions as is also set out in the National Compact.**

*"An authority intending to reduce or end funding (where 'funding' means both grant funding and any fixed term contract) or other support to a voluntary and community organisation or small business should give at least three months' notice of the actual reduction to both the organisation involved and the public/service users".*

*(Best Value revised guidance 2015)*

In essence, the Compact sought to achieve good financial practice, recognition of an independent sector and a relationship that is based on respect and understanding. All of these commitments are fundamental principles and objectives of this strategy. We, therefore, believe the relationship set out in this strategy and the support offer described harnesses the principles of what the National Compact sought to achieve but in a way that is relevant and reflects the current environment.



## Chapter 1

# People

Whilst civil society is independent of the state a proportion of the social sector is an important provider of publicly funded services to individuals on our behalf. However, the role of civil society in supporting people is broader than that; it often provides that wider safety net, supporting people in our communities outside of state support.

During our consultation people described civil society as ‘people coming together to support each other, ensuring our communities are inclusive’. It is through the social action of individuals within our communities that social connections are often created that are vital to improving our wellbeing.

### **Social Sector as a provider of services**

A small proportion of the social sector in Kent provide services on behalf of the Council. These services are significant and may be supporting children, young people, and older people, and indeed some of the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Whilst the number of charities delivering services in this way in Kent is relatively small against the totality of the sector, financially this is a significant amount of KCC spend, with approximately £124m<sup>12</sup> spent in the VCSE sector for a range of services, support, and community interventions.

The social sector has become increasingly engaged in the delivery of public services over the last 20 years and the relationship between the state and social sector has therefore become deeply entwined. Through community wellbeing and preventative services, the sector plays an important role in supporting older people in their homes and within their local community. The social sector also provides specialist services such as mental health services, services for disabled children, people with learning disabilities and young people through youth services or activities for younger people. They are also a vital provider of specialist drug and alcohol support services. In all of these services the sector often provides the innovative solutions to some of the most challenging issues, which later can later become mainstream approaches embedded by local authorities.



<sup>12</sup> KCC 2020-21 spend, includes all payments for services and grants to registered charities, community interest companies, industrial and provident societies and mutuals.

## **Demand on the social sector post Covid**

The financial impact of the pandemic on the social sector is yet to be fully realised, however we know that demand for support from VCSE organisations has increased over the last year, with the latest survey from Kent Community Foundation showing a 70% increase in demand<sup>13</sup>, whilst resources to meet this have reduced.

We know that in addition to providing contracted services, the sector often provides a 'safety net' outside of state support and that many of the population groups the sector supports will have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. Covid not only had an unequal impact on population health, for example, Black & ethnic minority groups had between 10 and 50% higher risk of death from Covid and Bangladeshi twice the risk of death than White British, but we also know that certain population groups are more at risk from the long-term wider impacts of the pandemic. This includes people with learning disabilities, care home residents, informal carers, those in low paid employment, vulnerable children, people in the justice system, people with mental health conditions, people living in poverty and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.

Community groups and VCSE organisations have been a lifeline to many over the last year; providing support to people who are shielding and isolated and will need to continue to support communities to build back. Many charities will also offer the more formal services to people dealing with the longer-term impact Covid has had on their lives. The needs in our communities may look different because of the last year and it will take time to fully understand the impact, but the sector is a central part of that wider safety net that supports our communities. It is therefore right that this strategy does not focus solely on the sector as a provider of publicly funded services but also the innovative support and solutions the sector can bring to meet the complex challenges, that sit outside of the local authority's direct remit.

## **Social responsibility**

Integral to a thriving civil society are the countless individuals who volunteer, whether this is by setting up and running activities that bring people together, championing the needs of their local community or serving as trustees.

The volunteer effort during the pandemic has been monumental, whilst many volunteers had to shield, new volunteers stepped up and the volunteer infrastructure played a central role in supporting those shielding in Kent as well as in the vaccination effort, which continues. As an example, during 2020 Ashford Volunteer Centre alone had 796 people who wanted to volunteer and who formally registered for volunteering.

<sup>13</sup> [Kent Community Foundation Survey of Kent's Charitable Sector \(kentcf.org.uk\)](https://www.kentcf.org.uk)

However, the role of volunteers is not something we should only celebrate during a crisis; volunteers are the backbone of the many community organisations that exist day to day. We want to ensure that people are empowered to take part in their communities going forward in the same way they have over the last year.

Around a quarter of the population formally volunteer<sup>14</sup> and there is evidence that being involved in volunteering is beneficial for people's health<sup>15</sup>. There are around 19,000 volunteers within major, large, and medium-sized charities in Kent. This figure is significant; however, it does not include the many volunteers running the small and micro charities and organisations embedded in local communities. However, to empower people to contribute, volunteering needs to be flexible and innovative so that it fits around different life circumstances. It is also important that we encourage young people to take part in social action or to volunteer particularly as we know that younger adults aged 16-24 years old are at particular risk of feeling lonely more often.

It is very often small groups and organisations that are involved in shaping our local communities. They contrast with the more formally constituted, larger charities and are often completely funded by donations and fundraising and led by volunteers. However, it is this that grounds them in their local communities. They respond to a need for as long as it exists, it is self-defined and determined. **We want to encourage people within their communities to respond in this way and ensure that Kent is a place that supports and values this type of civic activity.**

**Our offer of support to the sector set out in Chapter 3, is in part therefore aimed at supporting volunteering infrastructure and grassroots, community activities and organisations that evolve organically and the many volunteers who are integral to them.**

14 HM Government, (2018) A connected society, a strategy for tackling loneliness. London: Government Publications

15 Public Health England/NHS England, (2015), Health and Wellbeing: A guide to Community-centred approaches



## Chapter 2

# Place

Civil society enhances the places we live in. It provides opportunities for diverse communities to meet, it celebrates the history and heritage of our local areas, creates social networks through shared spaces and activities that people value. A sense of place and identity is important to people. People want their local area to be thriving and the physical spaces and community assets are an important part of this. The community buildings, activities and green spaces are all part of what makes our local area and have provided much respite over the last year.

Kent is a diverse county, spanning from the North Downs to the East Coast; rural countryside in the Weald to the urban areas of North Kent; traditional market towns and villages to planned garden communities at Otterpool and Ebbsfleet. Kent has a strong identity, but it also has distinct identities found within this large county and it is the connections within these unique places that make a community.

### **Social sector and the local economy**

Increasingly as public service policy requires a collaborative place-based approach, civil society must be part of the conversation. The needs of places can be represented by insights from local communities but also the social sector, which is a significant part of the local economy. This is particularly important in a county the size of Kent, that we can hear from the diverse communities that exist.

The social sector makes a significant contribution to the local economy, creating vibrant and diverse places whilst reinvesting back into their communities. Registered charities and social enterprises are a significant employer in Kent, estimates for the southeast state that there are 44,000-62,000 people employed in social enterprises (this data is not available at Kent level). Meanwhile registered charities in Kent with an income of over £500K, employ around 8,799 people and the sector contributes £300m to the local economy. Many social enterprises employ people who could not work in the mainstream labour market, with 44% of social enterprises nationally employing people from disadvantaged communities<sup>16</sup>. They are also more likely to be led by and recruit staff from the BAME backgrounds, although there is still evidence of limitations within the sector<sup>17</sup>. The social value of this should not be overlooked especially given the positive impact we know employment has on wellbeing.





Nationally the charity sector spends 86% of its income on charitable activities or their core mission, which in turn creates investment within our local area. For Kent's charities, this means £258m of its £300m income is potentially spent on charitable activities in our communities.

The contribution of volunteers cannot be overlooked, with around 19,000 volunteers in Kent supporting major large and medium-sized charities. However, this does not include the countless volunteers running, very often without paid staff, small and micro-organisations across our communities. The value of formal volunteering is estimated to be around £23.9bn (2016) nationally according to the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). The significant contribution volunteering has as a route to paid employment must also not be overlooked.

It is therefore important that we ensure the voice of the social sector is heard within the local economy as a significant contributor. When we talk about growth in Kent this must be inclusive and hearing the voice of the social sector will help us to achieve this, given that many of these organisations represent and very often employ, those who are most disadvantaged in our communities. We will work through our engagement with partners to advocate for this across the different engagement forums that exist.

## **Resilient communities – tackling social isolation**

If resilience is measured by a community's capability to cope with uncertainty and change, then our communities across Kent have shown great resilience over the last year. We have seen that building resilience is very often best achieved at the local level. What makes communities resilient is as diverse and complex as the communities themselves; whilst the state plays a role in this it is also the myriad of local organisations, community networks and trusted engagement channels, the community leaders, and local volunteers. It is all these that have helped to provide local 'resilience' over the last year but more importantly will continue to do so.

It is often civil society that is closest to the ground and nurtures relationships, it helps to connect people across diverse communities; helping to combat loneliness and social isolation. For an area such as Kent with its many rural communities there are also particular challenges in terms of isolation, accessibility, and connectivity and the active communities in these areas offer important support networks to local people. It is this informal infrastructure that sprang into action quickly during the early days of the pandemic and provided that much needed support to those shielding or isolated. Whilst we knew the importance of this and the detrimental impact of loneliness before, the pandemic shone a light even further into the vital role of community support and the importance of local connections. Whilst formal structures by their nature took time to respond, the informal had already galvanised.

<sup>16</sup> State of Social Enterprise, 2017 Social Enterprise UK

<sup>17</sup> [SEUK-Year-of-COVID-report-v3.pdf \(socialenterprise.org.uk\)](https://socialenterprise.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SEUK-Year-of-COVID-report-v3.pdf)

Social isolation and loneliness are societal issues and can only be combated by a partnership approach - civil society is just one part of the solution. However, civil society is increasingly seen as a central partner in many areas of public policy for example, within the delivery of adult social care and health services. Social prescribing, which refers people to community-based activities and organisations is not a new idea but has seen increasing emphasis within the NHS in helping people, particularly those with long term conditions to stay well or improve their wellbeing. GPs also report that they see between 1 and 5 people a day who have presented mainly because they are lonely<sup>18</sup>. Linking people through social prescribing to existing community groups and activities that are inclusive of people from a range of backgrounds, can help to combat loneliness and support people with long term conditions to stay well or be more resilient.

Within adult social care, there has been a focus for some time on the networks of support that exist within communities and the part that plays in creating innovative ways of supporting people. But also, the preventative effect that access to informal support and networks can have on individuals and their need for more formal support.

Whilst these policy solutions rely upon a vibrant civil society, this social infrastructure does not exist primarily to meet the needs of the public sector. There cannot, therefore, be an expectation that it will be able to meet a greater level of demand without access to the right support and a range of funding sources to enable activities and community support to continue to play an important role.

We know there is a broad spectrum of organisations across our communities such as sports and arts organisations and local groups, some of which may be registered charities or social enterprises but all of which provide opportunities for people to connect and support each other. This strategy marks our commitment to working to ensure that we support the 'social infrastructure' in our communities and that we work with partners to tackle social isolation collectively. This also includes working across the County Council in a way that recognises and seeks to support our communities to be resilient; by working in partnership and collaborating both internally and externally with partners and civil society itself.

We have seen now perhaps in ways less visible before, that a thriving civil society is central to supporting people in their communities, when they need it most. We must ensure that we build on this and that the ability for people to act; for organisations and individuals to be empowered to play an important role within our communities, is not reserved for a pandemic and lost as we move forward.

<sup>18</sup> Jo Cox Commission on Loneliness (2017) *Combatting Loneliness One Conversation at a time: A Call to Action*, London.



## Case Study: **CROWDFUND KENT** Your projects. Our communities. Kent's recovery

**Over the last year we have launched the CrowdFund Kent programme, an idea we investigated in 2019 but accelerated due to Covid. This £500K Fund now forms part of our support offer to the sector and was launched in March 2021 and will run as a pilot for two years, which we will evaluate.**

This programme has shown the innovation that exists within our communities, the dedication of local people to drive forward projects in their local area and the support that can be galvanised within our communities be that through residents or local businesses in backing ideas that are important to the local community. This fund is not about supporting services directed by the County Council, it is about local ideas and innovation that respond to local challenges or simply bring people together to improve their local area and build community resilience from the ground up. It also enables local people to be involved in their local area by backing and supporting local projects that matter to them.

### **The role of community assets**

The assets within our communities, whether that be physical assets such as community spaces, sports clubs, or activities run by local people, all play an important part in making our communities diverse and in bringing people together. These assets provide a shared space, a place for people from a range of backgrounds to meet and socialise and in so doing provide the connections that help to improve our wellbeing. Often these assets are run by organisations anchored in civil society, owned by the community they are set up to support and developed organically. We want to ensure that communities are empowered to take control to respond to needs within their communities and to take a place-shaping role.

We also know the importance of green spaces and parks for our physical and mental health and wellbeing. These spaces are at the heart of our communities, and we know they are important to local people; they can create a sense of identity to a place and help bring people together to combat social isolation. Very often the local community are the driving force behind these assets, they can be mobilised by community leaders and supported by volunteers passionate about their local environment and we have seen many examples of this in our CrowdFund Kent programme.

We know that many community spaces have been closed during the pandemic and indeed some charities and community groups have chosen to give up

space to save costs. However, there is a need for access to community space as we move back to some face-to-face delivery and as people want to enjoy the activities they previously did. How we utilise assets in the community to enable this alongside using digital solutions is something we will need to continue to explore.

KCC has many pivotal physical assets within our communities and has a community leadership role to play in helping shape places and spaces for people across Kent. *Our Future Assets programme* will support us to reimagine our community services and digital and physical presence in communities, working closely with our partners and creating modern, flexible and sustainable spaces which will contribute to our net zero commitments. We want to ensure that these are accessible and inclusive for local community groups and the social sector, offering a space for people to meet or to use these assets to deliver activities. We will also look at how the KCC estate alongside partners including the social sector, can offer a flexible space to support local community infrastructure and in so doing, offer further opportunities for partnership and collaboration within a community or 'place'.

## **Community activities and resources for young people**

Youth services had already become an increasing priority nationally, however the impact of the pandemic on Children and Young people has reinforced this agenda. Whilst experiences will have varied, the disruption to the lives of young people has undoubtedly been significant over the last year.

The *Kent Reconnect Children and Young People's Programme* invites the whole Kent community to join together to provide a range of exciting and supportive opportunities for children and young people during the period to end of August 2022. This programme is an example of recognising the power of local organisations and communities in bringing young people together, to re-engage alongside statutory partners but also the wealth of skills and resources embedded in our local communities.

Kent has a younger age profile than the national average with a greater proportion of young people aged 5-19 years than England. We know that Children and Young People, especially those vulnerable children and those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Events are more likely to be at risk of a long-term wider impacts of Covid. Now more than ever, we must ensure that our communities provide the spaces for young people to develop their skills, networks, and resilience that are positive for their life chances and wellbeing.

Uniformed youth services such as the Scouts, play an important role for many young people as do open access to youth services and district early help hubs. However, we want to support a diverse portfolio of community-based activities. We know that very often the most effective and responsive support for young people is embedded in their local communities and delivered by trusted people in the local community.

We need to create the right conditions to ensure there is a community-based offer of activities for young people that is led by the community and meets the needs of a diverse population. This must include ensuring organisations that support vulnerable and disadvantaged young people can continue to support them into positive activities, steering them away from negative influences into holistic activities such as art, music, sports. We know the importance of civil society and VCSE organisations in supporting all young people and that the best outcomes for all will be achieved by empowering and working alongside our communities and those who are active in supporting the young people within them.

**In addition to the programmes of work underway across the authority aimed at supporting young people, our support to the sector, as outlined in Chapter 3, recognises the need to support a diverse range of organisations in Kent. This will help organisations to grow, sustain community-based activities and support our community assets.**



## Chapter 3

# Supporting the Social Sector

This strategy is not just a document, it is our future commitment to supporting the social sector as a core part of civil society. In this chapter, we set out the range of ways we will do this, including through our investment in infrastructure support, with an agreed budget over the 3-year life of the strategy.

Whilst not a statutory requirement, this is a political priority for the County Council and there is budget commitment for 'infrastructure support' over the life of this strategy. Our [Interim Strategic Plan](#) set out this commitment 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.**

We know that there are many strengths in the sector and not all organisations will require support. That is why our funding will be a contribution to infrastructure support; to support organisations where additional support is **needed** against the objectives we have set out. We believe it is important that we contribute to the infrastructure support required by some to help them to adapt and grow to meet the challenges of the future. However, our support is not intended to create dependency or to be paternalistic but to play a role in supporting a sustainable and independent social sector and vibrant civil society in Kent.

Kent has a diverse and large social sector spanning across 12 districts, made up of micro and small local organisations and larger organisations that may cover multiple geographical areas. There is not one single organisation that can advocate for or support such a diverse sector; however, we are committed to developing the right model of support that works for the needs of Kent organisations. This will involve working with organisations that currently provide that support in a way that is sustainable and creating new ways of supporting the sector, where gaps in support are identified.

The support considerations and objectives set out in this chapter are therefore based upon the unique needs of Kent and the ongoing dialogue and engagement with the sector since 2015 and particularly over the last year.



## **What do we mean by infrastructure support?**

The National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA), who are the national membership body for local sector support and development organisations (infrastructure), sets out the following aims for infrastructure support:

- Every community in England benefits from a thriving local voluntary sector, strengthened through excellent local support and development.
- Any person in England that wants to volunteer, start a charity or social enterprise, or create a voluntary organisation has a place to go for good, local, advice and support.
- Our members have a clear voice, effective influence and engaged support amongst key stakeholders, locally and nationally.

We believe that this underpins what we want to create for Kent and the direction set out in this strategy. However, we want to go further than this so that organisations across diverse communities and of different sizes can contribute to a thriving civil society. Our infrastructure offer in this sense is not about simply supporting those who we fund or work with, it is much more than that. It is also not only about organisational support or access to business support, but is about engagement, with the sector having a voice and being able to influence.

## **Objectives of KCC support for the social sector:**

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- ① **Establishing a strategic relationship with the social sector - so that it can effectively engage and influence**

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- ② **Enabling a sustainable, diverse, and independent social sector in Kent, which can grow and develop**

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- ③ **Enabling a coordinated, properly resourced, and sustainable volunteering system across the county**

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- ④ **Creating the right conditions for small community organisations to respond to communities' needs and for communities to be empowered.**

## **Delivering our infrastructure support offer**

For 2021/22 we have allocated funding to respond to immediate needs post Covid, informed by engagement with the sector and the Action Plan developed by the VCS Recovery Cell. These interim arrangements are also to reflect that the ongoing support offer will sit alongside the framework set out in this strategy, once agreed. However, we will use the learning from the interim arrangements to help us shape the ongoing support offer and the funding mechanisms we use to deliver it be that contract, grants or a hybrid of arrangements. Thereafter the committed budget to support this strategy will be used to deliver against the objectives set out over the life of the strategy.

## Establishing a strategic relationship with the social sector - so that it can effectively engage and influence

During the development of the VCS policy in 2015, the sector told us that they wanted opportunities to network with similar VCSE organisations but also businesses and the public sector. As a result, we established cross-sector networking events twice a year and these were very successful and well attended. When initially developing this strategy in 2019 we wanted to build on this and expand these networks to establish an engagement mechanism that is ongoing and based on mutual respect and allows a free flow of information and exchange of ideas.

However, over the last year our engagement and partnership working has been much improved; a positive outcome of a challenging year. We have put in place forums working with the sector, aimed at improving our engagement with the VCSE and to ensure that engagement is meaningful and timely.

We established a VCS Strategic Partnership Board in January 2021, which is attended by KCC, Districts, NHS Kent and Medway CCG and representation from the VCSE. This Board is an informal board, by that we mean not part of the formal decision making of the County Council but has become a significant and important forum for discussions on cross cutting issues where VCSE organisations are a key partner. This Board was set up to continue the partnership working we have seen over the last year and recognise that the social sector is a key partner. It is starting to enable a flow of information and discussion on key strategic issues from across partners.

The meeting is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services and the Leader of the Council has a standing invite; the Board is focused on providing an engagement mechanism between statutory agencies and the social sector, beyond those we fund or have contractual relationships with. It provides a place to discuss key strategic issues and risks impacting on the social sector and the beneficiaries it supports. It is also a forum for healthy challenge between partners and the sector and provides a space to discuss strategy and plans with a mature and open dialogue.





Alongside this we agreed to establish a VCSE Steering Group, which is chaired by the sector and comprised of representatives from a range of organisations. This sits independently to the Board, but it is intended for the Board to recommend and take items for discussion to the Group and for the Group to highlight issues back to the Board; to enable a two-way communication channel.

These arrangements were put in place as a direct result of the engagement we have undertaken over the last year and whilst much progress has been made and these arrangements are proving very effective, we recognise that they can still be improved.

We do not have one single infrastructure organisation in Kent, which advocates for and engages across the sector; we are working perhaps within an imperfect model or a realistic one given the size and diversity of the County and sector. However, the work we have undertaken over the last year means that our engagement mechanisms are much improved from when we adopted the VCS Policy in 2015 and we are now developing a model that works for the unique needs of Kent. We committed to continuing to work with the Board and Steering Group to consider how this model can evolve alongside our partners such as the NHS and district councils. Particularly, we will work with the Steering Group to consider how it can become more established as an engagement forum for the sector. In response to consultation feedback, we will work with the Chair to evolve the membership and terms of the Group to ensure it is well recognised by the sector and creates an engagement mechanism to the wider sector, extending its reach. Whilst it can never represent a sector that is diverse, and which can never speak entirely with one voice; we can strengthen its representation. The representatives on the Group must be actively sharing information back out and representing the sector, not their organisation for this Group to continue to be an effective mechanism for the County to Council to engage with.

This equally requires us as a County Council to consider how we can support this forum without undermining its independence, recognising the time and commitment it requires from organisations who very often have limited resources; we do not want this to be a barrier to organisations engaging and stifling the diversity of representation.

However, alongside this we want to ensure that through our engagement mechanisms, we can be informed about the range of organisations and activities that people value within our communities, that are driven by local people, and which operate entirely independently. We believe we can have a role in supporting forums where collaboration can take place, with a range of organisations meeting in informal settings this could be in person, but we will also explore the use of digital, taking lessons from the last year.

It is not for the Council to force organisations that are independent to collaborate, but we can have a role in convening and creating the right environment that can make collaboration a possibility alongside partners and

we will work with them to consider how we can best support or tap into local forums.

Organisations have reported that they have pulled together during the pandemic, with 40% saying they had collaborated with other third-party organisations more than they usually would<sup>19</sup> and we want to build on this. This may not be best delivered by the County Council, but we can use our infrastructure budget to help facilitate this and we will consider how best we can achieve this alongside the development of the Board and Steering Group.



<sup>19</sup> [Kent Community Foundation Survey of Kent's Charitable Sector \(kentcf.org.uk\)](https://www.kentcf.org.uk)

# Enabling a sustainable, diverse, and independent social sector in Kent, which can grow and develop

Our offer of support to the sector will enable the social sector in Kent to be sustainable and its independence upheld. Whilst KCC has a role in supporting the sector to achieve this, our support funding will always be a contribution to help organisations to access support at critical times or to help them evolve; it is not on-going support.

We recognise that recent times have been incredibly turbulent for organisations and that to meet the challenges ahead will require organisations to rethink strategies and plans. The importance of organisations being able to access funding through a diverse range of sources is not only important to upholding the sector's independence but also creates more financial resilience.

We recognise the diversity in the sector and that to support organisations to grow and diversify means recognising that the needs are varied and cannot be met by one single organisation. Whilst there are some similarities between social enterprises to Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO), to registered charities and community groups, there are also many more distinctions between them. There are also differences in the needs of small to medium to large organisations. Therefore, our support offer in relation to sector sustainability, diversity and growth must reflect the range of needs and be flexible enough to meet them.

**We put in place the Strategic Recovery Fund in 2020 and are repeating this in 2021, working with Kent Community Foundation. This £300K Fund (per round) offered small grants for organisations to then buy in support, capacity, or expertise to help them to diversify and adapt post Covid. Access to this type of 'business support' was indeed ranked a priority in the original consultation on this strategy in 2020. This fund is primarily about access to support, to develop organisational and financial plans, to improve digital skills, diversify funding and leadership and board development. The fund is demand led and therefore the range of support that grant recipients access, the organisations they use to deliver support and the impact this has will be used to inform our ongoing support offer and how best this should be delivered. We will also ensure we work with colleagues from across the Council who may also be delivering similar support for example, funding that is available for Business Growth to social enterprises and trading charities.**



However, using the information and insights we have to date we expect the future business support element of our infrastructure offer to be focused on access to the following:

### **Organisational support and development**

It is not always clear to organisations who is best to go to for support, and trusted advice, especially advice that is sympathetic to the specific needs of the social sector. This may be for support to set up an organisation, or advice on governance to develop an organisation but also to rethink strategies to develop an existing organisation.

In recent years there has been a focus on 'blended funding', diversifying income through a mix of contracts, grants, and social finance or loans and we recognise that some organisations have embraced this. However, diversifying income requires the time, capacity, and skills of people within organisations to plan business models, identify funding and complete applications or indeed undertake procurement processes. Access to the right expertise to support an organisation through those processes, whether that is taking social finance, a loan or going through a public procurement process can be invaluable.

However, we know that for many organisations time and capacity for their employees to focus on this is an issue and paying for expertise and support may not always be easy to justify when there are pressing demands on budgets. We appreciate that for the smallest organisations in our communities some financial models and funding may never be appropriate, but we also know that many are working with very low or no reserves and are therefore financially less resilient and most at risk of closure. For these organisations access to good organisational and financial advice is even more important as is expertise around public procurement and fundraising.

We also know that for some organisations there are additional barriers to accessing funding, for example the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) recently launched *The Phoenix Fund*, a community-led fund co-designed and co-led by community leaders from across Black and Minoritised groups in England, designed to target groups that had no previous engagement; 65 % of the organisations that applied to the fund had no previous history with the NLCF.

There are both lessons to be taken from this in terms of the way funders ensure their funds are accessible but also the additional and appropriate support that some charities and community groups may need to access funding from a range of sources.

We will therefore embed access to a diverse range of organisational support and advice, including developing funding strategies and diversifying income, in our infrastructure offer.

## **Leadership skills and training**

We know that for organisations to grow or adapt they need strong leadership and that many organisations may have seen changes in their leadership and staffing over the last year. The Trustees and Chief Executives of the many VCSE organisations across Kent need to be able to access the support, mentoring and training they need to drive forward their organisation. They also need to ensure that the organisation is well run, complying with regulation and that effective approaches are in place to support equality, diversity, and inclusion an agenda that has grown in importance particularly over the last year.

Every organisation that delivers charitable activities must also safeguard volunteers, staff members, participants, and donors. Organisations must be run in a way that actively prevents harm, harassment, bullying abuse, and neglect. It is important that all organisations do safeguarding well and that they create a safe environment where everyone is respected and valued. We need to ensure that leaders of organisations can access the support and guidance they need to strengthen safeguarding practice.

We will therefore look at how we can support access to leadership training but also training and support for Board development and this will be informed by the impact monitoring and data we receive through the Strategic Recovery Fund.

## **Digital**

Digital had increasingly become a vital way to transform organisations, making them more efficient. We also know that digital platforms can offer many opportunities and indeed for many small grassroots organisations, social media may have contributed to their set up attracting people to get behind a local cause. However, the use of digital communication channels has become important in the last year, in ways we could never really have imagined.

Technology has proved vitally important in helping people to be connected and to deliver services to beneficiaries. Previously digital skills were not something all VCSE organisations had access to or have previously prioritised but over the last year the majority of organisations in Kent reported that they moved online and 60% state they will continue to do so.<sup>20</sup>

It is worth acknowledging that not all services will continue to be delivered online; whilst the last year has proved the importance of digital platforms, it has also shown us how much we value face to face and human contact. Indeed, many organisations that reported continuing to deliver online also reported Covid restrictions as a barrier to returning to face to face; once these are lifted many are likely to want to move to in person or at least a hybrid arrangement. However, digital skills are about much more than delivering services online, the use of digital is also a way of engaging supporters, of reaching out to communities and fundraising.

<sup>20</sup> [Kent Community Foundation Survey of Kent's Charitable Sector \(kentcf.org.uk\)](https://www.kentcf.org.uk)

We will, therefore, embed access to digital skills, be that social media support, website development or upskilling staff, as a part of our infrastructure support going forward. We believe that any infrastructure offer to the sector must recognise the need for digital skills and be able to offer that support to VCSE organisations going forward to be effective.



# Enabling a coordinated, properly resourced, and sustainable volunteering system across the county

This strategy has set out the many ways that volunteers are integral to civil society and the importance of enabling social action. Whilst the volunteer effort over the last year, be that informal or formal volunteering must be recognised for its incredible contribution, volunteers quietly play an important part in our communities every day. Be that Trustees, those leading small community groups or supporting voluntary organisations in the delivery of support to their beneficiaries.

However, we know that recruiting and retaining volunteers takes time and resources and that the ground swell of volunteer action we have seen will subside. Voluntary organisations often struggle to recruit volunteers, indeed 43% of organisations in the recent Kent Community Foundation survey stated that they would struggle to recruit volunteers in the coming months<sup>21</sup>. Support for volunteers was also ranked a priority by responders in the 2020 consultation on this strategy.

The VCS Recovery Cell Action Plan set out a commitment to look at how we can create a sustainable model of volunteering infrastructure across the County to ensure that organisations can access the support they need to recruit and retain volunteers and that volunteers can find opportunities that meet their needs.

As a County Council we have funded volunteer infrastructure in different ways in the past and many district councils continue to fund their local volunteer centres, where they exist. However, there has not been a consistent offer of volunteer infrastructure support across the County for some time and the model of volunteer centres has changed alongside funding changes. By volunteer infrastructure we mean support to recruit and retain volunteers (volunteer brokerage) and access to the guidance and advice needed to support this.

Across a County the size of Kent we know that there is a need for access to good support at a local level, however the model of support also needs to be sustainable and offer a consistent standard of guidance, resources, and training across the County. It also needs to be able to promote volunteering, attracting volunteers into opportunities across the range of organisations that exist within Kent. It also should be able to capture data in a consistent way to show the value of volunteering.



**We have committed to funding a pilot on volunteering infrastructure across the County for 12 months starting in 2021. This funding will be used to help to develop a sustainable model of support, which encourages volunteering and provides good quality and consistent support and guidance required to effectively recruit and retain volunteers. This pilot will not necessarily mean funding an organisation in every district but will look to develop a local presence across the County in a sustainable way; in some cases that may mean organisations covering more than one area as is the case in some areas currently. It will be a starting point and will build on the good practice that exists, avoiding duplication. The pilot will be delivered by Ashford Volunteer Centre as the lead organisation working with the other locality-based volunteer infrastructure organisations in partnership.**

We will evaluate the pilot, and we will alongside the grant recipients review the findings to inform the best way to deliver the model going forward. However, our funding for this pilot and the ongoing model will be a contribution; intended to help leverage funding from other partners and funders in the County or to supplement income models. The value and contribution volunteering infrastructure makes to our communities and the benefits this brings is not isolated to the County Council. We hope we can use the finding of this evaluation to work with partners and other funders to support the model developed going forward.



# Creating the right conditions for small community organisations to respond to communities' needs and for communities to be empowered



We want our support to the sector to focus on creating the right environment for civil society to flourish, supporting activities or innovations in our communities, which help to create a sense of place and identity across our communities.

We recognise that community organisations are often small and led by one or two leaders within the local community. These organisations are organic and grow from a need often recognised at the very local level. It is these organisations that can support the diversity in our communities and often represent those that may feel their voice is not heard. These organisations may also provide a place for young people to meet and take part in positive activities or provide people with social networks that improve their lives and wellbeing.

These organisations are not always set within traditional charity structures, they may be micro charities but equally, they may be un-constituted associations and groups. They may also be led by people from diverse backgrounds be that Black and Minority Ethnic groups or by people with the lived experiences of the beneficiaries they support.

Organisations such as these are doing incredible things in our communities but are often operating under challenging circumstances and on the goodwill of volunteers or a very small number of paid staff. We think it is important that we understand the community-led activities and groups that contribute to the quality of life of our residents. The independence of these organisations should not be compromised; we do not want to interfere, but we would like to ensure that the right conditions exist in Kent for people to be empowered to act in their local area. Some of this support may come through the organisational/business support already described or through our engagement channels in the future but we have also been supporting these organisations and activities through our CrowdFund Kent programme.

**The Crowdfund Kent programme is a pilot for 2 years and is currently focused on supporting Covid Recovery. The funding for this pilot is currently in addition to our infrastructure support budget.**

**We will be evaluating this pilot and will use the findings of that evaluation to either expand the CrowdFund Kent programme and embed it in our infrastructure offer or use the learning to develop an alternative way to support community led organisations and activities that support the objectives of this strategy. We will also be continuing to reach out to partners and other funders, including businesses to see how they can support the CrowdFund Kent programme.**

Crowdfunding has enabled us to have a greater awareness of activities and projects that are at the micro level, being delivered by local people with a passion for their local area or cause. It has also leveraged significant funding into the County, with KCC only one of many contributors to a project. The projects are not intended to deliver KCC services or to be for the sole benefit of KCC but to support community led and community backed ideas. Crowdfunding projects must be able to show the benefit for the wider community to be successful and this programme has shown the wide community support that does exist for local initiatives. By that we mean the many residents and local businesses that have got behind campaigns and supported initiatives in their local area.



## Fair Funding as an enabler to a sustainable social sector

Our infrastructure offer is one way of supporting the sector, but our own funding practices must equally support not destabilise the sector. If these are right, then it will enable continued diversity in those that deliver services funded by the Council but also help to ensure our grants and contracts are accessible to a wide range of organisations, without creating dependency and threatening the independence of some organisations.

Our processes around funding must take into consideration the time and resources it takes for organisations to apply for grants or contracts. Where possible, funding should be over the medium term to allow time for ideas to be tested, embedded and to create some stability. We must also adhere to the Best Value Duty and uphold the principles of reasonable notice periods on funding decisions.

### **Commissioning**

It is through our commissioning process that we should establish and continually assess the best mechanism for delivering and funding services, whether that is grants or contracts or a mix of both. The grant funding framework set out later in this strategy is therefore inherently linked to our commissioning practice.

Our commissioning approach has evolved since the VCS policy in 2015 and we are now looking at how this model should develop in the future to ensure that commissioning has a greater emphasis on locality and to look at how our commissioning can work with communities to build resilience and improve the focus on place. This is in recognition that often the real added value is found at the local level and the need to build more collaborative commissioning arrangements.

Whilst this strategy is not a commissioning document nor is it focused solely on the relationship with providers of services funded by the Council, the significance of KCC's spend with VCSE organisations means it is an integral part of our relationship. How we fund and the process and decisions we make as a Council ultimately do impact a proportion of the sector and represent a significant amount of sector income as the role of the sector in providing directly commissioned services has increased. It is also true that our approach to commissioning and funding helps to set a tone for our relationship and partnership working with the sector and it therefore needs to be in line with our wider strategy.

It is fair to say that there has been some criticism by the social sector of commissioning arrangements, which are often seen to be an overly process-driven, transactional approach with an emphasis on procurement and contract management and this is recognised. This is not just a criticism in Kent; the burden of greater regulation and resources needed by VCSE organisations

to meet the requirements of public contracting, is widely debated. It is a real challenge we cannot simply ignore. We know that good engagement and partnership working can help to overcome barriers to procurement; by developing Market Position Statements and early engagement with providers, including the social sector we can help organisations that are engaged in public procurement to align to our future commissioning intentions and plans, where they choose to do so. We must also continue to work with providers, particularly smaller providers to ensure that our commissioning standards and processes are proportionate and are developed with a greater recognition of the diversity of potential providers in the market. This includes setting realistic timescales for bidders and offering support or signposting to resources where appropriate; this could include accessing our business support funding.

There are also opportunities, perhaps highlighted in the last year to look at better ways of proactively collaborating, taking a more flexible and creative approach to our commissioning, including using a mix of funding mechanisms. We must ensure that we build back better and how we do this alongside key partners in the local Kent economy, such as the social sector will be pivotal to our success.

The last year has also highlighted some of the complicated dependencies, which exist between the social sector and public sector. As parts of the sector have increasingly become a significant contracted provider of public services over the last 20 years or more, there have been longstanding debates about the challenges this may have created in certain parts of the sector but also that some funding arrangements have had a destabilising effect. It is also fair to say that there is dependency in certain parts of the public sector on the social sector to meet demand for services and a real risk if those organisations are no longer financially viable.

Ultimately it is for the Board of an organisation to set their risk appetite, to determine their financial strategy and to decide whether to enter contracts. There have been concerns raised about the budget for contracts, which the social sector feels do not appear to support full cost recovery and sets a false expectation that social sector providers can raise other funding to meet the gap. This is not just a Kent issue, although we have significant expenditure with the sector for the delivery of services, but this is an issue which requires us to work in partnership to understand in more detail. We are committed to looking at the risk and issues within the existing commissioning model as part of our work around our future commissioning model and to better understand the challenges. This work will involve both KCC and engagement with sector representatives. This work once undertaken will be reported to the VCS Strategic Partnership Board and VCSE Steering Group.

## Social Value

The Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 required local authorities to ‘consider’ social value when commissioning services subject to the Public Procurement Regulations 2020. This requirement is linked to a local authority’s duty to consider overall best value, as described, and means that certain public body commissioners must consider the following at pre-procurement:

- How the services they are going to buy might improve the social, economic or environmental well-being of the area
- How they might secure this improvement; and
- Whether they should consult on these issues.

The Council has continued to develop its approach to social value and work is ongoing to ensure consistent guidance and standards across the Council. We are committed to maximising the community benefits of every penny we spend and to improving the economic, social, and environmental wellbeing of Kent, by not simply considering the price of a service, but what can be achieved with the resources available.

We will consider and act to make sure that social value can be enhanced, and equality can be advanced both:

- through the delivery of a service itself, and
- through additional value that a provider might offer in addition to the core requirements of a contract.

However, we also expect our providers to consider how they can be of benefit to the local community through increasing economic opportunities, improving social wellbeing and minimising environmental damage.

- **Local Employment:** creation of local employment and training opportunities
- **Local Economy:** supporting local SMEs and buying locally where possible
- **Community development:** development of resilient local community and community support organisations, especially in those areas and communities identified as having the greatest need
- **Good Employer:** support for staff development and welfare within the service providers’ own organisation and within their supply chain
- **Green and Sustainable:** protecting the environment, minimising waste

In addition, we have now procured a social value platform - *the [Social Value Exchange](#)*, which is an online marketplace used by a number of local authorities to maximise social value in contracts. This tool will enable

commissioners to generate resources into community organisations through our procurement processes, with the opportunity to leverage up to £1bn of the Councils procurement spend to get tailored resources into local community organisations. Work to develop this model within Kent is underway and will include engaging VCSE representatives to help shape how we use this platform in the future.

## **Grant Framework for funding VCSE organisations:**

We know that grants play an important role in supporting organisations within the community in pursuit of their aims, to stimulate the growth of new micro organisations and for developing new and innovative approaches to delivering services.

We created our grant funding framework in 2015 recognising that practice around grants had not always been consistent in the past and grants had sometimes funded historic arrangements that were not seen to be accessible to a wide variety of organisations. Grants had also been used inappropriately in the past for the delivery of services that have then been effectively 'contract managed'. Equally, where grants have been used to support innovation and new projects, there had been little consideration for the longer-term sustainability of existing projects or the infrastructure of organisations themselves, and often with timescales for delivery that are too short.

The grant framework has been welcomed and has been largely successful in providing consistency and transparency in much of our grant funding and improving the way grants are allocated. We have been working hard over the past 6 years in developing our grant framework and have made some adjustments based on feedback to improve practice and we will continue to do so.

We developed our grant framework before the government published its then Grant Standards. These have now been developed into the Government Functional Standard for general grants and the principles we set out in 2015 largely adhere to the principles subsequently set out by the government. However, KCC grant awards are often of lower value than those typical of government and therefore we will continue to take a proportionate approach to applying the general principles. Where significant new grants are undertaken, we will consider on a case-by-case basis if a more rigorous grant business case and process are required.

However, we are also committed to supporting a sustainable funding environment, and to consider a wide range of ways to fund or resource the sector. This strategy aims to recognise the need to support the sector to explore different funding options, however, it will also ensure that our approach to grant funding does not build dependency in the sector and is open and transparent.

In our grant framework we are referring to **General Grants** as defined by the Cabinet Office:

*Grants made by departments or their grant-making Arm's Length Bodies to outside bodies to reimburse expenditure on agreed specific items or functions, and often paid only on statutory conditions. These are the grants, which are most closely related in administration to contract procurement, whilst remaining legally distinct.*

The grant framework also endorses the principle set out in Managing Public money that:

*Grants should not be confused with contracts. A public sector organisation funds by grant as a matter of policy, not in return for services provided under contract<sup>22</sup>.*

***More details on our grant framework and the criteria it sets out are found in Annex 2.***

<sup>22</sup> Edited from Managing Public Money (HM Treasury 2013 with annexes revised 2019) Annex 5.1

## Reviewing and Delivering this Strategy

We will use the framework set out earlier in this strategy to measure success and progress; we will report on this annually. This will be shared with Cabinet, P&R Cabinet Committee, the Strategic Partnership Board (VCS) and the VCS Steering Group.

We will commit to a full review of the strategy by the end of 2024.





## Annex 1: National Data on registered charities

The National Council for Voluntary Organisation’s (NCVO) Almanac 2020 reports that the income of the sector grew by 2% to £53.5bn in 2017-18<sup>23</sup>. Income had also grown for the preceding 3 years. The growth in total income was largely due to increasing income from the public; income from Government also grew after three years of slightly falling income.

<b>Charity size</b>	<b>Income banding</b> (based on NCVO bandings)
<b>Micro</b>	Less than £10,000
<b>Small</b>	£10,000 - £100,000
<b>Medium</b>	£100,000 - £1m
<b>Large</b>	£1m - £10m
<b>Major</b>	More than £10m
<b>Super-Major</b>	More than £100m

In 2017/18, income decreased for micro, small and medium sized organisations nationally but grew for bigger organisations. More than half (£29bn) of the sector’s income was generated by major and super-major voluntary organisations – those with an income over £10m. Their share of the sector’s income has almost continuously grown from 38% in 2000/01 to 54% in 2017/18. Much of the increase was concentrated in super-major voluntary organisations with an income of over £100m. In 2017/18, the number of super-major voluntary organisations continued to grow from 51 to 56, accounting for 23% of the sector’s total income alone. The growth in the income of super-major organisations can be explained by their increased number but also their strategies and decision-making. They include organisations that used to be former government institutions, organisations that have grown through mergers and those that centralised funds where previously they were held internationally. The public continues to be the largest income source for the sector, accounting for almost half of the total income, followed by government.

The sector also makes a considerable contribution to the UK economy. According to the estimation method developed by NCVO and ONS, the voluntary sector contributed £18.2bn to the UK economy in 2017/18, representing 0.9% of total GDP. About 910,000 people worked in the voluntary sector in the UK in June 2019, equivalent to 2.8% of the UK workforce. 23 UK Civil Society Almanac 2020 | Home | NCVO.

<sup>23</sup> [Sector finances - Financials | UK Civil Society Almanac 2021 | NCVO](#)

Furthermore, an estimated 11.9 million people formally volunteered at least once a month in 2017/18. The most recent figures from ONS for 2016 estimated the value of voluntary activity in the UK to be £23.9bn.

## Annex 2: Grant Framework

Under the Local Authorities Data Transparency code, KCC has a duty to publish all grants to the Voluntary and Community Sector on our website through a grants [register](#).

When awarding grants, it is the responsibility of the grant owner (KCC officer) to make sure they comply with these processes, which will enable us to monitor the impact of our funding, ensure transparency and identify the type of grants being awarded across the authority.

### What is a grant?

Grants should not be confused with contracts. A public sector organisation funds by grant as a matter of policy, not in return for services provided under contract. Edited from *Managing Public Money (HM Treasury 2013)*

### KCC VCS grant standards:

- All VCS grants must be subject to an open application process, if not there must be a record of the decision for a direct award
- All VCS grants must adhere to the standardised definitions set out in KCC's VCS policy
- All VCS grants must be subject to a grant agreement
- All grants must be linked to and clearly deliver against KCC outcomes
- All grants must be subject to proportionate evaluation /monitoring framework set out in the grant agreement
- All grants must have a clearly defined grant owner and accountable officer

### KCC grant definitions:

**Innovation Grants** (one off):

- payment for innovations/pilots
- payment to help develop new organisations which will contribute to the Council's Strategic framework and priorities.

### **Strategic Grants:**

- Payments to organisations of strategic importance given under the Local authority's wellbeing power(as provided in the Localism Act 2011) to help the authority to achieve its strategic and supporting outcomes

Grants may be made as direct awards and not through a competitive process but must meet the defined criteria (set out below).

Both Strategic and Innovation grants will be awarded over the three year MTFP period and where possible and appropriate will be awarded on a multi-year basis with payments made annually. KCC reserves the right to refuse multi-year agreements where necessary.

### **Direct awards:**

We recognise that in some cases it may be appropriate for grants to be paid as direct awards and not through a competitive process. In these cases, the grant must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- a) payments made to an organisation which inhabits a unique position or offers a particularly specialist function;
- b) payments made to an organisation which has a track record of excellence in a particular area;
- c) or in the event of market failure.

Where direct awards are made, we require these to be recorded internally.

### **Applying for grants:**

All grant opportunities to the VCS, except the direct awards, will be advertised on the [Community Grants Funding page on Kent.gov.uk](#) in agreement with our Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance team.

### **Combined Member Grants:**

These will continue to be advertised via the current application process set out on the [Community Grants Funding page](#) and managed by the Member Support Team.

Kent County Council



**Strategy for Kent 2021-2024**

Supporting connected communities  
and a sustainable social sector in Kent

# Kent County Council



# Society

## Strategy for Kent 2021-2024

Supporting connected communities  
and a sustainable social sector in Kent

## Executive Summary

## Definitions and Terminology

### What do we mean by civil society?

By civil society, we mean all those individuals, informal and formal groups and organisations that operate outside of state control and for the primary purpose of social good.

Whilst we recognise that private business can be socially motivated, this strategy focuses on those organisations that do not distribute profits and are not part of the statutory sector.

Whilst the 'social sector' as we refer to it, is at the heart of a strong civil society we believe the terminology of civil society is important in establishing that social good happens outside of the state and in many different forms. This is not always through the traditional organisational structures, such as registered charities that we have referred to as the social sector. It also includes the more informal and often un-constituted community groups and individuals taking an active role in their local community, to improve their local area or champion a particular cause with a primary aim of delivering social good.

### VCSE

When we refer to organisations in the strategy as opposed to the 'sector' we use the term 'VCSE', which relates to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

### Social sector

We have used the term 'social sector' in this strategy, where referring to the 'sector' as opposed to organisations. We also wanted to broaden out the definition of 'voluntary sector' to recognise the important contribution that social enterprises make to our local communities. Whilst fundamentally different from charities they share the objective to complete a social mission.



## Introduction

This strategy recognises the role of civil society in Kent and sets out how Kent County Council (KCC) will work to support a strong and vibrant civil society across our communities. This strategy replaces our Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) policy agreed in 2015 and is the first Civil Society Strategy for KCC.

We originally developed and consulted on this strategy in early 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic. We subsequently decided to pause the development due to Covid and allow time to reflect on the challenges and impact of the last year. However, we believe that the importance of this strategy has only grown in the last year. Not only because of the incredible response we have seen from our communities, voluntary organisations, and local people but because of the undeniable impact the pandemic has and will continue to have on us as individuals, communities and as organisations and the need to recognise and respond to that.

Prior to this we had seen the publication of the first Government Civil Society Strategy. The national strategy shift informed our decision to broaden out the VCS policy into a new Civil Society Strategy, however, 'Civil Society' also allowed us to recognise the contribution of both the registered charities and voluntary organisations but also the many informal groups and individual volunteers who play an important role in our communities. This also reflected the conversations we had with the sector since the publication of the VCS policy.

This direction still feels right; we have seen evidence of the resilience and innovation that exists both within the social sector and when our communities or 'civil society' come together. This strategy we hope celebrates that civic activity and community spirit and sets out our ambitions for the County Council's relationship with Civil Society in Kent.

Finally, but importantly this strategy sets out how we will support the social sector, not only through our funding practice such as our approach to grant funding but also through our funding of infrastructure support to the sector. .

The KCC Civil Society strategy is an important document for the authority, reflecting the crucial role the social sector plays in achieving strong and resilient communities across our county. It is also a key strategy in delivering against the outcomes of the Council's [Interim Strategic plan](#).

## Aims and objectives of this strategy:

- ① a recognition of the contribution of civil society in Kent and the VCSE (the 'social sector') as a core part of that
- ② a commitment to supporting civil society to flourish
- ③ a commitment to a strategic relationship with the social sector that recognises its diversity and goes beyond those that have a financial relationship with the Council
- ④ a commitment to build on the partnership working we have seen over the last year between both public sector partners and the social sector, which recognises the sector as an equal partner
- ⑤ a commitment to support the social sector to be sustainable
- ⑥ a commitment to safeguarding the independence of VCSE organisations.

## How will this strategy be used?

- to shape our relationship with civil society in the future and the social sector as a core part of that
- to provide a framework to guide the approach to the Council's engagement with the social sector
- to provide consistency in our approach to grant funding to the social sector
- to shape our commitment to an offer of support to the social sector, and the principles which underpin it including fair funding.





How will we measure our progress and success?

We will have succeeded when:



## Chapter 1

# People

Whilst civil society is independent of the state a proportion of the social sector is an important provider of publicly funded services to individuals on our behalf. However, the role of civil society in supporting people is broader than that; it often provides that wider safety net, supporting people in our communities outside of state support



During our consultation people described civil society as ‘people coming together to support each other, ensuring our communities are inclusive’. It is through the social action of individuals within our communities that social connections are often created that are vital to improving our wellbeing.

This strategy does therefore recognise the sector’s role in delivering public services, something which has grown in the last 20 years, but it does not solely focus on this. Whether delivering public services or providing more informal support, we know that over the last 18 months this support has been vital for many people that have been particularly impacted by Covid and will continue to feel the longer term impacts more than most. This includes people with learning disabilities, care home residents, informal carers, those in low paid employment, vulnerable children, people in the justice system, people with mental health conditions, people living in poverty and Black and Minority Ethnic Groups.

Community groups and VCSE organisations have been a lifeline to many over the last year and will need to continue to support communities to build back, whilst many charities will offer the more formal services to people dealing with the longer-term impact on their lives.

Integral to a thriving civil society are also the countless individuals who volunteer, whether this is by setting up and running activities that bring people together, championing the needs of their local community or serving as trustees. The volunteer effort during the pandemic has been monumental, whilst many volunteers had to shield, new volunteers stepped up and the volunteer infrastructure played a central role in supporting those shielding in Kent as well as in the vaccination effort, which continues. However, the role of volunteers is not something we should only celebrate during a crisis; volunteers are the backbone of the many community organisations that exist day to day. We want to ensure that people are empowered to take part in their communities going forward in the same way they have over the last year.

## What KCC will do

This strategy sets out our commitment to support the social sector and civil society to ensure that it can continue in the many ways it supports people in our community; our support offer sets this out in Chapter 3. However, this strategy also sets out the relationship we want to establish with civil society in Kent; one that recognises the diversity of the sector and empowers individuals to be active in their local area and to continue the civic contribution we have seen during the pandemic.



## Chapter 2

# Places

Civil society enhances the places we live in. It provides opportunities for diverse communities to meet, it celebrates the history and heritage of our local areas, creates social networks through shared spaces and activities that people value. A sense of place and identity is important to people. People want their local area to be thriving and the physical spaces and community assets are an important part of this and often cared for or run by local organisations and volunteers

However, the social sector also makes a significant contribution to the local economy, creating vibrant and diverse places whilst reinvesting back into their communities. Registered charities and social enterprises are a significant employer in Kent, whilst the significant contribution of 19,000 volunteers (across major, large and medium sized organisations) and the financial value of this should not be overlooked.

Civil society has the ability to connect people across our communities, it is this informal infrastructure that sprang into action at the start of the pandemic and was able to swiftly respond. We have seen that building resilience is very often best achieved at the local level and civil society plays an important role in tackling important issues such as social isolation and loneliness. What makes communities resilient is as diverse and complex as the communities themselves; whilst the state plays a role in this it is also the myriad of local organisations, community networks and trusted engagement channels, the community leaders, and local volunteers.

We also know that very often the most effective and responsive support for young people is embedded in their local communities; through both uniformed youth services such as the Scouts, to open access youth services and more informal community organisations, all supporting young people into positive activities. We know that the best outcomes for all will be achieved by empowering and working alongside our communities and those who are active in supporting the young people within them.

### What KCC will do

We will ensure the voice of the social sector is heard within the local economy as a significant contributor. When we talk about growth in Kent this must be inclusive and hearing the voice of the social sector will help us to achieve



this, many of the people these organisations represent are amongst the most disadvantaged in our communities.

This strategy seeks to highlight and celebrate the variety of community assets and resources that exist within Kent, but it also sets out a commitment to support them. This includes through our support offer to the social sector set out in Chapter 3 but also working across the County Council in a way that recognises and seeks to support our communities to be resilient. This means working in partnership and collaborating both internally and externally with partners and civil society itself to best meet the needs of our communities and to ensure that individuals can be empowered to play an active role in their local area.



## Chapter 3

# Supporting the Social Sector

This strategy is not just a document, it is our future commitment to supporting the social sector as a core part of civil society. In this chapter, we set out the range of ways we will do this, including through our investment in infrastructure support with an agreed budget over the 3-year life of the strategy. Whilst not a statutory requirement, this is a political priority for the County Council and there is budget commitment for 'infrastructure support' over the life of this strategy.

### Objectives of KCC support for the social sector:

- **Establishing a strategic relationship with the social sector- so that it can effectively engage and influence.**
- **Enabling a sustainable, diverse, and independent social sector in Kent, which can grow and develop.**
- **Enabling a coordinated, properly resourced, and sustainable volunteering system across the county.**
- **Creating the right conditions for small community organisations to respond to communities' needs and for communities to be empowered.**

### Why this is important

We know that there are many strengths in the sector and not all organisations will require support. That is why our funding will be a contribution to infrastructure support; to support organisations where additional support is **needed** against the objectives we have set out. Our support is not intended to create dependency or to be paternalistic but to play a role in supporting a sustainable and independent social sector and vibrant civil society in Kent.

Kent has a diverse and large social sector spanning across 12 districts, made up of micro and small local organisations and larger organisations that may cover multiple geographical areas. There is not one single organisation that can advocate for or support such a diverse sector; however, we are committed to developing the right model of support that works for the needs of Kent



organisations. This will involve working with organisations that currently provide that support in a way that is sustainable and creating new ways of supporting the sector, where gaps in support are identified.

### **What KCC will do**

For 2021/22 we have allocated funding to respond to immediate needs post Covid, informed by engagement with the sector and the Action Plan developed by the VCS Recovery Cell. However, we will use the learning from these interim arrangements to help us shape the ongoing support offer and the funding mechanisms we use to deliver it be that contract, grants or a hybrid of arrangements. Thereafter the committed budget to support this strategy will be used to deliver against the objectives set out over the life of the strategy.

## **Our infrastructure support offer**

### **Establishing a strategic relationship with the social sector - so that it can effectively engage and influence**

#### **What KCC will do**

- Work with the established VCS Strategic Partnership Board to deliver an effective engagement channel on key strategic issues where the VCS and Civil Society have a clear role, based on the principles of mature and open dialogue
- Work with the Board to advocate for and better understand the challenges of the social sector in Kent alongside partners
- Evolve the VCSE Steering Group to ensure it is an effective, representative body for the sector including for small, local organisations and enables effective communication between KCC and the social sector on strategic issues.
- Look at ways in which we can embed wider engagement and collaboration with Civil Society as we evolve the Steering Group model, including working with other partners such as NHS and District Councils to support and tap into local forums.

## **Enabling a sustainable, diverse, and independent social sector in Kent, which can grow and develop**

### **What KCC will do**

- **Make a contribution to funding business support for organisations that need it, this will include access to support on:**
  - Governance and organisational structures (including for new organisations)
  - Digital skills
  - Leadership training
  - Funding strategies, accessing different income streams and financial controls
  - Organisational/business plans and strategies

The best mechanism to deliver this will be informed by our evaluation and impact reporting on the Strategic Recovery Fund, which we have established for 2021/22 and our ongoing engagement with the sector and VCSE Steering Group.

## **Enabling a coordinated, properly resourced, and sustainable volunteering system across the county**

### **What KCC will do**

- **Invest in a Volunteering Infrastructure pilot for 2021-21, led by Ashford Volunteer Centre this will:**
  - Deliver support in the recruitment and retention of volunteers and access to good advice and guidance on volunteering across the County
  - Develop a sustainable model of volunteering infrastructure, that ensures a consistent level of support across the county and leverages funding from a range of sources
  - Evaluate the pilot to inform future funding for volunteering infrastructure.



## **Creating the right conditions for small community organisations to respond to communities' needs and for communities to be empowered.**

### **What KCC will do**

- Provide a contribution for organisations to access business support as outlined to enable organisations to grow and diversify
- Deliver the CrowdfundKent pilot (set to run until the end of 2022), which is aimed at supporting local organisations and projects that are backed by the local community
- Evaluate the impact of this pilot to inform our future support to community organisations and projects to ensure that our communities are empowered.

## **Fair Funding as an enabler to a sustainable social sector**

### **Why is this important**

Our infrastructure offer is one way of supporting the sector, but our own funding practices must equally support not destabilise the sector. If these are right, then it will enable continued diversity in those that deliver services funded by the Council but also help to ensure our grants and contracts are accessible to a wide range of organisations, without creating dependency and threatening the independence of some organisations

Whilst this strategy is not a commissioning document nor is it focused solely on the relationship with providers of services funded by the Council, the significance of KCC's spend with VCSE organisations means it is an integral part of our relationship. How we fund and the process and decisions we make as a Council ultimately do impact a proportion of the sector and represent a significant amount of sector income as the role of the sector in providing directly commissioned services has increased. It is also true that our approach to commissioning and funding helps to set a tone for our relationship and partnership working with the sector and it therefore needs to be in line with our wider strategy.

## What will KCC do

- Adhere to the principles of Best Value Duty
- Continue to embed our grant framework and ensure that grants are accessible, transparent and not creating dependency
- Look at how the commissioning model should develop in the future to ensure that commissioning has a greater emphasis on locality, collaboration and encourages diversity. This includes looking at support, timely engagement and proportionate processes to enable greater access to public procurement
- Commit to undertaking work to better understand the risk and issues within the existing commissioning model. This work will involve both KCC and engagement with sector representatives. This work once undertaken will be reported to the VCS Strategic Partnership Board and VCSE Steering Group.

## Reviewing this strategy

We will use the framework set out earlier in this strategy to measure success and progress; we will report on this annually. This will be shared with Cabinet, P&R Cabinet Committee, the Strategic Partnership Board (VCS) and the VCSE Steering Group.

We will commit to a full review of the strategy by the end of 2024.



**Kent County Council**



**Strategy for Kent 2021-2024**

Supporting connected communities  
and a sustainable social sector in Kent

**Executive Summary**



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Kent County Council



Strategy for Kent 2021-2024

# You Said We Did

## Introduction

In 2019, Kent County Council (KCC) made a commitment to adopt a new Civil Society Strategy (CSS), this was presented to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in November 2019. The first draft of the Strategy was formally consulted on in February 2020, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic, further activity on the document was paused. In 2021 the existing draft was revised, using the analysis and feedback from the previous consultation and this was published for consultation in September 2021.

In 2019, Kent County Council (KCC) made a commitment to adopt a new Civil Society Strategy (CSS), this was presented to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in November 2019. The first draft of the Strategy was formally consulted on in February 2020, however due to the Covid-19 pandemic, further activity on the document was paused. In 2021 the existing draft was revised, using the analysis and feedback from the previous consultation and this was published for consultation in September 2021.

The Civil Society Strategy will replace the Kent Partners Compact, which was last revised in 2012. It sets out KCC's future relationship with civil society and the "social sector" (voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations) as a core part of that relationship.

For the purposes of the Strategy, the term "civil society" relates to "all those individual, informal, and formal groups and organisations that operate outside of state control and for the primary purpose of social good."

The Strategy sets out the objectives and intentions for KCC's future offer of infrastructure support to the social sector (VCSE), the funding agreed for this is £2.1M over the three years of the Strategy and will be allocated against the priorities and framework set out in the Strategy.

Additionally, the Strategy will revise KCC's current grant framework which was developed in 2015 and has been updated based on feedback from the past six years of operation. This is intended to create consistency and clarity in the way we award grants to VCSE organisations across the Council.

This will be a supporting Strategy to the Interim Strategic Plan and longer term, to the new Strategic Statement for the Council.

## Consultation Process

A nine-week formal consultation was undertaken on the draft Strategy in 2020 alongside additional engagement, which took place through VCSE networks and representative bodies to inform the development of the draft.

A VCS Recovery Cell was established during the pandemic as part of the Kent Resilience Forum architecture. The impact assessment and action plan developed by that group of VCS representatives (facilitated by KCC and Medway officers) was used to revise the Strategy.

We undertook a shorter period of formal consultation of 4 weeks to revise the draft Strategy and this took place from the 6th of September to 3rd October 2021. For both consultations we undertook an Equality Impact Assessment and alternative formats were made available to ensure a wide variety of responses.

We have kept the VCS Strategic Partnership Board updated on all stages of the creation of the Strategy and circulated the consultation weblink to our key contacts within KCC and partner organisations (NHS, District Councils and VCS organisations) once it was live.

The Strategy has been discussed at a number of internal KCC meetings including Management Team Meetings for relevant directorates and it has been shared more widely through engagement forums such as the Joint Kent Chief's meeting (District Council representatives). We have worked alongside the new VCSE Steering Group made up of representatives from across the social sector, to inform the development of the revised draft in addition to formal consultation.

The consultation has also been widely distributed across KCC's social media channels, where we received 7,555 impressions on Twitter over the course of the social media campaign with 49 clicks through to the consultation link.

Previously a high-level outline of the Strategy structure was taken to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 8th November 2019. A report outlining our intention to revise the draft went to Cabinet on 24th June 2021.

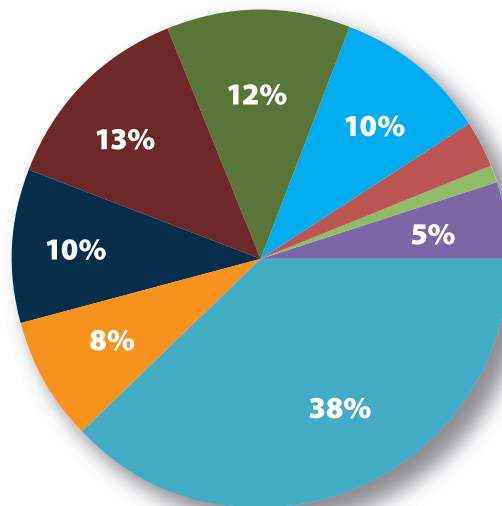
## Respondents

Over the course of the two formal consultations a total of 78 individuals across a number of different areas of the sector have responded. This does not include the engagement undertaken with the VCSE Steering Group.

The below graph shows the distribution for the responses received in relation to their role/organisational capacity. As the graph shows, the majority of responses (69%) were either responding on behalf of a VCSE organisation or were a trustee/volunteer.

### % Of Responses by Role / Organisation

- As a Kent Resident
- As a KCC Elected Member
- On behalf of a registered charity
- On behalf of a community group
- Other
- As a KCC Employee
- As a District / Borough or Parish Councillor
- On behalf of a social enterprise
- As a trustee / volunteer



## Equality Analysis

Responses to the consultation did not raise any concerns relating to protected characteristics.



# How your views helped shape KCC’s Civil Society Strategy “You Said, We Did”

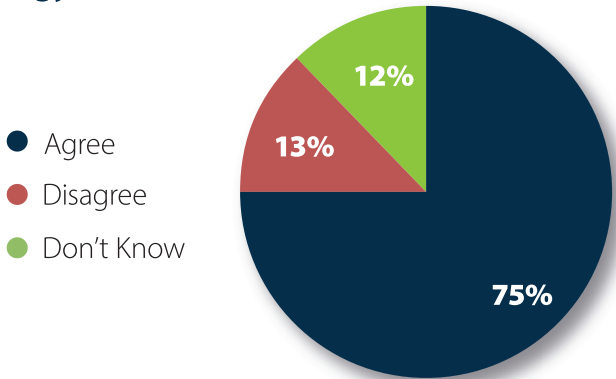
We asked for views on the Strategy, in particular the future support needs of the sector and whether the Strategy captures the challenges facing the sector following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Your feedback has been used to change the Strategy and in particular, the tables below highlight our response to key data we received during the consultation process.

## Terminology

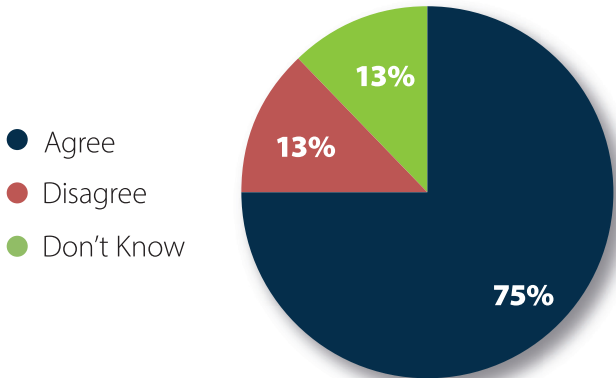
In round one of the consultations, 75% respondents agreed with the title of the Strategy, and this was consequently carried forward to the revised draft of the document.

### % of Responses - Do you agree with the title of the Strategy?



In both rounds of the consultation, respondents were asked their view on whether they “agreed or disagreed with our use of the term social sector”, the majority agreed with this change in shared terminology.

### % of Responses - Do you agree or disagree with the use of the term “Social Sector”?



## You Said

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It was felt the term “voluntary” sector can undervalue the economic contribution the sector makes to the local economy and can give the impression the sector can exist on little or minimal funding.

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You felt it was difficult to define what is meant by a “civil society” and that the “social sector” is not a term everyone is familiar with.

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You felt the Strategy lacked detail on how it will be implemented and the amount of funding available alongside targets and timescales.

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## We Did

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**We have used the terminology ‘social sector’ in the Strategy based on discussions with the sector particularly over the last year.**

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**This use of terminology was supported by the consultation responses, with the majority of respondents across both consultations supporting the move to a “civil society” Strategy however we added a section on terminology to ensure our message was clear.**

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**We have outlined in the Strategy the measures of success, which will be used to monitor our progress against the Strategy frameworks. A 3-year budget is agreed as set out in the Strategy and will be used to deliver the support offer set out in Chapter 3. The accompanying Executive Summary provides a concise summary of what KCC will do to implement the Strategy.**

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## Challenges and Opportunities facing the sector post Covid

The majority of respondents agreed that the Strategy captures the opportunities available to the sector post Covid. The Strategy recognises the considerable impact the sector has had during the pandemic since it began in 2020; with the increasing role of volunteers in supporting our communities.

### You Said

Some respondents felt that opportunities to work more collaboratively could be further emphasised.

You said there should be more encouragement to the sector to work in collaboration with KCC to come up with innovative solutions to social issues.

### We Did

**Building on our work with the VCSE Steering Group and through our support offer we will be addressing wider engagement with the sector and the Strategy now recognises more explicitly the need to work with partners such as District Councils and the NHS, as we look at how we can facilitate engagement and collaboration at the local level.**

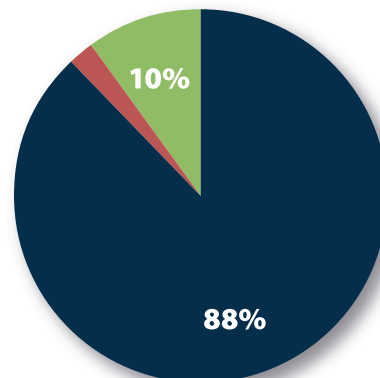
**We have set out in the Strategy our commitment to working more collaboratively with the sector through our engagement and in our commissioning approach.**

## Support to the Sector

In round one of the consultations, 88% of respondents agreed that “access to the right business support is important to the social sector to help organisations to grow, be sustainable and diversify”.

**% of Responses - Do you agree that access to the right business support is important to the social sector to help organisations to grow, be sustainable and diversify?**

- Agree
- Disagree
- Don't Know



We developed this further for round two of the consultation and respondents were asked to rank several "business support options in order of their importance for Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations". The majority felt that financial advice, including how to access different funding, income generation and financial planning was the most important area of focus for the sector with Board development/training to support organisational Strategy being of the least importance.

## You Said

You said access to grants for small organisations to support their core mission was the most important area in which KCC could support VCSE organisations over the next five years

Financial advice was felt to be the most important area for business support but accessing this was impacted by lack of funding.

Time and access to funding to gain business support were highlighted as key areas of importance for the sector that prohibits them from accessing the support they need.

## We Did

**Since the consultation in 2019 we have developed and delivered our Crowdfund Kent pilot, supporting local projects and community organisations. This will be evaluated and the findings from this used to inform future support to community organisations and activities.**

**Through the introduction of the Strategic Recovery Fund, organisations will be able to access funding to help develop their business support needs. This will be reviewed and developed following the pilot round so KCC can identify what additional support will be needed for future years.**

**We have developed the Strategic Recovery Fund for 21-22 to enable organisations to access grants to buy in support and expertise, recognising that funding and time is a barrier for some.**

## Volunteering

We asked whether respondents have “in the past accessed support to recruit volunteers or for volunteer brokerage (matching people into volunteering opportunities)?”, the majority replied that they had not. However, they did have concerns about recruiting and retaining volunteers in the future and that they would welcome additional advice and support on this issue. This area was welcomed by the respondents.

In response we will be launching the Volunteering Support pilot alongside colleagues from the sector to help create a better resourced and more co-ordinated volunteering network across the County. This was also highlighted in the VCS Recovery Cell action plan which was developed in response to Covid.

### You Said

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You said that access to support for volunteers was the most important outcome of promoting and supporting civil activity within the community.

### We Did

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**We are creating a pilot to support the sector in creating a sustainable model of volunteering to develop multiple funding streams or creating revenue. Good quality advice and support will be available through the pilot for organisations to access training and guidance on recruiting and retaining volunteers.**

It was felt that the Strategy’s emphasis on volunteering was welcome as volunteers are essential to many VCSE organisations.

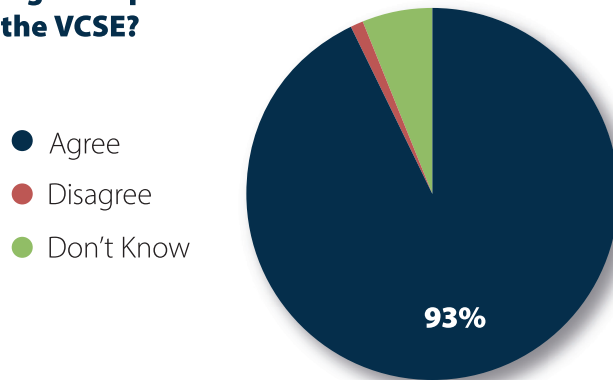
**We recognised the importance of volunteers and have revised the Strategy. Accordingly, we will be building on this with the introduction of the volunteering pilot.**

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## Engagement

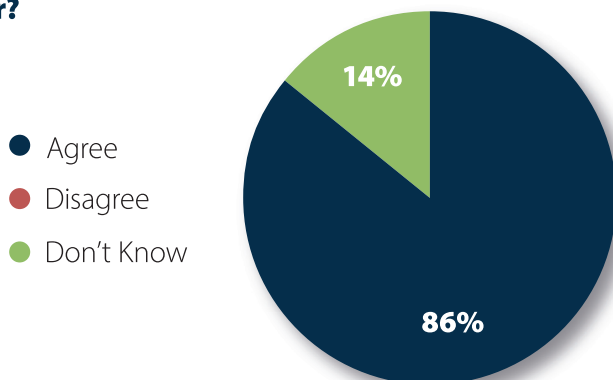
In our initial consultation, the majority (93%) of respondents agreed that a more open dialogue, beyond that of commissioning and funding, was needed with the sector. Since then, we have developed the VCSE Steering Group as the beginning of establishing a more coordinated and engaged relationship with the sector.

### **% of Responses - Do you agree with our focus on ongoing and open engagement with the VCSE?**



Following on from the second consultation, the majority (86%) of respondents felt that the changes we had made were a positive step in the right direction. However, it was felt that more engagement mechanisms were required and at the local level. We need to ensure that the Steering Group is accessible and visible to the wider sector.

### **% of Responses - Do you think there is a need for more engagement mechanisms to support collaboration in the social sector?**



## You Said

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You said that KCC creating an open and ongoing dialogue with the social sector was important to you, rather than engaging solely through commissioning.

## We Did

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**We have created the Strategic Partnership Board, with member representation from the District Councils, Voluntary Sector and NHS. The VCS rep on the Board chairs the VCSE Steering Group, which is made up of individuals from several organisations who can share key issues and discussions with a representative from KCC in attendance.**

You agreed that the VCSE Steering Group should have a more formalised membership. However, concerns were raised about whether a rotational membership would be appropriate.

**As part of our offer of support we will look to evolve the Steering Group and its role alongside the Chair to ensure that we have the right representation to provide an effective engagement channel. This is an important forum for KCC and indeed partners, wanting to meaningfully engage with the sector and we recognise that whilst a starting point, the model can be improved. The challenges of a rotational membership are recognised and will be addressed as we develop the future model.**

You said that each district should have local forums to enable the local VCSE organisations to respond to what is happening at a local level.

**We are working with district colleagues to ensure that we can regularly share information about the social sector and the support we have collectively put in place. This will include how we can work with the established local engagement forums to improve collaboration and ensure we can engage with local organisations.**

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## You Said

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You said that regular communication and consultation with the sector as a whole was important. You also felt that monitoring of our success could be fixed on existing networks which may disregard other areas of the sector.

## We Did

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**We will be reviewing the VCSE Steering Group to ensure the membership is more reflective of the sector in Kent. The membership of the VCS Strategic Partnership Board cuts across public sector partners and the VCSE. We will be using insight and intelligence gathered from different channels via that Board to inform our success monitoring. This will include surveys of the sector undertaken by sector representatives, where available. We will also use feedback from the Strategic Recovery Fund and the evaluation of the Volunteering Infrastructure pilot, to build our understanding and insight.**

You asked for a key designated person within the council with the power to make and implement change.

**We have a Key Officer and team designated to delivery on this Strategy with a KCC Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services who holds responsibility for this activity.**

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## Conclusions and Next Steps

A final draft of the Strategy informed by the consultation is due to go back to the KCC Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on November 9th 2021 before being formally adopted by Cabinet on 9th December 2021. The final Strategy and the consultation report will be available on Kent.gov, once agreed.



Kent County Council



Strategy for Kent 2021-2024

You Said We Did



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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

**Cabinet**

**DECISION NO:**

**For publication**

**Key decision: Yes**

## **Subject Matter / Title of Decision**

To adopt the Civil Society Strategy and agree to fund the infrastructure offer set out in the strategy framework. This is an annual budget contribution of £700K over the 3 years of the strategy 2021-2024.

## **Decision:**

As Cabinet we agree to adopt the Civil Society Strategy and commit to funding an infrastructure offer against the strategy framework over the life of the strategy 2021-2024. The relevant Cabinet Member(s) will take the decision on expenditure in line with delegations.

## **Reason(s) for decision:**

The Civil Society strategy will replace KCC's existing VCS policy and set out the future relationship with civil society and the 'social sector', voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE), as a core part of that.

The strategy was previously consulted on between February and April 2020, however due to Covid the development of the strategy was paused. We have now revised the draft to reflect the events of the last year and ensure that it will still meet the challenges going forward.

The strategy sets out the objectives and intentions for KCC's future offer of infrastructure support to the VCSE. The funding agreed for this is £2.1m over the 3 years of the strategy; and will be allocated against the objectives and framework set out in Chapter 3 of the strategy. These are formulated around 4 themes, engagement, business support, volunteering and support to community-based projects and organisations.

The strategy also revises and reinforces the grant framework for the council, which was developed in 2015 and has been updated based on feedback from the past 6 years of operation. This is intended to create consistency and clarity in the way we award grants to the VCSE across the Council.

The strategy replaces the Kent Partners Compact, which was last revised in 2012 and sets out the principles of how we will engage and work with the VCSE in the future.

This is a supporting strategy to the Interim Strategic Plan and longer term, to the new Strategic Statement for the Council.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Discussed and agreed by P&R Cabinet Committee 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

N/A

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

.....  
signed

.....  
Date

**From:** Roger Gough, Leader of the Council  
David Cockburn, Corporate Director for Strategic & Corporate Services and Head of Paid Service

**To:** Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Decision No:** N/A

**Subject:** Corporate Risk Register

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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

**Future Pathway of Paper:** Governance & Audit Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022

**Electoral Division:** ALL

**Summary:** This report updates Cabinet on the outputs from the more formal annual refresh of KCC's corporate risk profile, including the revised Corporate Risk Register.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet Members are asked to NOTE the report.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The Corporate Risk Register is a 'living document' and is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect any significant new risks or changes in risk exposure that arise due to internal or external events; and to track progress against mitigating actions. It is subject to a more formal review each autumn, including conversations with Corporate Management Team and Cabinet Members and taking into consideration comments made by the Governance & Audit Committee.
- 1.2 The review process has taken place as the organisation continues to balance ongoing response and recovery from the Covid-19 emergency with delivery of more "business as usual" type activities, while also leading on the development of new ways of working and delivery of services. There has also been continued uncertainty in the operating environment for local government and in the wider external environment, including workforce and materials shortages, cost inflation etc.

## 2. Corporate Risk Register summary

- 2.1 The latest version of the Corporate Risk Register is attached at appendix 1. One of the key considerations this year has been whether the increases in risk levels for many of the risks triggered by factors associated with Covid-19 were still valid, or whether they had dissipated.
- 2.2 The meetings with Risk Owners during the autumn demonstrated a strong consensus on what are seen as the main risks for KCC, both in relation to respective portfolios / directorates and wider KCC concerns. There remains a strong correlation between these views and risks already captured on directorate registers or the corporate risk register, which would indicate that the current risk management process is robust. However, the context of the risks continues to evolve, along with the Council's responses.
- 2.3 During the latest refresh process, several new risks are being added to the register, one de-escalated to directorate level, several risks have been merged, while others have been identified where the context has required reviewing and updating. The main changes are summarised below.
- 2.3.1 CRR0009 – Future financial and operating environment for local government.  
This risk encapsulates a significant number of risks on the corporate register, as it relates to the funding envelope that the council has to work within, as well as some of the key dependencies the Council has. The Government's Spending Review, announced on 27<sup>th</sup> October, has given the local government sector more certainty in terms of funding over 3 years, although there are still more details awaited until the local government funding settlement allocations are confirmed in December. One of the main aspects of this risk now is whether spending growth pressures facing services across the council can be contained within the Council's core spending power over the medium term. Factors such as social care reforms and associated resourcing impacts are relevant, and therefore previous risks relating to social care resourcing implications have now been included as part of this risk. The risk rating will be reviewed once the local government settlement is confirmed in December and further discussions regarding the development of KCC's budget have taken place.
- 2.3.2 NEW: Capital programme affordability – the corporate register has contained risks relating to specific elements of the capital programme, such as Basic Need grant shortfall to enable sufficient school place provision, as well as maintenance and modernisation of the KCC estate. These risks are now being included in a broader risk relating to the affordability of the capital programme. This takes into account important service areas not explicitly covered before such as Highways infrastructure.
- 2.3.3 NEW: Impacts of Climate Change. The Council has a longstanding corporate risk relating to its response to major incidents and emergencies, which includes our responses with partners to severe weather events such as flooding. However, there are specific, longer term adaptation challenges that will need to

be factored into the council's operating model going forward. Hence a corporate risk focused on climate change adaptation has been proposed, with controls and mitigations currently being captured.

2.3.4 NEW: Supply Chain and Market Factors. A key theme arising from this process has been external factors affecting KCC's supply chain and markets. A specific risk remains on the corporate register that focuses on the sustainability of the care market. However, workforce shortages are being experienced in key areas across the council such as bus drivers, which presents significant challenges, alongside shortages of materials that are driving associated cost inflation. Therefore, a specific risk covering supply chain factors is being considered.

2.3.5 A risk covering the development of Integrated Care System (ICS) / Integrated Care Programmes (ICPs) in the Kent and Medway NHS system (CRR0005) has been on the corporate register for some time. The context to this is evolving. A paper was presented to County Council in July 2021 outlining KCC's ambition for Health and Care Partnership working in the wake of the White Paper "Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all", which will be enacted by the Health and Social Care Bill currently being considered by Parliament. This clearly stated the importance of local authorities continuing to maintain their capacity to ensure that they are able to discharge their separate and distinct statutory responsibilities, maintain internal control, deliver annually balanced budgets and manage financial risk accordingly, which is understood by partners. This was a key element of this corporate risk previously, and therefore it is proposed that the risk is **de-escalated** to directorate level on the understanding that should any further risks become apparent it shall be escalated back up to corporate level.

2.3.6 Technological resilience and information security – the previous risk CRR0014 relating to cyber threats and their implications has been broadened to reflect the importance of ensuring our technology infrastructure remains fit for purpose as an enabler for the achievement of our Technology Strategy, as well as resilient in light of the ever-increasing dependency on technology to conduct day-to-day business. Specific cyber threat consequences remain as a key element of the risk.

2.3.7 The risk rating relating to civil contingencies and resilience (CRR0004) was raised in 2020 to the maximum level to reflect the potential "perfect storm" of simultaneous challenges faced by the council in relation to Covid-19 response and recovery efforts, UK/EU Transition preparedness and other winter pressures. The risk is still judged as high but given the way that the Council and its partners at local and national level have responded to challenges so far, the risk has been reduced slightly.

2.3.8 There remains specific focus on managing workforce risks and opportunities during this time. A significant majority of the KCC workforce has been working remotely for more than eighteen months and regular surveys have been conducted during that time, indicating that our staff continue to show

tremendous resilience in adapting to new working practices, finding innovative ways to engage with service users and residents and continuing to deliver services. However, there are still potential wellbeing concerns for public, service user facing staff, as we enter what could still be another challenging winter period. The Corporate Management Team is ensuring regular engagement with staff to monitor the situation and respond appropriately, putting in place further interventions as necessary to supplement pre-existing support to aid health and wellbeing. The risk remains high and also focuses on adaptation to new working practices.

2.3.9 Workforce capacity challenges have also been raised throughout the refresh process, with recruitment and retention difficulties being reported, for both KCC staff and those in the supply chain, reflecting some of the wider market conditions.

2.3.10 The corporate risk regarding suitable provision for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) is being revised in light of the latest developments, in particular the Government's move to temporarily mandate the transfer of children to local authorities nationally.

### **3. Monitoring and Review**

3.1 The corporate risks led by each Corporate Director are presented to the relevant Cabinet Committees annually, alongside existing arrangements for presentation of directorate risks.

3.2 The corporate register is also presented to Governance & Audit Committee twice yearly for assurance purposes, and the Internal Audit function uses the register as a source of information to inform its audit plan for the coming year.

3.3 There is a focus on ensuring that key mitigating actions are identified, and progress monitored. The risks within the Corporate Risk Register, their current risk level and progress against mitigating actions are reported to Cabinet quarterly via the Quarterly Performance Report.

### **4. Conclusions**

4.1 The refresh process this year has taken place against a continued background of uncertainty, particularly in the external environment, as the council is affected by wider supply chain and market factors, as well as some continued uncertainty regarding the detail of upcoming and proposed Government reforms.

4.2 The refresh highlights again the complex and systemic nature of the risks KCC faces, which often involve management alongside partners and providers, meaning that some risks are only partly within our control to



mitigate. This emphasises the importance of continual horizon scanning and scenario modelling, along with agility of response and resilience.

- 4.3 It is apparent that it is too early to tell whether risks that were exacerbated by Covid-19 factors, either directly or indirectly, have reduced yet. Covid-19 recovery efforts continue, and several risks will need to be reviewed in Spring 2022 to see if there is evidence to suggest that risk ratings should be reduced. These reviews will form part of a wider piece of work with Risk Owners to outline timescales for the “target” deliverable level of risk to be met.
- 4.4 As risks evolve and new risks emerge, there is the need to consider the continued effectiveness of controls and any further mitigations as appropriate.
- 4.5 The consideration of the aggregate picture of risk at a corporate level should aid thinking on how risk (including risk appetite) needs to feed into decision-making when setting priorities and allocating resources.

## **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 Cabinet Members are asked to NOTE the report.

Report Author:

*Mark Scrivener, Corporate Risk & Assurance Manager*  
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### **Relevant Director**

**David Whittle, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance**  
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# KCC Corporate Risk Register

FOR PRESENTATION TO CABINET – 09/12/2021

## Corporate Risk Register - Summary Risk Profile

**Low = 1-6    Medium = 8-15    High =16-25**

Risk No.*	Risk Title	Current Risk Rating	Target Risk Rating	Direction of Travel since December 2020
CRR0001	Safeguarding – protecting vulnerable children	High (20)	Medium (15)	↔
CRR0002	Safeguarding – protecting vulnerable adults	High (20)	Medium (15)	↔
CRR0003	Securing resources to aid economic recovery and enabling infrastructure	High (20)	High (16)	↔
CRR0004	Simultaneous Emergency Response and Resilience	High (20)	Medium (15)	↓
CRR0005	Development of Integrated Care System (ICS) / Integrated Care Programmes (ICPs) in Kent and Medway NHS system	De-escalated to directorate level		
CRR0006	Resourcing implications arising from increasing complex adult social care demand	Incorporated into Risk CRR0009		
CRR0007	Resourcing implications arising from serious and complex children’s services demand	Incorporated into Risk CRR0009		
CRR0009	Future financial and operating environment for local government	High (25)**	High (16)	↔
CRR0010	Provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)	TBC – risk being reviewed in light of latest Government announcement		
CRR0014	Technological resilience and information security threats	High (20)	High (16)	Revised Risk
CRR0015	Managing and working with the social care market	High (25)	Medium (15)	↔
CRR0016	Delivery of New School Places is constrained by capital budget pressures and dependency upon the Basic Need allocation and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)	Incorporated into new risk CRR0053		
CRR0039	Information Governance	High (20)	Medium (12)	↔
CRR0042	Post-Transition border systems, infrastructure and regulatory arrangements	High (20)	Medium (12)	↔

CRR0044	High Needs Funding shortfall	High (20)	High (16)	↔
CRR0045	Maintaining effective governance and decision making in a challenging financial and operating environment for local government	Medium (10)	Low (5)	↔
CRR0047	Adequacy of support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – response to Written Statement of Action	High (20)	Medium (10)	↔
CRR0048	Maintenance and modernisation of the KCC estate	Incorporated into Capital Programme CRR0053		
CRR0049	Fraud and Error	High (12)	Low (6)	↓
CRR0050	CBRNE incidents, communicable diseases and incidents with a public health implication – KCC response to and recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 public health emergency	High (25)	Medium (15)	↔
CRR0051	Maintaining or Improving workforce health, wellbeing and productivity	High (16)	Medium (8)	↔
CRR0052	Impact of Climate Change	NEW risks – details of controls and ratings being devised		
CRR0053	Capital Programme affordability			
CRR0054	Supply Chain and market factors			

\*Each risk is allocated a unique code, which is retained even if a risk is transferred off the Corporate Register. Therefore, there will be some 'gaps' between risk IDs.

\*\* Risk rating to be reviewed after local government finance settlement is confirmed.

NB: Current & Target risk ratings: The 'current' risk rating refers to the current level of risk taking into account any mitigating controls already in place. The 'target residual' rating represents what is deemed to be a realistic level of risk to be achieved once any additional actions have been put in place. On some occasions the aim will be to contain risk at current level.

Likelihood & Impact Scales					
Likelihood	Very Unlikely (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)	Very Likely (5)
Impact	Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Serious (4)	Major (5)

Risk ID	CRR0001	Risk Title	Safeguarding – protecting vulnerable children			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
The Council must fulfil its statutory obligations to effectively safeguard vulnerable children in a complex and challenging environment e.g., the challenge of recruiting and retaining suitably experienced and qualified permanent staff.	Failure to fulfil statutory safeguarding obligations. Failure to meet the requirements of the “Prevent Duty” placed on Local Authorities.	Incident of serious harm or death of a vulnerable child. Serious impact on vulnerable people. Impact on ability to recruit the quality of staff critical to service delivery.	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education (CYPE)	Likely (4)	Major (5)	
In addition, the Government’s “Prevent Duty” requires the Local Authority to act to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, with a focus on the need to safeguard children at risk of radicalisation.	Safeguarding risks are not identified to / by KCC in a timely fashion. Spike(s) in demand impact on robustness of controls	Serious operational and financial consequences. Attract possible intervention from a national regulator for failure to discharge corporate and executive responsibilities.	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b> Sue Chandler, Integrated Children’s Services  Shellina Prendergast Education and Skills  Mike Hill (Lead Member for PREVENT)	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Possible (3)	<b>Target Residual Impact</b> Major (5)	
‘Lockdown’ restrictions due to Covid-19 meant that children and families were at home for long periods of time, with significantly reduced numbers of children in schools. This has introduced uncertain impacts for children’s mental health and resilience and the potential for latent demand to build. We are starting to see more complex demand arising, with later referrals.						

Control Title	Control Owner
Active strategy in place to attract, recruit and retain social workers through a variety of routes with particular emphasis on experienced social workers.	Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead) / Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications
Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership (KSCMP) arrangements in place, replacing the previous Kent Safeguarding Children Board. Includes, a Scrutiny and Assurance Framework.	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE) / David Whittle, Director SPRCA
Children's Assurance Board established to give assurance to the rest of the council, including safeguarding arrangements. Includes review of qualitative audit information and triangulates with quantitative picture	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE)
Consistent scrutiny and performance monitoring through Divisional Management Team, "Performance, Challenge and support" meetings and audit activity.	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE) / Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead)
Multi agency Crime and Sexual Exploitation Panel (MACSE) provides a strategic, county wide, cross agency response to CSE	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE)
A revised Elective Home Education policy approved that includes interaction with children where there are welfare concerns and where other agencies have been involved with the family. Awareness raising taking place with other practitioners.	Craig Chapman, Head of Fair Access / Christine McInnes, Director of Education
Introduction and appointment of independent scrutineer as part of multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements	David Whittle, Director SPRCA
Communities of Practice introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic, offering support for practitioners, with over 100 practitioners attending weekly	Kevin Kasaven, Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Multi-function officer group helping to define key steps and approach to aid any future inquiries or investigations that may arise relating to alleged historical abuse	Kevin Kasaven, Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit conducts audits, reviews of practice, identifies themes and patterns for accountable managers to respond and provides challenge.	Kevin Kasaven, Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Multi Agency Public Protection arrangements (MAPPA) in place	Kevin Kasaven, Assistant Director Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
Kent & Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board (chaired by KCC) oversees the activity of the Kent Channel Panel, co ordinating Prevent activity across the County and reporting to other relevant strategic bodies in the county (including reporting route to the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi Agency Partnership).	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
Manageable caseloads per social worker and robust caseload monitoring. Social work vacancies monitored with action taken to address as required.	Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead)
'Deep Dive' activity undertaken to investigate vacancy rates for staff that reflects factors such as maternity leave	Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead)
Integrated practice model	Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead) / Stuart Collins, Director Integrated Services (Early Help and Preventative Services lead)
Extensive staff training - Quality Assurance Framework has been rolled out and Integrated Children's Services team has received mandatory training related to this	Sarah Hammond, Director of Integrated Services (Children's Social Work Lead) / Stuart Collins, Director Integrated Services (Early Help and Preventative Services lead)
Kent Channel Panel (early intervention mechanism providing tailored support to people who have been identified as at risk of being radicalised) in place.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
Joint Exploitation Group (Kent & Medway) children and adults focuses on PREVENT, gangs, Modern Slavery, human trafficking and online safeguarding matters. Reports to Kent and Medway Adults Safeguarding Board and KSCMP.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
KCC cross directorate PREVENT group meets regularly and ensures the PREVENT duty is embedded across the organisation. Regular updates are provided to the Corporate Management Team. PREVENT	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager



training strategy in place and regularly reviewed.		
The annual assurance statement is a self-declaration approved by the Head of Paid Service which captures the Authority's compliance with the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Act. Actions identified within the annual assurance statement are transferred to the Kent and Medway Action Plan. Kent and Medway Board for PREVENT have oversight of action progress,		Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
Semi-regional PREVENT model of delivery across Kent & Medway developed		Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
New adolescent risk management process agreed, and approach signed off.		Stuart Collins, Director Integrated Services (Early Help and Preventative Services lead)
Kent and Medway Gangs Strategy 2018-21 outlines the multi-agency approach to ending the criminal exploitation of vulnerable children and adults by gangs		Stuart Collins, Director Integrated Services (Early Help and Preventative Services lead)
Education Safeguarding Team in place as part of the contract with The Education People		Christine McInnes, Director of Education
Section 11" audit conducted periodically to provide assurance that relevant agencies and individuals are cooperating to safeguard children and promote their welfare, with feedback and follow up. .		Jennifer Maiden-Brooks, Systems Improvement Manager, Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Recommendations from the recent Kent and Medway PREVENT Peer review to improve and promote best practice are being implemented.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	April 2022

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0002</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Safeguarding – protecting vulnerable adults</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
The Council must fulfil its statutory obligations to effectively safeguard vulnerable adults, in a complex and challenging environment e.g., challenges relating to demand for services and consistent quality of care in the provider market.	Failure to fulfil statutory obligations. Failure to meet the requirements of the “Prevent Duty” placed on Local Authorities.	Incident of serious harm or death of a vulnerable adult. Serious impact on vulnerable people. Serious impact on ability to recruit the quality of staff critical to service delivery.	Richard Smith Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH)	Likely (4)	Major (5)	
The change from ‘safeguarding alerts’ to ‘safeguarding enquiries’ has led to a significant increase in the number of safeguarding concerns received. There has also been an increase in domestic abuse referrals.	Safeguarding risks are not identified to / by KCC in a timely fashion during the Covid-19 pandemic.	Serious operational and financial consequences.	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b>  Clair Bell, Adult Social Care and Public Health	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Possible (3)	<b>Target Residual Impact</b> Major (5)	
The Covid-19 pandemic and the associated ‘lockdown’ measures raised concerns of increases in hidden harm, self-harm and neglect resulting in impacted demand profiles.	Spike(s) in demand impact on quality of controls	Attract possible intervention from a national regulator for failure to discharge corporate and executive responsibilities.				
Social care services have made substantial adaptations to service delivery across the system.			Mike Hill (Lead Member for PREVENT)			
In addition, the Government’s “Prevent Duty” requires the Local Authority to act to prevent vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism.						

Control Title	Control Owner
Quality Surveillance Group - regular KCC meetings with Care Quality Commission to share intelligence. This is currently being relaunched and the function of the group reconsidered.	Sharon Dene, Strategic Commissioning
Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team in adult social care and health leads on a strategic framework for policy, service development, strategic safeguarding and quality assurance	Sarah Denson, Service Manager ASCH
Kent and Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board (chaired by KCC) oversees the activity of the Kent Channel Panel, co-ordinating Prevent activity across the County and reporting to other relevant strategic bodies in the county.	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
KCC is a partner in multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) for managing sexual and violent offenders, a mechanism through which agencies can better discharge their statutory responsibilities and protect the public in a coordinated manner.	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
KCC contributes to the Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) process, which allows for the best possible safety planning for victims of domestic abuse who are considered to be at high risk of experiencing further significant harm/injury.	Chris McKenzie, Director, Adult Social Care and Health
Safeguarding activity and practice is under review as a specific workstream within the Practice Pillar of the Make A Difference Everyday approach. Current Activity includes: An "as is" systems review to explore the current delivery of safeguarding activity and performance Suite of performance data to be developed to provide practice intelligence	Helen Gillivan, Head of ASCH Business Delivery Unit
KCC Safeguarding Competency Framework in place, including Mental Capacity Act requirements.	Julie Davidson, Head of Adult Safeguarding
Quarterly safeguarding report brings together key information to enable scrutiny and performance monitoring for management teams and the Cabinet Member.	Julie Davidson, Head of Adult Safeguarding
KCC Safeguarding Competency Framework reviewed to ensure currency and look for areas for improvement.	Julie Davidson, Head of Adult Safeguarding
KCC is a member of the Kent & Medway Safeguarding Adults Board – a statutory service which exists to make sure that all member agencies are working together to help Kent and Medway's adults safe from harm and protect their rights. The Board has an independent Chair and its work carried out by a number of working groups.	Julie Davidson, Head of Adult Safeguarding / David Whittle Director SPRCA

Kent Channel Panel (early intervention mechanism providing tailored support to people who have been identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism) in place.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
PREVENT training strategy in place and regularly reviewed.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
Semi-regional PREVENT model of delivery across Kent and Medway developed.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
KCC cross-directorate PREVENT group meets regularly and ensures the PREVENT duty is embedded across the organisation. Regular updates are provided to the Corporate Management Team.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
Joint Exploitation Group (Kent & Medway) focuses on PREVENT agenda, gangs, modern slavery, human trafficking and online safeguarding matters reports to Adults Safeguarding Board and Children's Partnership.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
The annual assurance statement is a self-declaration approved by the Head of Paid Service which captures the Authority's compliance with the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Act. Actions identified within the annual assurance statement are transferred to the Kent and Medway Action Plan. Kent and Medway Board for PREVENT have oversight of action progress	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	
Quarterly safeguarding report brings together key information to enable scrutiny and performance monitoring for management teams and the Cabinet Member.	ASCH Divisional Directors	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
A Quality Assurance Working Group is in place to develop the Quality Assurance Framework and associated mechanisms.  Practice Standards and Roles and Responsibilities have been agreed for testing  A draft Quality Assurance Framework will be delivered to the Making a difference every day Meaningful Measures Group	Julie Davidson	January 2022
Preparation for introduction of new Liberty Protection Safeguards system under the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019.	Maureen Stirrup, Head of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards	April 2022

The safeguarding operating model, is being reviewed within the practice pillar of the Making A Difference Everyday approach, and this will consider how to optimise outcomes for people who become subject to safeguarding enquiries	Julie Davidson	January 2022
Recommendations from the recent Kent and Medway PREVENT Peer review to improve and promote best practice are being implemented.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager	April 2022

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0003</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Securing resources to aid economic recovery and enabling infrastructure</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of Risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>The Covid-19 pandemic is impacting on the economy in Kent &amp; Medway and the impacts could be disproportionate across the county (e.g. in coastal areas).</p> <p>To gain an understanding of the implications, an impact assessment has been conducted, which has led to the preparation and launch of an 18-month local economic renewal and resilience plan, which aims to act as a stimulus for improvement.</p> <p>The Council actively seeks to secure the resources/funding necessary to provide the infrastructure required to support growth, which often need to be bid for in very tight timescales and are increasingly subject to the drive to deliver economic impact, housing and employment outputs.</p> <p>EU structural funds are set to be replaced by UK funds, with further detail awaited.</p> <p>At a local level there is often a significant gap between the overall costs of the infrastructure required and the Council's ability to secure sufficient funds through</p>	<p>The inability to secure sufficient funding, including contributions from development, to deliver the infrastructure necessary to support growth may require gap funding in order for KCC to fulfil its statutory duties.</p> <p>Deferral of developer contributions and / or elongated planning consents leads to delayed or compromised infrastructure.</p>	<p>Key opportunities for growth missed.</p> <p>The Council finds it increasingly difficult to fund services across Kent and fully mitigate the overall impact of housing growth on KCC services and, therefore communities.</p> <p>Kent becomes a less attractive location for inward investment and business.</p> <p>Our ability to deliver an enabling infrastructure becomes constrained.</p> <p>Reputational risk associated with delayed delivery of infrastructure required</p> <p>Additional revenue costs incurred due to infrastructure delays e.g. Home to school transport</p>	<p>Simon Jones, Corporate Director Growth, Environment and Transport (GET)</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b> On behalf of Cabinet</p> <p>Derek Murphy Economic Development</p> <p>David Brazier Highways &amp; Transport</p>	<p>V. Likely (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Likely (4)</p>	<p>Serious (4)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b> Serious (4)</p>	

the current funding systems, including Section106 contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy and other growth levers.	
<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
Active pipeline in place of projects for potential funding arrangements.	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)
Multi-agency Kent and Medway Employment Task Force has been established.	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)
Single Monitoring System (SMS) is used to track individual s106 planning obligations from the Council's initial request for developer contributions through the issue of invoice for payment.	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead) / Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director Growth and Communities.
Strong engagement of private sector through Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP), Business Advisory Board and Kent Developer Group	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)
Strong engagement with South-East LEP and central Government to ensure that KCC is in a strong position to secure resources from future funding rounds.	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)
Teams across the Growth, Environment and Transport directorate work with each individual District on composition of local infrastructure plans including priorities for the CIL and Section 106 contributions, to articulate needs for the demands on services	Nigel Smith, Head of Development (GET) / Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director Growth and Communities.
Local Transport Plan 4 produced and approved by County Council	Tom Marchant, Head of Strategic Planning and Policy
Government consultations on proposals for reform of the planning system in England considered and responded to.	Tom Marchant, Head of Strategic Planning and Policy
Officers are working on bids to secure funding as appropriate including Local Growth Fund, Housing Infrastructure Fund, Major Roads Network	Joe Ratcliffe, Transport Strategy Manager

Economic Recovery Dashboard in place	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst	
Kent and Medway Renewal and Resilience Plan Economic Impacts Evidence Base sets out a high-level assessment of the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis on the Kent and Medway economy to inform the Renewal and Resilience Plan for the next 12-18 months.	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst	
Growth and Infrastructure Framework for Kent and Medway published, setting out the infrastructure needed to deliver planned growth.	Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director, Growth & Communities	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
<p>Contribute to implementation of the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership's local Economic Renewal and Resilience Plan, key delivery principles of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greener Futures (building a sustainable, lower carbon economy)</li> <li>• Open and Productive (supporting long term productivity growth in an economy that welcomes investment and trade)</li> <li>• Better Opportunities, Fairer Chances (ensuring that people are supported through recession and stand to gain from a more resilient economy in the return to growth).</li> </ul> <p>Participation on the Renewal and Resilience Group Plan group and the Employment Taskforce plans are being scoped to support key delivery principles.</p>	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)	April 2022
The Kent & Medway Business Fund opened to pre application on 30 September, with the KMBF Small Business Boost opening in December 2021. The next phase of the Innovation Loan is to be scoped.	David Smith, Head of Business and Enterprise (KCC lead)	December 2021
Workstreams include Government Relations, Infrastructure Priorities, Joint Planning, Delivery modelling, KCC Support of Housing Growth, Governance and Infrastructure Proposition Bid.	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET	February 2022



<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0004</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Simultaneous Emergency Response, Recovery and Resilience</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of Risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>The County Council, along with other Category 1 Responders in the Kent, has a legal duty to undertake risk assessment and planning to reduce the likelihood and impact of major incidents and emergencies.</p> <p>This includes responses associated with the Government's Counter-terrorism Strategy (CONTEST).</p> <p>Ensuring that the Council works effectively with partners to plan for, respond to, and recover from, emergencies and service disruptions is becoming increasingly important in light of climate change impacts, national and international security threats, severe weather incidents, threats of 'cyber attacks' and uncertainties around implications of the future UK/EU relationship.</p> <p>The response to, and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is putting significant strain on organisational capacity and resources.</p>	<p>Failure to deliver suitable planning measures, respond to and manage these events when they occur.</p> <p>Critical services are unprepared or have ineffective emergency and business continuity plans and associated activities.</p> <p>Lack of resilience in the supply chain hampers effective response to incidents.</p> <p>Focus on Covid-19 response and recovery and post UK/EU transition contingency planning means less opportunity to progress other aspects of emergencies and resilience agenda.</p> <p>Future wave(s) of pandemic / winter pressures put further strain on capacity and resource.</p>	<p>Potential increased harm or loss of life if response is not effective.</p> <p>Serious threat to delivery of critical services.</p> <p>Significant harm to the natural and build environment of Kent.</p> <p>Increased financial cost in terms of recovery and insurance costs.</p> <p>Damage and disruption to local businesses and the Kent economy.</p> <p>Potential for public unrest and reputational damage.</p> <p>Legal actions and intervention for failure to fulfill KCC's obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act or other associated legislation.</p>	<p>On behalf of CMT: Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b> On behalf of Cabinet: Mike Hill, Community &amp; Regulatory Services</p>	<p>V. Likely (4)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Possible (3)</p>	<p>Major (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b> Major (5)</p>	

Control Title	Control Owner
Management of financial impact to include Bellwin scheme	Cath Head, Head of Finance (Operations)
Kent Resilience team in place bringing together personnel from KCC, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service in an integrated and co-located team to deliver enhanced emergency planning and business continuity in Kent	Lisa Guthrie, Head of Kent Resilience Team
On-going programme of review relating to ICT Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity arrangements. ICT resilience improvements are embedded as part of the ICT Transformation Programme.	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning
Local multi-agency flood response plans in place for each district/borough in Kent, in addition to overarching flood response plan for Kent	Andy Jeffery, KCC Manager, Kent Resilience Team
Review of Kent Resilience Forum Local Authorities Emergency Planning group's mutual aid arrangements with District Councils and other councils across the region undertaken.	Andy Jeffrey, KCC Manager, Kent Resilience Team
Local procedures have been and are being continually reviewed and refined for occasions the national threat level increases to 'critical'. This includes an update of the Corporate Business Continuity Plan.	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
KCC has a Major Emergency Plan that is refreshed regularly	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
Ensure business continuity governance arrangements focus on directorate issues and complement KCC's cross directorate resilience groups and forum	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
Multi-agency recovery structures are in place	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
Emergency planning training rolled out at strategic, tactical and operational levels. Resilience and Emergency planning service business plan in place	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
KCC and local Kent Resilience Forum partners have tested preparedness for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives (CBRNE) incidents and communicable disease outbreaks in line with national requirements.	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager / Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health

Work programme implemented to deliver Kent County Council compliance with the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness and Public Information) Regulations 2019, including amendments to the Dungeness Offsite Emergency Plan	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
KCC Business Continuity Management Policy and overarching Business Continuity Plan in place, underpinned by business continuity plans at service level.	Rebecca Spore, Director Infrastructure
Legally required multi-agency Kent Resilience Forum in place, with work driven by risk and impact based on Kent's Community Risk Register. Includes sub-groups relating to Health and Severe Weather.	Rebecca Spore, Director Infrastructure
KRF and KCC Command and Control structures planned and in place to deal with simultaneous events	Rebecca Spore, Director Infrastructure
Kent & Medway Prevent Duty Delivery Board established (chaired by KCC) to oversee the activity of the Kent Channel Panel, co-ordinate Prevent activity across the County and report to other relevant strategic bodies in the county	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
The Director of Public Health works through local resilience forums to ensure effective and tested plans are in place for the wider health sector to protect the local population from risks to public health.	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
Kent Channel Panel (early intervention mechanism providing tailored support to people who have been identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism) established at district and borough level.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
KCC Strategic Prevent Lead is a member of the Covid-19 District Recovery Cell and disseminates appropriate protective security advice and online tension monitoring reports.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
Ongoing development of a PREVENT counter-terrorism risk assessment	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
The annual assurance statement is a self-declaration approved by the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service which captures the Authority's compliance with the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Act. Actions identified within the annual assurance statement are transferred to the Kent and Medway Action Plan. Kent and Medway Board for PREVENT have oversight of action progress.	Nick Wilkinson, Prevent and Channel Strategic Manager
Implementation of Kent's Climate Adaption Action Plan	Stephanie Holt-Castle, Director of Growth and Communities

Fire Safety Guidance provided by KCC reviewed and updated	Stewart Baxter-Smith, Head of Health & Safety	
Dungeness offsite emergency plan and regular exercises to validate the effectiveness.	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Continued preparations for, and response to, implications of future UK/EU relationship in relation to border friction, regulatory change etc. (cross-reference to CRR0042)	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET	Ongoing up to July 2022

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0009</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Future financial and operating environment for Local Government</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner (s)</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>The Government Spending Review in October 2021 has set out the 3-year picture for local government, to be followed by the local government finance settlement in December 2021. This provides some welcome medium-term certainty, although there are still areas of uncertainty in the operating environment relating to impacts of upcoming Government reforms e.g., social care, as well as the level and complexity of demand and growth pressures facing services across the council.</p> <p>The uncertainty also applies to services funded via ring-fenced specific grants. Of particular concern is the special educational needs and disability (SEND) provision funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The high needs block of DSG has not kept pace with the substantial increase in demand for SEND (see CRR0044) resulting in deficit accruing on DSG spending.</p>	<p>Levels of spending and growth pressures across services outstrip the Council's core spending power, threatening the financial sustainability of KCC, its partners and service providers.</p> <p>In order to set a balanced budget, the council is likely to have to continue to make significant year on year savings. Quality of KCC commissioned / delivered services suffers as financial situation continues to worsen.</p> <p>Continued delays and uncertainty surrounding Fair Funding and Business Rate retention reviews impacts on KCC's medium term financial planning.</p>	<p>Unsustainable financial situation, ultimately resulting in s114 notice.</p> <p>Failure to delivery statutory obligations and duties or achieve social value.</p> <p>Potential for partner or provider failure – including sufficiency gaps in provision.</p> <p>Reduction in resident satisfaction and reputational damage.</p> <p>Increased and unplanned pressure on resources.</p> <p>Decline in performance.</p> <p>Legal challenge resulting in reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>Impact on Council Tax.</p>	<p>On behalf of CMT:</p> <p>Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>All Cabinet Members</p>	<p>V. Likely (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Likely (4)</p>	<p>Major (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b> Serious (4)</p>	

<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
Processes in place for monitoring delivery of savings and budget as a whole, including identification of management action.	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Robust budgeting and financial planning in place via Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) process, including stakeholder consultation.	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Financial analysis conducted after each budget statement	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)
Ensure evidence of any additional KCC spend required to cover impacts relating to the end of UK/EU transition period is captured e.g., new burdens imposed	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)
Continued engagement with Government regarding High Needs funding concerns	Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE) / Christine McInnes, Director of Education / Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)
Engagement with CCN, Society of County Treasurers and other local authorities and Government of potential opportunities and issues around devolution and public reform	David Whittle, Director SPRCA
KCC Interim Strategic Plan and Strategic Reset Framework developed, outlining how the Council will operate in future, taking into account implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.	David Whittle, Director SPRCA / Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People & Communications
KCC Quarterly Performance Report monitors key performance and activity information for KCC commissioned or delivered services. Regularly reported to Cabinet.	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst, KCC
Regular analysis and refreshing of forecast to maintain a level of understanding of volatility of demand which feeds into the relevant areas of the MTFP and business planning process.	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
Ongoing monitoring and modelling of changes in supply and demand in order to inform strategies and service planning going forward.	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst, KCC

<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Engage with Government for a fair-funding needs formula for Grant distribution and tariffs/top ups under business rate retention	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)	Awaiting Central Government timescales
Ensure appropriate response to next Government Spending Review and Local Government Finance Settlement.	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)	December 2021
Work proactively with Government regarding how the new business rate retention scheme can be most effectively implemented.	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)	Awaiting Central Government timescales
Assess impact of and respond to Government plans for the future of social care.	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH	Awaiting Central Government timescales
Regular monitoring of 2021/22 position for Adult Social Care with deep dives where there are increases in referrals to identify sources and determine likely total impact on resource for future financial planning.	Michelle Goldsmith, Finance Business Partner ASCH directorate	March 2022

Risk ID	CRR0014	Risk Title	Technological Resilience and Information Security			
<b>Source / Cause of Risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner(s)</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>The Council has a duty to protect personal and other sensitive data that it holds on its staff, service users and residents of Kent</p> <p>It should also ensure confidentiality, integrity, availability of its information assets</p> <p>The shift to remote/flexible working, and changes in how services are offered increases need for, and dependency on, resilient IT systems.</p> <p>KCC's ICT Strategy is moving the Authority's technology to cloud based services. It is important to harness these new capabilities in terms of both IT security and resilience, whilst emerging threats are understood and managed.</p> <p>Attempts to gain access to secure networks and servers are increasing nationally and becoming more sophisticated and damaging when they succeed.</p> <p>In information terms the other factor is human. Technology can only provide a level of protection. Our staff must have a strong</p>	<p>Information security incidents (caused by both human error and / or system compromise) resulting in loss of data or breach of privacy / confidentiality.</p> <p>Business information is lost, stolen, copied, or otherwise compromised (a breach)</p> <p>Significant business interruption caused by a successful cyber security attack.</p> <p>Successful cyber-attack (e.g., 'phishing' scam or ransomware attack) leading to loss or unauthorised access to sensitive business data.</p>	<p>Data Protection breach and consequent Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) sanction.</p> <p>Damages claims.</p> <p>Reputational Damage.</p> <p>Potential significant impact on business interruption if systems require shutdown until magnitude of issue is investigated.</p> <p>Loss or corruption of data.</p> <p>Loss of key systems potentially impacting ability to deliver statutory services.</p> <p>Partners unable to discharge their duties</p> <p>Complaints</p>	<p>Rebecca Spore, Director Infrastructure</p> <p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer</p> <p>Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Peter Oakford, Finance, Corporate and Traded Services</p> <p>Bryan Sweetland Communications , Engagement, People and partnerships</p>	<p>Likely (4)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b> Likely (4)</p>	<p>Major (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b> Serious (4)</p>	



awareness of their responsibilities in terms of IT and information security.	
<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
Changes and additions to security controls remains an on-going theme as the authority updates and embraces new technologies.	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning
Electronic Communications User Policy, Virus reporting procedure and social media guidelines in place	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning
Staff are required to abide by IT policies that set out the required behaviour of staff in the use of the technology provided. These policies are reviewed on an annual basis for appropriateness.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Procedures to address data breaches from KCC 'client-side' perspective are covered within the Infrastructure business continuity plan	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Further training introduced relating to cybercrime, cyber security and social engineering to raise staff awareness and knowledge.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
External reviews of the Authority's security compliance are carried out to maintain accreditation and confirm best practice is applied.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Monthly updated remediation plans produced for the Director of Infrastructure and Senior Information Risk Owner. Quarterly reporting to the Directorate Management Team.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer

Service Partners / Providers liaised with to ensure clarity regarding support available and respective responsibilities to address data breaches should they occur.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Persistent monitoring of threats, network behaviours and data transfers to seek out possible breaches and take necessary action.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Systems are configured in line with best practice security controls proportionate to the business information being handled. Systems are risk assessed and reviewed to ensure compliance is maintained.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
A Cyber incident response and management policy has been developed which strengthens the responsibilities and accountabilities across the Authority.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Procedure for incident management being reviewed and updated and responses to liaison picked up under consolidated action plan.	James Church, Interim Head of ICT Compliance and Risk and Digital Accessibility Compliance Officer
Data Protection and Information Governance training is mandatory and requires staff to refresh periodically. Progress rates monitored regularly.	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer / Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People & Communications
Additional messages warning staff of cyber threats are being sent out regularly.	Diane Trollope, Service Manager OD and Engagement
Messages to encourage increased awareness of information security amongst staff are communicated to align with key implementation milestones of the ICT Transformation Programme.	Diane Trollope, Service Manager OD and Engagement

Action Title	Action Owner	Planned Completion Date
Implementation of actions within the Consolidated Security Action Plan	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning	April 2022 (review)
Continuation of roll out of Microsoft Security and Compliance Package	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning	January 2022 (review)
Business case for a cloud-native security information and event manager being developed.	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning	December 2022

Risk ID	CRR0015	Risk Title	Managing and working with the social care market			
<p><b>Source / Cause of Risk</b></p> <p>The current social care system is under significant strain as a result of the increasing cost and complexity of demand for services and constrained local authority budgets</p> <p>A significant proportion of adult social care is commissioned out to the private and voluntary sectors. This offers value for money but also means that KCC is dependent on a buoyant market to achieve best value and give service users optimal choice and control.</p> <p>The market has high vacancy levels, and high staff turnover rates. Factors such as the increase to the National Living Wage, inflationary pressures, mandated vaccinations, and a buoyant job market mean that the care market is under pressure to recruit and retain adequate numbers of staff.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has added additional pressures, further threatening sustainability of the market. Latent demand and a reduction in access to</p>	<p><b>Risk Event</b></p> <p>Social Care market particularly domiciliary care is not sustainable.</p> <p>Inability to obtain the right kind of provider supply at affordable prices.</p> <p>Significant numbers of care home closures or service failures.</p> <p>Increases in hand backs of care</p> <p>Providers choose not to tender for services at Local Authority funding levels or accept service users with complex needs.</p>	<p><b>Consequence</b></p> <p>Gaps in the care market for certain types of care or in geographical areas meaning difficulty in placing some service users.</p> <p>Unable to offer care packages immediately leading to delays with discharging from Health Services</p> <p>Reduction in quality of care provided due to workforce pressures</p>	<p><b>Risk Owner</b></p> <p>Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH, in collaboration with Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Clair Bell, Adult Social Care and Public Health</p>	<p><b>Current Likelihood</b></p> <p>V. Likely (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b></p> <p>Possible (3)</p>	<p><b>Current Impact</b></p> <p>Major (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b></p> <p>Major (5)</p>	

health care has led to an increase in clients presenting with more complex needs. There is increased demand for care and support, and pressures arising from hospital discharges.	
<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
KCC is part of local and regional Quality Surveillance Groups that systematically bring together the different parts of the health and care system to share information, identify and mitigate risks to quality, including those relating to care providers.	Sharon Dene, Strategic Commissioning
New contracts commenced relating to Disability and Mental Health Residential Care services.	Simon Mitchell, Strategic Commissioning
Ongoing work to improve maturity of the market	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner
Ongoing monitoring of Home Care market and market coverage. Commissioners and operational managers review the capacity of the Home Care market with a view to developing a strategy to ensure market coverage.	Paula Watson, Senior Commissioner
Ongoing Contract Monitoring, working in partnership with the Access to Resources team	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner
Opportunities for joint commissioning and procurement in partnership with key agencies (i.e., Health) being regularly explored, including joint work regarding the provision of dementia nursing beds.	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner
Regular engagement with provider and trade organisations	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner
Older Persons Accommodation Strategy refreshed, which analyses demand and need and sets the future vision and direction for accommodation to support vulnerable Kent residents alongside the Adult Social Care Strategy - Your Life, Your Wellbeing	Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH
Ensuring contracts have indexation clauses built-in, managed through contract monitoring	Louise Merchant / Christopher Wimhurst, Strategic Commissioning

As part of the <i>Commissioning Success</i> model, Analytics function utilises data to inform decision making before moving commissioning activity forward.	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst	
Phase 2 of the Care in the Home Services refresh commenced, bringing the various Discharge services and Supported Living Services under the Care in the Home Umbrella.	Tracey Schneider, Senior Commissioner	
Phase 1 of Care and Support in the Home Services contract live, combining homecare and community based supporting independence services. This has reduced the number of care packages being placed off contract	Tracey Schneider, Senior Commissioner	
Analytical work is being conducted on assessments and reviews in adult social care to help inform key commissioning activity, including Winter planning and impact of Covid.	Rachel Kennard, Chief Analyst	
Daily risk assessment for people in the community awaiting packages of care and short-term bed provision for those at high risk	Chris McKenzie, Director ASCH	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Community Support Market Position Statements being refreshed, to inform market shaping, oversight and sustainability	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner	February 2022
Adult Social Care Pressures Plan 2021/22 - outlining the strategic and operational response to a range of factors including COVID-19, vacancies in the health and social care workforce, waiting lists for care and support, winter pressures and budgetary pressures.	Richard Smith – Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health	December 2021

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0039</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Information Governance</b>				
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Target Residual Impact</b>
<p>The Council is required to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and proper use, including disposal of data under the Data Protection Act 2018, which is particularly challenging given the volume of information handled by the authority on a daily basis.</p> <p>The Council has regulatory obligations into the management of SAR/FOI/EIR requests</p> <p>United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) came into effect that have introduced significantly increased obligations on all data controllers, including the Council.</p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced new risks e.g. staff adapting to new ways of working and increasing information security threats.</p> <p>There is insufficient resource available to undertake comprehensive oversight / assurance activity that provides assurance on compliance with existing information governance standards.</p>	<p>Failure to embed the appropriate processes, procedures and behaviours to meet regulations.</p> <p>Failure to meet regulatory reporting deadlines</p> <p>Information security incidents (caused by both human error and / or system compromise) resulting in loss of personal data or breach of privacy / confidentiality.</p> <p>Council accreditation for access to government and partner ICT data, systems and network is withdrawn.</p> <p>Cantium Business Solutions prioritises commercial work or does not undertake information governance compliance work in an appropriate and timely fashion.</p> <p>Providers processing KCC data fail to embed the appropriate processes and behaviours.</p>	<p>Information Commissioner's Office sanction (e.g., undertaking, assessment, improvement, enforcement or monetary penalty notice issued against the Authority).</p> <p>Serious breaches under UK GDPR could attract a fine of c£17m.</p> <p>Increased risk of litigation.</p> <p>Reputational damage.</p>	<p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and Data Protection Officer in collaboration with David Whittle, Senior Information Risk Owner</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Roger Gough, Leader</p> <p>Bryan Sweetland Communications, Engagement, People and Partnerships</p> <p>Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet</p>	<p>V. Likely (5)</p> <p>Possible (3)</p>	<p>Serious (4)</p> <p>Serious (4)</p>		

<p>There is a critical dependency on the Council's Local Authority Trading Companies (CBS) and other material third parties to support Information Governance compliance for the KCC systems and network.</p> <p>KCC services' requirement for non-standard systems creates vulnerabilities.</p>	<p>Member for Corporate and Traded Services</p>
<p><b>Control Title</b></p>	<p><b>Control Owner</b></p>
<p>Staff are required to complete mandatory training on Information Governance and Data Protection and refresh their knowledge every two years as a minimum.</p>	<p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer / Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications</p>
<p>Senior Information Risk Owner for the Council appointed with training and support to undertake the role.</p>	<p>David Whittle, Director SPRCA</p>
<p>ICT Commissioning function has necessary working/contractual relationship with the Cantium Business Solutions to require support on KCC ICT compliance and audit.</p>	<p>Rebecca Spore, Director Infrastructure</p>
<p>Caldicott Guardian appointed with training and support to undertake the role</p>	<p>Richard Smith, Corporate Director ASCH</p>
<p>Corporate Information Governance group to allow for effective management of information governance risks and issues between the DPO, SIRO and Caldicott Guardian.</p>	<p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer</p>
<p>A number of policies and procedures are in place including KCC Information Governance Policy; Information Governance Management Framework; Information Security Policy; Data Protection Policy; Freedom of Information Policy; and Environmental Information Regulations Policy all in place and reviewed regularly. Data Protection Officer in place to act as a designated contact with the ICO.</p>	<p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer</p>



Management Guide/operating modules on Information Governance in place, highlighting key policies and procedures.	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
Privacy notices as well as procedures/protocols for investigating and reporting data breaches reviewed and updated	Caroline Dodge, Team Leader Information Resilience & Transparency	
Information Resilience and Transparency team in place, providing business information governance support.	Caroline Dodge, Team Leader Information Resilience & Transparency	
Cross Directorate Information Governance Working Group in place.	Michael Thomas-Sam, Strategic Business Adviser Social Care	
Corporate Information Governance Group established, chaired by the DPO and including the SIRO and Caldecott Guardian acting as a point of escalation for information governance issues and further escalation to the Corporate Management Team if required	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Continuation of roll out of Microsoft Security and Compliance Package	Dave Lindsay, Interim Head of ICT Strategy and Commissioning	January 2022 (review)
Detailed action plan is being prepared for changes to the recording of data breaches and identification.	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	March 2022
Working from Home Information Governance and Records Management audit implementation of recommendations	Ben Watts, General Counsel / David Whittle, Director SPRCA	March 2022
Each directorate is responsible for carrying out data mapping exercises to find out what personal data is held and to understand how the information flows through the organisation	Michael Thomas-Sam, Chair of Cross-Directorate Information Governance Working Group	March 2022

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0042</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Post Transition period border systems, infrastructure and regulatory arrangements –</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
On 1 January 2021 the Transition period with the European Union ended, and the United Kingdom now operates a full, external border as a sovereign nation. This means that controls are now placed on the movement of goods between the UK and the EU.	That changes in border customs, checking and processing routinely affect local communities and both the strategic and local road networks. That the Government does not provide sufficient capital and revenue financial support to departments, agencies, local authorities and other infrastructure stakeholders necessary to address the necessary infrastructure, legislation and controls to ensure long term plan for frictionless border movements.	Significant slowdown in the existing flow of goods and people through the Kent Ports leads to long delays in accessing Dover Ports and Eurotunnel. Impacts on major traffic routes to support Operation Brock and other mitigations for port delays and the consequential increase in local and pan-Kent road journey times, impacting on local residents and businesses. Significant detrimental impact on county's economic competitiveness, attractiveness for inward investment and quality of life for Kent residents. Significant increase in imported goods subject to statutory checks by Trading Standards including consumer goods and animal	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET	Likely (4)	Major (5)	
To afford industry extra time to make necessary arrangements, the UK Government has taken the decision to introduce the new border controls in three stages up until 1 July 2022. KCC has been working with partners at a local and national level to assess potential implications for the county and prepare for various scenarios. KCC is reliant on coherent, coordinated governance and information across Government to aid the Local Authority and partners locally in planning their contingency arrangements and responding appropriately.			<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b>  David Brazier, Highways & Transport  Mike Hill, Community & Regulatory Services	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b>  Possible (4)	<b>Target Residual Impact</b>  Serious (4)	

feeds.  
 Imported animals now  
 subject to welfare  
 checks at Border  
 controls posts,  
 breaches of welfare  
 subject to investigation  
 by Trading Standards.  
 Shortages and delay  
 may impact supply  
 chains.

<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
KCC engagement with and support for the Kent Resilience Forum	Lisa Guthrie, Head of Kent Resilience Team
Regular engagement with senior colleagues in relevant Government Departments on the impacts and implications of transition on KCC's regulatory responsibilities relating to Trading Standards and the resilience of Kent highways.	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET
Several training exercises have taken place to prepare for various scenarios	Simon Jones, Corporate Director, GET / Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
KCC involvement in Operation Fennel Strategic and Tactical Groups (multi-agency planning groups for potential disruption at Port of Dover and Eurotunnel).	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET
Operation Fennel strategic plan in place	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET
KCC Cross Directorate Resilience Forum reviews latest situation regarding transition impacts	Tony Harwood, Resilience and Emergencies Manager
KCC contribution to multi-agency communications in the 'response' phase, and leadership of communications in the 'planning' and 'recovery' phases	Christina Starte, Head of Communications
KCC services are continually reviewing business continuity arrangements, taking potential scenarios into consideration (cross-reference to CRR0004), with co-ordination via Directorate Resilience Groups	Service Managers

KCC membership of the Delivery Models Operational Group and associated working groups such as Emergency Planning, Infrastructure etc.		Steve Rock, Head of Trading Standards
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
KCC continues to make a case for further funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Transport (DfT) for direct impact costs of Transition preparedness in the county.	Simon Jones, Corporate Director GET	July 2022
Recruitment of additional staff for Ports Team to provide capacity and deal specifically with imported goods through the 7-8 Ports and Inland border facilities in Kent.	Steve Rock, Head of Trading Standards	July 2022
Recruitment of additional animal health officers to provide capacity to deal with increased pressures on animal health and welfare in Kent.	Steve Rock, Head of Trading Standards	December 2021
Recruitment of Trainee Trading Standards Officers to increase capability of the service to cover statutory functions requiring qualified staff, in particular Animal Feed.	Steve Rock, Head of Trading Standards	December 2021

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0044</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>High Needs Funding shortfall</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
The demand for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) support is rising and at a much faster rate than the school age population, and the Council's Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget is overspending on the High Needs Block and has already accrued a deficit of £62m on the DSG reserve.	Inability to manage within budget going forward.	Continued funding of deficit on the DSG reserve by net surplus balances in other reserves becomes unsustainable, impacting on the financial resilience of the Council.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE	Likely (4)	Major (5)	
Corresponding pressure on some of KCC's non-DSG SEND related budgets e.g. SEN Home to School Transport, is also being experienced.	Inability to reduce accumulated deficit on Dedicated Schools Grant reserve.	Impact on support for children with SEND (cross reference to CRR0047)	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b>	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Target Residual Impact</b>	
Consequently, meeting the needs of children and young people with SEND within available resources is becoming ever more challenging.			Shellina Prendergast, Education & Skills	Likely (4)	Serious (4)	
The ability to forecast costs in future years is difficult.						
The Department for Education (DfE) is introducing tighter reporting requirements on local authorities who have a deficit in their DSG account.						

Control Title	Control Owner	
Block payment arrangement negotiated with Further Education colleges. For this early confirmation and certainty in funding colleges are expected to absorb inflationary pressures and provide support to any growth in the number of post 16 young people with High Needs.	Karen Stone, Revenue Finance Manager (0 - 25 services) / Christine McInnes, Director of Education	
Continual lobbying of Government on two matters; increased funding in both the short and medium term, and structural changes to government policy to help reduce the demand i.e. via County Council Network, Association of Directors' of Children's Services. Includes provision of evidence of the impact of the High Needs pressures on the quality of education children receive, schools, other providers and the Local Authority.	Roger Gough, Leader of the Council / Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member, Education and Skills / Matt Dunkley Corporate Director (CYPE)	
KCC conducted a review of provision of pupils in mainstream schools with High Needs, introducing changes aiming to ensure the number of High Needs pupils in mainstream schools does not contribute to the current budget pressures.	Christine McInnes, Director of Education / Karen Stone, Revenue Finance Manager (0 - 25 services)	
As required by the DfE, a recovery plan is produced (if the LA is either in deficit or if there is a significant reduction in their surplus) outlining how KCC can bring in-year spending in line with in-year funding, and options for how the accumulated deficit could be repaid. To be presented to the Schools' Funding Forum and approved by the Council's Section 151 Officer	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) / Christine McInnes, Director of Education	
Action Title	Action Owner	Planned Completion Date
High Needs Funding review to be undertaken and recommendations to be agreed with the School's Funding Forum. This links to Workstream B of the Written Statement of Action in supporting Inclusive Practices in schools.	Karen Stone, Revenue Finance Business Partner / Christine McInnes, Director of Education	March 2022
Implementation of SEND Written Statement of Action Inclusion workstream to better address the relationship between learner need, outcomes, provision and cost. Including: - Tighter commissioning arrangements to drive down the cost of placements in Independent Non-Maintained Special Schools	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE	March 2022
Building capacity and an inclusive ethos in mainstream schools to improve teaching and confidence in supporting more children with higher levels of need.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE	March 2022

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Maintaining effective governance and decision making in a challenging financial and operating environment for local government</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>
<p>The continuation of a challenging financial and operating environment for Local Government (see risk CRR0009) will require difficult policy decisions to be made in a timely manner, which requires continued effective governance and decision making as well as robust internal control mechanisms. Examples from other local authorities has shown the impact that ineffective decision making can have on financial resilience. KCC's constitution explicitly references the demarcation of Member and Officer roles which consequently places dependency on the effectiveness of the member governance of the Council. Elected Members may require additional training and expertise to enable capability of effective challenge.</p>	<p>Members are unwilling or unable to agree necessary policy (service) decisions to deliver a legally balanced budget and sustainable medium-term financial plan (MFTP).</p>	<p>Decisions challenged under judicial review on the appropriateness of the decision-making within KCC.</p>	<p>David Cockburn, Head of Paid Service</p>	<p>Unlikely (2)</p>	<p>Major (5)</p>
	<p>Members agree a budget requiring unrealistic and undeliverable efficiency savings leading to significant in-year overspends.</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer / Head of Paid Service statutory report to Council.</p>	<p>Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (s151 Officer)</p>	<p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b></p> <p>V. Unlikely (1)</p>	<p><b>Target Residual Impact</b></p> <p>Major (5)</p>
	<p>Statutory officers (S151, Monitoring Officer, Head of Paid Service) are required to use their powers to intervene or alert the Council to inappropriate/illegal decision-making.</p>	<p>Reputational damage to the Council.</p> <p>S114 Notice issued by the S151 Officer.</p>	<p>Ben Watts, General Counsel and Monitoring Officer</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Roger Gough, Leader of the Council</p> <p>Peter Oakford, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Traded Services</p>		

<b>Control Title</b>	<b>Control Owner</b>
Interim Strategic Plan agreed by County Council and published setting out objectives and priorities for the Council in 2021/22.	Roger Gough, Leader of the Council
Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget Book agreed by Full Council and support/briefings provided for all political groups by officers on budget development options	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Effective internal audit arrangements in place and robust monitoring arrangements for the delivery of internal audit recommendations to Governance & Audit Committee	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Appropriately detailed and timely financial monitoring reports considered by Cabinet and Cabinet Committees	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Governance reviews from across the Local Government sector are analysed to identify any lessons learned and reported to relevant stakeholders, including Governance & Audit Committee.	Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Appropriate officer development and training programme in place and overseen by CMT	Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications
Appropriate and effective corporate risk management procedures in place for the Council	David Whittle, Director SPRCA
Informal governance arrangements authorised by the KCC Constitution have been published on KNet as a practical guide for how officers work with elected Members to help them support effective decision making for our service users, residents and communities.	David Whittle, Director SPRCA
Operating standards for KCC officers that support KCC's constitution published on KNet, signposting officers to essential policy information and additional guidance on specific topics, to help officers discharge their responsibilities effectively.	David Whittle, Director SPRCA
Key and significant decision-making process in place for Executive decisions and appropriately published Forward Plan of Executive Decisions	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer
Annual Governance Statement (AGS) arrangements in place with returns made across both senior and statutory officers	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer



Democratic Services support effective Committee governance and scrutiny arrangements	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
Member and Officer codes of conduct in place and robustly monitored and enforced	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
Member development and training programme in place and overseen by Selection and Member Services Committee	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
Provision for Chief Officers to seek written direction from Executive Members within the KCC Constitution	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer	
Appropriate performance reporting of service and corporate performance to Cabinet, Cabinet Committee and Full Council	David Cockburn, Head of Paid Service	
Transformation plans and/or business cases for strategic change underpinning MTFP shared with non-executive members through Cabinet Committees as part of the executive decision-making arrangements	David Cockburn, Head of Paid Service	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Review of KCC Operating Standards	David Whittle, Director SPRCA	March 2022
Further amendments to KCC's governance will be set out in a 5-year plan to be presented to County Council.	Ben Watts, General Counsel and KCC Data Protection Officer (DPO)	December 2021

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0047</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Adequacy of support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) – implementation of Kent Local Area SEND Written Statement of Action</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Kent in early 2019, to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.	Insufficient improvement in areas identified within timescales.	Adverse impact on outcomes for vulnerable young people	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE	Likely (4)	Major (5)	
While a number of strengths were identified, a number of weaknesses and areas of concern were raised.		Dissatisfaction from families				
In response to these concerns a programme has been identified across both KCC and Clinical Commissioning Groups to implement the changes and improvements required.		Potential for legal action if statutory time limits or processes are not met.	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b>	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Target Residual Impact</b>	
The programme is being delivered against a challenging backdrop of significant increases in demand and a shortfall in High Needs funding (see risk CRR0044), while some aspects of the programme are being revised to take account of implications of the Covid-19 pandemic.			Sue Chandler, Integrated Children's Services	Unlikely (2)	Major (5)	

Control Title	Control Owner
SEND Steering Group in place, with responsibility for coordinating activity and tracking progress across the five identified workstreams in the Written Statement of Action, reporting into the Improvement Board.	Mark Walker, Director for SEND
<p>SEND Improvement Programme being implemented, which includes delivery of requirements detailed in the Kent Written Statement of Action, covering five key workstreams relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Parental engagement and co-production</li> <li>-Inclusive practice and the outcomes, progress and attainment of children and young people.</li> <li>- Quality of Education, Health and Care Plans</li> <li>- Joint commissioning and governance</li> <li>- Service provision</li> <li>- Preparation of adulthood.</li> </ul>	Mark Walker, Director for SEND
Effective use of SEND Improvement Programme Risk register.	Mark Walker, Director for SEND
Local area SEND Strategy developed in collaboration with partners, which goes beyond the Written Statement of Action to enable sustained improvement and transform Kent's SEND offer.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE (KCC lead)
Kent Joint SEND vision established	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE (KCC lead)
SEND Improvement Board established, meeting monthly, to ensure collaborative working across education, health and social care, to have a strategic overview of services and drive the operational workstreams that have been developed to address each area of significant weakness.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE (KCC lead)
Robust programme management in place, ensuring appropriate integration between workstreams and delivery plan.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE (KCC lead)
0-25 Health and Wellbeing Board is the strategic board for children's services that oversees delivery of these services in Kent. A new joint governance with health has been established from November 2020.	Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director CYPE (KCC lead)

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0049</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Fraud and Error</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>As with any organisation, there is an inherent risk of fraud and/or error that must be acknowledged and proactively managed.</p> <p>The fraud threat posed during emergency situations is higher than at other times, and all public bodies should be attuned to the risks facing their organisations and the public sector.</p> <p>It is critical that management implements a sound system of internal control and demonstrates commitment to it at all times, and that investment in fraud prevention and detection technology and resource is sufficient.</p> <p>This includes ensuring that new emerging fraud/error issues are sufficiently risk assessed.</p>	<p>Failure to prevent or detect significant acts of fraud or error from internal or external sources, in that within any process or activity there are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- false representations are made to make a gain or expose another to a loss</li> <li>- failure to notify a change of circumstances to make a gain or expose another to a loss</li> <li>- abuses their position, in which they are expected to safeguard to make a gain or expose another to a loss.</li> </ul>	<p>Financial loss leading to pressures on budgets that may impact the provision of services to service users and residents</p> <p>Reputational damage, particularly if the public see others gaining services or money that are not entitled to, leading to resentment by the public against others.</p>	<p>On behalf of CMT:</p> <p>Zena Cooke, Corporate Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Peter Oakford, Finance, Corporate and Traded Services</p>	<p>Possible (3)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b></p> <p>Unlikely (2)</p>	<p>Serious (4)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b></p> <p>Significant (3)</p>	
<b>Control Title</b>				<b>Control Owner</b>		
KCC is part of the Kent Intelligence Network (KIN), a joint project between 12 district councils, Medway Council, Kent Fire & Rescue and Kent County Council which analyses and data matches financial and personal information to allow fraudulent activity in locally administered services to be detected more proactively within Kent				Nick Scott, Operations Manager, Kent Intelligence Network / James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager KCC		

Training and awareness raising is conducted periodically	Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications / James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager
An agreed Memorandum of Understanding is in effect with partners (District Councils, Police and Fire Service) outlining the minimum standards expected to be applied by collection authorities (District Councils) to address fraud and error relating to council tax and business rates. Additional work jointly funded to identify and investigate high risk cases based on each authority's share of the tax base.	Dave Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Strategy and Planning)
Internal Audit includes proactive fraud work in its annual audit plan, identifying potential areas where frauds could take place and checking for fraudulent activity.	Jonathan Idle, Head of Internal Audit
Whistleblowing Policy in place for the reporting of suspicions of fraud or financial irregularity	James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager
Preventing Bribery Policy in place, presenting a clear and precise framework to understand and implement the arrangements required to comply with the Bribery Act 2010.	James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager
Anti-fraud and corruption strategy in place and reviewed annually	James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager
Counter Fraud Manager liaises with CMT regarding all new policies, initiatives and strategies to be assessed for the risk of fraud, bribery and corruption through engagement with the Counter Fraud Team.	James Flannery, Counter-Fraud Manager
Systems of internal control which aim to prevent fraud and increase the likelihood of detection	Statutory Officers / Corporate Management Team
Fraud risk assessments have been developed by the Counter-Fraud team and are being considered by service directorates to aid awareness and facilitate appropriate mitigations.	Directorate Management Teams
Commissioning standards reviewed, including rules relating to "Spending the Council's Money", which have been clarified.	Clare Maynard, Interim Strategic Commissioner

Risk ID	CRR0050	Risk Title	CBRNE incidents, communicable diseases and incidents with a public health implication			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
<p>The Council, along with other Category 1 Responders in the County, has a legal duty to establish and deliver containment actions and contingency plans to reduce the likelihood, and impact, of high impact incidents and emergencies.</p> <p>The Director of Public Health has a legal duty to gain assurance from the National Health Service and Public Health England that plans are in place to mitigate risks to the health of the public including outbreaks of communicable diseases e.g. Pandemic Influenza.</p>	<p>Insufficient capacity / resource to deliver response and recovery concurrently for a prolonged period, including potential future wave(s) of Covid-19.</p>	<p>Potential increased harm or loss of life if response is not effective.</p> <p>Increased financial cost in terms of damage control and insurance costs.</p> <p>Adverse effect on local businesses and the Kent economy.</p> <p>Possible public unrest and significant reputational damage.</p> <p>Legal actions and intervention for failure to fulfil KCC's obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act or other associated legislation.</p>	<p>On behalf of CMT:</p> <p>Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health</p> <p><b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b></p> <p>Clair Bell, Adult Social Care and Public Health</p>	<p>V. Likely (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Likelihood</b></p> <p>Possible (3)</p>	<p>Major (5)</p> <p><b>Target Residual Impact</b></p> <p>Major (5)</p>	
<b>Control Title</b>				<b>Control Owner</b>		
There is coverage across Kent for Covid-19 testing, with regional and / or mobile testing sites.				Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health		
"Protect Kent and Medway, Play your part" media campaign				Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health		
Utilising data sets from Public Health England to give a picture of Covid-19 across Kent.				Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health		

<p>DPH now has oversight of the delivery of immunisation and vaccination programmes in Kent through the Health Protection Committee</p> <p>DPH has regular teleconferences with the local Public Health England office on the communication of infection control issues</p> <p>DPH or consultant attends newly formed Kent and Medway infection control committee</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>Kent Resilience Forum has a Health sub-group to ensure co-ordinated health services and Public Health England planning and response is in place</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>KCC and local Kent Resilience Forum partners have tested preparedness for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives (CBRNE) incidents and communicable disease outbreaks in line with national requirements. The Director of Public Health has additionally sought and gained assurance from the local Public Health England office and the NHS on preparedness and maintaining business continuity</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>The Director of Public Health works through local resilience fora to ensure effective and tested plans are in place for the wider health sector to protect the local population from risks to public health.</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>Multiple governance – e.g. Health Protection Board feeds into KRF Health and Care cell.</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>Kent Resilience Forum Outbreak Control Plan published, building on existing health protection plans already in place between Kent County Council, Medway Council, Public Health England - South East, the 12 Kent District and Borough Council Environmental Health Teams, the Strategic Coordinating Group of the Kent Resilience Forum, Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Group and other key partners</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health
<p>Kent Local Tracing Partnership, supporting Government Test and Trace scheme.</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health / Christina Starte, Head of Communications
<p>Mass testing and vaccination rollout supported</p>	Allison Duggal, Interim Director of Public Health

<b>Risk ID</b>	<b>CRR0051</b>	<b>Risk Title</b>	<b>Maintaining or Improving workforce health, wellbeing and productivity</b>			
<b>Source / Cause of risk</b>	<b>Risk Event</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>	<b>Current Likelihood</b>	<b>Current Impact</b>	
The council's workforce is adapting the way it operates and delivers services.	Lack of managerial capacity and / or capability to deliver in new environment	Increased absence levels	On behalf of CMT:	Possible (4)	Serious (4)	
Hybrid/flexible working in the delivery of services brings with it opportunities to accelerate programmes of change, improve productivity, wellbeing and promote our employer brand, but also, in the short term at least, risks that require close monitoring and management.	Staff mental and physical fatigue due to prolonged period of response and recovery, while adapting to a new working environment.	Impact on productivity (could be positive or negative)	Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communication s	<b>Target Residual Likelihood</b>	<b>Target Residual Impact</b>	
Staff across the organisation continue to work under significant operational pressures and capacity constraints.	Lack of depth / resilience of key personnel or teams.	Recruitment and retention challenges.	<b>Responsible Cabinet Member(s):</b>	Unlikely (2)	Serious (4)	
	Insufficient capacity should future wave of winter pressures materialise.		Bryan Sweetland Communication s, Engagement, People and Partnerships			
<b>Control Title</b>				<b>Control Owner</b>		
Regular engagement with recognised trades unions.				Paul Royel, Head of HR and OD		
KCC's Organisation Design principles have been refreshed to ensure they remain fit for purpose.				Paul Royel, Head of HR and OD		
Comprehensive resources and tools available for staff to access, including Support Line counselling services, I-resilience tool, mindfulness and wellbeing sessions, tailored to staff groups as appropriate.				Amanda Beer, Corporate Director People and Communications		



Additional guidance for staff on Display Screen Equipment self-assessments when working from home on a semi-permanent basis.	Stewart Baxter-Smith, Head of Health & Safety	
Health & Safety team support for services, including updated Covid-19 related advice and guidance e.g. with Task Safety Analysis and supporting use of premises safety during response and recovery.	Stewart Baxter-Smith, Head of Health & Safety	
Working and Wellbeing Surveys conducted, to build understanding of current picture and inform future planning and action with managers, alongside regular reviews of a suite of management information.	Diane Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation	
Refocused medium-term Organisation Development Plan	Diane Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation	
Intranet site contains dedicated Covid-19 area, with latest advice and guidance - including staff FAQs, Keeping Well, Comfort and Safety and Remote Working.	Diane Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation	
Promoting even more regular communications between managers and their teams while working remotely via "Good Conversations" tools etc.	Diane Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation	
KCC's values, behaviours and culture embedded by managers, linked to KCC Strategic Reset programme.	Diane Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation	
<b>Action Title</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>	<b>Planned Completion Date</b>
Development of a new People Strategy for 2022-2027.	Paul Royel, Head of HR and OD	April 2022

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

**To:** Cabinet, 9 December 2021

**Subject:** Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2021-22

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The attached report sets out the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at September 2021-22 excluding and including the impact of Covid-19.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) NOTE the forecast Revenue monitoring position and consider the action required to balance the budget by the year end.
- b) NOTE the forecast Capital monitoring position and the development of the 10 year capital programme to address the level of slippage in the programme.
- c) NOTE the way we are monitoring the financial impact of Covid-19
- d) NOTE and AGREE the Capital budget adjustment.
- e) NOTE the Prudential Indicators report.
- f) NOTE the Reserves monitoring position.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The September 2021-22 budget monitoring report being presented is the first monitoring position for 2021-22 and sets out the revenue and capital forecast position including the financial information related to the impact of Covid 19 on our resources.

**2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2021-22**

- 2.1 The attached report sets out the overall forecast position as at 30 September 2021-22, which excluding Covid-19 for revenue is an overspend of +£18.7m and an underspend on capital of -£103.4m. The reported COVID-19 position shows forecast spend of £37.9m. There are corporately held COVID budgets of £16.1m and the remainder of the spend is to be met from the emergency COVID reserve, resulting in us currently showing the position as breakeven. Without the additional government funding our forecast outturn would be £37.9m higher.
- 2.2 Action to address the current £18.7m overspend is critical to ensure we achieve a balanced budget by the year end. Any overspend at the year end will need to be funded from reserves and will put pressure on the 2022-23 revenue budget.

2.3 The level of slippage in the Capital programme has increased further since the last monitoring report. The development of a 10 year programme from 2022-23 together with a new capital monitoring and reporting IT solution should ensure capital programme budgets and delivery are more realistic.

### **3. Recommendation(s)**

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) NOTE the forecast Revenue monitoring position and consider the action required to balance the budget by the year end.
- b) NOTE the forecast Capital monitoring position and the development of the 10 year capital programme to address the level of slippage in the programme.
- c) NOTE the way we are monitoring the financial impact of Covid-19
- d) NOTE and AGREE the Capital budget adjustments.
- e) NOTE the Prudential Indicators report.
- f) NOTE the Reserves monitoring position.

### **4. Contact details**

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# Finance Monitoring Report

As at September 21-22

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By Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services,  
Peter Oakford  
Corporate Director Finance, Zena Cooke  
Corporate Directors

To Cabinet – 9 December 2021

Unrestricted

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## Contact Details

Corporate Director Finance – Zena Cooke  
Head of Finance Operations – Cath Head  
Chief Accountant – Emma Feakins  
Capital Finance Manager – Jo Lee  
Capital Finance Manager – Julie Samson

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# 1 Introduction

**This report sets out the Council's financial position up to the end of September 21-22, setting out both business as usual activities and the impact of Covid-19 on our resources. Capital budget adjustments are also included which require Cabinet approval.**

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1.1	<p>This report includes additional sections.</p> <p>Additional sections will be included in future reports.</p>	<p>New sections are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A section on progress in delivery of agreed savings</li><li>• A section on our reserves position</li></ul> <p>Further sections will be added in future monitoring reports, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A high-level analysis by expenditure type</li><li>• Key Financial Health Indicators</li><li>• Financial Resilience indices</li></ul>
1.2	<p>The overall Revenue General Fund forecast is a +£18.7m overspend.</p>	<p>The Revenue General Fund forecast position is a net overspend of +£18.7m. The forecast net spend of £1,148.2m includes a net drawdown from reserves of £9.4m; the source of funding will be determined at year-end, once the final position is presented.</p> <p>The largest variance is +£13.9m in ASCH, with an overspend forecast in CYPE (+£6.8m). GET (-£0.2m), S&amp;CS (-£1.4m) and NAC (Corporately Held Budgets) (-£0.5m) are forecasting small underspends. Details can be found in the individual directorate sections.</p> <p>Without the one-off Covid grants our forecast overspend would be £37.9m higher, bringing the total overspend to £56.6m.</p>
1.3	<p>The Covid-19 forecast is a total spend of £37.9m. This is shown as a breakeven position as the additional spend is being met from the Covid-19 emergency reserve.</p>	<p>The additional spend of £21.8m above the corporately held budget of £16.1m for Covid-19 is being funded from a drawdown from the Covid-19 emergency reserve, bringing the current position to breakeven.</p> <p>There is £55.6m held in the emergency reserve and the remaining £33.8m will be used to cover ongoing Covid-19 related costs. £13.5m of this balance relates to Helping Hands and Reconnect and will need to be rolled forward into 2022/23, which only leaves £20.3m for any further Covid related costs during the remainder of this financial year.</p> <p>Details can be found in the Covid-19 section and the individual directorate sections.</p>
1.4	<p>The Schools' Delegated Budgets are reporting a +£52.8m overspend.</p>	<p>The overspend position of +£52.8m reflects the impact of high demand for additional SEN support and high cost per child of High Needs Placements. The projected deficit on the High Needs budget has increased by £48m in this year from £62m at the end of the 2020-21 and will be in excess of £100m by the end of this financial year. The High Needs deficit is the Council's single most significant financial risk.</p>
1.5	<p>The Capital forecast is an underspend of -£103.4m.</p>	<p>The underspend is made up of +£21.9m real and -£125.3m rephasing variance, which represents 22.4% of the budget.</p>

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# 1 Introduction

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The largest real variance is an overspend of +£26.5m in GET. Details can be found in the capital sections.

The major rephasing variances are -£61.1m in CYPE and -£58.9m in GET. Details can be found in the capital section.

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## 2 Recommendations

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### Cabinet is asked to:

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- |     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
| 2.1 | Note the forecast Revenue monitoring position and consider the action required to balance the budget by the year end.                                 | Action to address the current £18.7m overspend is critical to ensure we achieve a balanced budget by the year end. Any overspend at the year end will need to be funded from reserves and will put pressure on the 2022-23 revenue budget. The position regarding previously agreed savings will also need to be reviewed, including those identified as no longer achievable in this year. |
| 2.2 | Note the forecast Capital monitoring position and the development of the 10 year capital programme to address the level of slippage in the programme. | The level of slippage in the Capital programme has increased further since the last monitoring report. The development of a 10 year programme from 2022-23 together with a new capital monitoring and reporting IT solution should ensure capital programme budgets and delivery are more realistic.  |
| 2.3 | Note the way we are monitoring the financial impact of Covid-19   | Please refer to Section 4 for details.  |
| 2.4 | Note and agree the Capital budget adjustments   | Please refer to Section 13 for details.   |
| 2.5 | Note the Prudential Indicators report   | Please refer to Appendix 2.   |
| 2.6 | Note the Reserves monitoring position   | Please refer to Appendix 3.   |
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### 3 Revenue

General Fund forecast +£18.7m overspend  
 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) +£52.8m overspend  
 Covid-19 forecast breakeven

General Fund		Forecast position as overspend/(underspend)				
Directorate	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast Outturn	Net Revenue Forecast Variance	Last reported position (July)	Movement (+/-)	
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Adult Social Care & Health	431.5	447.1	13.9	17.6	(3.7)	
Children, Young People & Education	302.3	309.1	6.8	1.1	5.7	
Growth, Environment & Transport	182.3	182.1	(0.2)	0.2	(0.4)	
Strategic & Corporate Services	95.5	94.1	(1.4)	(0.1)	(1.3)	
Non Attributable Costs	115.8	115.8	0.0	(0.3)	0.3	
Corporately Held Budgets	0.5	0.0	(0.5)	(8.9)	8.4	
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>1,127.9</b>	<b>1,148.2</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.1</b>	
<b>Ringfenced Items</b>						
Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	52.8	52.8	49.5	3.3	
<b>Overall Position</b>	<b>1,127.9</b>	<b>1,201.1</b>	<b>71.6</b>	<b>59.1</b>	<b>12.5</b>	

#### Covid Forecast position as overspend/(underspend)

Directorate	Covid-19 Allocation	Covid-19 Forecast	Covid-19 Variance
	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care & Health	7.0	13.1	6.1
Children, Young People & Education	5.3	11.9	6.6
Growth, Environment & Transport	0.4	2.1	1.7
Strategic & Corporate Services	1.3	10.5	9.2
Non-Attributable Costs	2.1	0.3	(1.8)
<b>Variance to Covid-19 Budgets held corporately</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>21.8</b>
<b>Drawdown from COVID-19 Reserve</b>			<b>(21.8)</b>
<b>Total Covid-19 Position</b>			<b>0.0</b>

#### General Fund

The General Fund forecast position is a net overspend of +£18.7m, almost all of which relates to Adult Social Care and Children, Young People and Education. The forecast of £1,148.2m includes a net drawdown from reserves of £9.4m; the source of funding will be determined at year-end. There is £10m set aside in a risk reserve as agreed as part of

the 20-21 outturn that can be used to mitigate in part the projected overspend, but management action will be required to address the remaining overspend.

### **Covid-19**

The Council's response to the pandemic continues to be considerably complex, causing uncertainty to the forecast. This is due to the nature of the financial impact, ranging from additional expenditure, market sustainability payments, loss of income, and unachievable savings. The forecasting in this area is also impacted by the effect of the relaxation in restrictions, ongoing costs, and the expected withdrawal of a range of government support schemes.

Each directorate has a corporately held, COVID 19 budget amounting to £16.1m in total. Any additional expenditure will be met from the COVID-19 reserve. The forecast is breakeven after contributions from reserves of £21.8m. There is £55.6m held in the Covid-19 reserve and the remaining £33.8m will be used to cover ongoing Covid-19 related costs. £13.5m of this balance relates to Helping Hands and Reconnect and will need to be rolled forward into 2022/23, which only leaves £20.3m for any further Covid related costs during the remainder of this financial year. Further details of Covid-19 related costs are detailed in Section 4 and the individual directorate sections.

Without the one-off COVID grants, our forecast overspend position would be £37.9m higher, bringing it to £56.6m. The impact of COVID on our spend may be ongoing, particularly in Adults and Children's social care and if this pressure continues, we could see a significant impact on our 3-year medium term plan.

### **Schools' Delegated Budgets**

The forecast overspend is +£52.8m. The DSG deficit will increase from £51m to £103.4m in 2021/22. This is almost entirely due to an increase in the High Needs budget deficit, which is the Council's single biggest financial risk. The Council continues to work with the Schools' Funding Forum to set out the challenge and agree and deliver a plan to address the deficit. The Department for Education is expected to make contact with local authorities to discuss the detail of their plan and next steps although it is not clear when this might be. For more information, please refer to section 10.

### **Collection Fund**

Council Tax remains a significant source of income and the forthcoming year's budget will be dependent on the scale and pace of recovery in both the level of CTRS discounts and the collection rate. We consider it likely that we will see an improved position on Council Taxbase growth and the collection rate by the end of the year. For more information, please refer to section 15.

Categories	ASCH	CYPE	GET	S&CS	NAC	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Covid-19 Allocation held corporately</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>16.1</b>
Contribution from Public Health Reserve*						<b>0.0</b>
Forecast Real spend	7.9	9.2	4.2	10.9	0.0	<b>32.2</b>
Underspends	(0.1)	(0.2)	(13.7)	(1.5)	0.0	<b>(15.8)</b>
Loss of income	0.2	1.5	3.1	1.1	0.3	<b>6.2</b>
Unrealised savings	0.0	1.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	<b>1.7</b>
Market sustainability - loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Market sustainability - one off payments	5.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>5.1</b>
Payments for undelivered services (fixed fee)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Payments for undelivered services (variable fee)	0.1	0.0	8.4	0.0	0.0	<b>8.5</b>
<b>Total Covid-19 Forecast</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>37.9</b>
<b>Variance to Covid-19 Budgets held corporately</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>(1.8)</b>	<b>21.8</b>
Contribution from Covid-19 Reserve	(6.1)	(6.6)	(1.7)	(9.2)	1.8	<b>(21.8)</b>
<b>Total Covid-19 Position</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

\* Any Public Health net spend relating to Covid-19 will be funded by a drawdown from the Public Health reserve. Currently no Public Health related Covid-19 spend is being forecast.

As a consequence of Covid-19, the total additional expenditure impact (excluding ring-fenced grants spend) on General Fund services is forecast to be £37.9m. There is £16.1m of budget allocated for Covid-19 which is held corporately. £21.8m additional expenditure will be funded from a drawdown from the Covid-19 reserve.

There is £55.6m held in the Covid-19 reserve and the remaining £33.8m Covid-19 reserve will be used to cover the overspend and ongoing Covid-19 related costs. £13.5m of this balance relates to Helping Hands and Reconnect and will need to be rolled forward into 2022-23, which only leaves £20.3m for any further Covid related costs that may be incurred during the remainder of this financial year, which are currently not reflected in the projected out-turn.

	Forecast Variance				
	Budget	Revenue Forecast Outturn	Net Revenue Forecast Variance	Last reported position (July)	Movement (+/-)
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Adult Social Care & Health Operations	387.6	403.6	14.3	17.8	(3.5)
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (ASCH) including Public Health	33.5	33.1	(0.4)	0.5	(0.9)
Business Delivery	10.4	10.4	0.0	(0.7)	0.7
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	<b>431.5</b>	<b>447.1</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>(3.7)</b>

	Budget	Revenue Forecast Outturn	Net Revenue Forecast Variance	Contribution to/(from) Reserves	Net impact on General Fund
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
	<b>Covid-19 forecast position</b>	<b>7.0</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>(6.1)</b>

The Adult Social Care & Health directorate has a projected overspend of +£13.9m, which has reduced slightly since July and is in a number of different service areas from those previously reported.

The £447.1m forecast includes a net £1.5m drawdown from reserves. The drawdowns include £1m for the Digital Implementation (Mosaic) project and £0.7m for use of the community discharge grant reserve. In addition, there is a contribution to the Leap year reserve of £0.2m.

There is an underlying Covid-19 projected additional spend of +£6.1m, which is offset by a contribution from reserves to show a breakeven position. Uncertainty remains around the ongoing impact Covid-19 will have on services.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Older People - Residential Care Services (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	+£12.2m	High levels of complexity requiring additional support.	<p>There has been an increase in need largely due to the ongoing impact of Covid on our now “business as usual” services; people are leaving hospital with increased complexity of need requiring additional support. Additionally, the impact of lockdown restrictions has resulted in individuals delaying receiving support and less access to the use of preventative services. There has also been an increase in situations where it is considered detrimental to move an individual to a lower cost placement as a result of Covid restrictions affecting the Hospital Discharge Process.</p> <p>A range of actions are underway or planned to mitigate this budget pressure. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that appropriate health contribution is secured to meet care and support needs where continuing health care is applicable</li> </ul>

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased scrutiny of requests where it is deemed that it would be detrimental to move a client</li> <li>a bed brokerage review has been commissioned and completed.</li> <li>additional therapy resources being deployed to support a more streamlined hospital discharge process</li> </ul>
Older People - Community Based Services (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	-£4.7m	The number of clients receiving a community care service has not increased as expected.	There is severe pressure in the social care market especially relating to workforce capacity. This has manifested partially as lack of availability of suitable homecare packages. As a result, more clients are receiving alternative support within the community. There is a resulting underspend within this budget due to the lower than anticipated number of clients and corresponding overspends against other services. The 21-22 budget anticipated increasing numbers of clients receiving support in the community rather than residential care. This has not been achieved as referenced in the savings section of this report.
Adult Learning Disability - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	+£4.5m	Learning Disability Residential Care has high levels of complexity and high-cost packages transferring from 18-25.	The high level of additional complex needs seen in clients 18-25 moving from Children's into Adult Social Care Services has resulted in a significant increase in care costs above negotiated contract price increases. CQC inspections of some providers and home closures have resulted in a need to find alternative placements, some of which are at a higher cost.
Adult Physical Disability - Community Based Services (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	+£2.3m	Increased complexity and higher costs than anticipated.	Most of the overspend relates to clients receiving Supported Living care packages where the authority is seeing increased complexity of need increasing costs. Action is being taken to resist these increasing costs including commissioning community voluntary sector pilots to provide support in the home.
Adult Mental Health - Community Based Services (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	+£2.2m	Mental Health Supported Living numbers increasing.	The majority of the overspend relates to clients receiving Supported Living care packages. The number of people with packages of care has increased significantly over and above anticipated demography.
Physical Disability 26+ Lifespan Pathway & Sensory and Autism 18+ - Community Based Services (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	-£1.9m	Decrease in one-off Direct Payments.	Most of the underspend (£1m) on these services relates to Direct Payments where the normal level of one-off payments to clients has significantly decreased during the year. The remainder is partially due to a misalignment of sensory and autism budgets which will be resolved in 22-23 Medium Term Financial Plan.

Adult Learning Disability - Community Based Services & Support for Carers (Adult Social Care & Health Operations)	+£1.0m	Learning Disability (LD) 26+ Supported Living has seen an increase in activity numbers and average weekly costs	Learning Disability Community Based Services are seeing similar overspends to Physical Disability and Mental Health (described above). There are higher than average package costs for young adults transitioning into Adult Services from the 18 to 25 pathway. Clients with particularly high packages of care will be under regular review to ensure that care needs can be met using the most efficient use of resources.
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Details of the Covid-19 forecast are shown here:

Grant Category	Forecast	Explanation
Covid-19 Allocation held corporately	£7.0m	
Forecast Real Spend	£7.9m	The cost of supporting additional demand for services resulting from Covid-19, including a range of projects to tackle backlogs in addition to increased staffing requirements.
Underspends	(£0.1m)	Underspends in day care relating to the first quarter of 2021-22 as some centres have remained closed during this period due to COVID-19.
Loss of income	£0.2m	Relates to where day services are still not providing the same level and type of service as before meaning that clients cannot be charged for those periods
Market Sustainability	£5.0m	We are expecting to have to continue to support the social care market during the recovery period of the pandemic in 2021-22 so are assuming a £5m cost at this stage.
Payments for undelivered services (variable fee)	£0.1m	Relates to instances when providers are unable to complete a call due to Covid (for example, the client is shielding, or the provider has staff who are isolating), the Local Authority will still pay for the call.
<b>Total Covid-19 Forecast</b>	<b>£13.1m</b>	
<b>Covid-19 additional spend</b>	<b>£6.1m</b>	
Contribution from Reserves	(£6.1m)	
<b>Revised Covid-19 position</b>	<b>£0.0m</b>	

	Forecast Variance				
	Budget	Revenue Forecast	Net Revenue Forecast	Last reported position	Movement
	£m	Outturn	Variance	(July)	(+/-)
Integrated Children's Services (East & West)	161.9	162.1	0.2	(1.3)	1.5
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	80.1	81.1	1.0	0.3	0.7
Education	56.2	62.3	6.1	2.2	3.9
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (CYPE)	4.0	3.5	(0.5)	(0.1)	(0.4)
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	<b>302.2</b>	<b>309.0</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>5.7</b>

	Budget	Revenue Forecast	Net Revenue Forecast	Contribution to/(from) Reserves	Net impact on General Fund
	£m	Outturn	Variance	Reserves	£m
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
<b>Covid-19 forecast position</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>(6.6)</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The Children, Young People & Education directorate is projected to be overspent by +£6.8m. This is due to a delay in the implementation of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport re-procurement coupled with higher demand along with pressures across the children social work service and higher costs of supporting looked after children. This is partially offset by lower accommodation costs of supporting Care Leavers.

The £309.0m forecast includes a net £1.3m drawdown from reserves. This includes a £1.5m drawdown relating to the Reconnect project. There are smaller drawdowns and contribution relating to PFI equalisation.

The Covid-19 underlying additional expenditure is £6.6m (before contributions from reserves of £6.6m), mainly due to higher number of referrals for Special Educational Needs services and delays in the ability to achieve budgeted social care savings. COVID restrictions at the start of the year have also meant a greater dependency on use of temporary accommodation to provide sufficient school places and reductions in income from adult education courses. Uncertainty remains around the ongoing impact Covid-19 will have on services.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown here:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Home to School & College Transport (Education)	+£5.3m	Delays in re-procurement of transport contracts and increase in demand	The re-procurement of the SEN transports contracts has been put back due to delays in the implementation of new software to support this project (+£3.0m). The September pupil numbers indicate a significant increase in the number of children requiring SEN transport with 13% year on year increase in the number travelling. This is a consequence of the higher EHCP numbers. This forecast includes an allowance for further increases in the coming months (total pressure of +£2.3m)



Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Care Leavers Service (Integrated Children Services)	-£2.2m	Lower accommodation related costs of supporting care leavers	The service has been working to reduce the number of children in semi-independent placements to ensure young people are placed in the most cost-efficient placements. This has resulted in an underspend of approximately -£1.3m. The number of young people requiring support with their council tax continues to remain lower than initially estimated leading to a further -£0.6m underspend. The balance relates to an underspend on staffing (-£0.3m).
Children's Social Work Services - Assessment & Safeguarding Service (Integrated Children Services)	+£1.5m	Additional social workers required to meet demand	Higher sickness and maternity levels coupled with increased complexity of Children in Needs cases has led to a requirement for more social workers and higher number of agency staff to meet demand.
Looked After Children - Care & Support (Integrated Children Services)	+£1.1m	Increased number and cost of residential placements	The number of looked after children has remained fairly static but the cost of placements continues to rise with a greater number placed in more expensive external settings as no suitable alternative is available. The average cost of residential placement has risen by over 20% in 2 years.
Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care & Support (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities)	+£0.7m	Increased number and cost of residential placements	We have seen a significant number of new placements earlier in the year than expected. The average cost of residential placement has risen by over 20% in 2 years.
Disabled Children & Young People Service (0-25 LD & Complex PD) - Assessment Service	+£0.5m	Additional staff and use of agency staff to meet demand	Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DOLs) posts required along with use of agency staff to meet demand.

Other School Services (Education)	+£0.5m	Use of mobiles to meet basic need	Delays in basic need projects due to archaeological/environmental factors have resulted in use of temporary accommodation to ensure sufficient school places from September.
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (CYPE)	-£0.5m	Lower early retirement costs	Fewer redundancies in schools staff over the past year has resulted in lower early retirement commitments.
Asylum (Integrated Children Services)	£0.0m	Forecasting breakeven	The Asylum service is currently forecasting a breakeven position following an increase in the grant rate paid for care leaver services and a new financial arrangement to fund the Reception & Safe Care service, ensuring new referrals are fully funded prior to moving through the national transfer scheme or, where there is capacity, remaining in Kent.

Details of the Covid-19 forecast are shown here:

Grant Category	Forecast	Explanation
Covid-19 Allocation held corporately	£5.3m	
Forecast Real Spend	£9.2m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Latent demand estimates for Children Social Services: additional staffing to cover increased staff sickness and increased complexity of children in need cases along with estimated increased demand for looked after children placements.</li> <li>Delays in the basic need capital programme resulting in greater use of temporary accommodation to meet demand for school places and higher contractor costs.</li> <li>Increased demand for Education and Health Care Plan assessments and supportive services following interruption to schooling due to COVID restrictions.</li> <li>Estimated higher costs of SEN transport due to market shortages.</li> </ul>
Underspends	(£0.5m)	Delay in recruitment in detached youth workers
Loss of income	£1.5m	Reduction in income whilst the adult learning services recovers following prolonged closures due to COVID restrictions. Reduction in 16+ travel saver income where numbers of children have not yet recovered to pre-COVID levels.

Unrealised savings	£1.6m	Delay in the delivery of children social care savings due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID restrictions delaying or reducing the impact of new initiatives to increase the number of children supported in in-house foster care rather than more expensive alternatives.</li> <li>• The demand for children’s social workers increasing during COVID, due to increased staff sickness and increased complexity of children in need cases therefore delaying the planned reduction in agency staff.</li> </ul>
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Market Sustainability	£0.1m	Additional payments to support tutors in adult learning services
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Total Covid-19 Forecast	£11.9m
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<b>Covid-19 additional spend</b>	<b>+£6.6m</b>
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Contribution from Reserves	(£6.6m)
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<b>Revised Covid-19 Position</b>	<b>£0.0m</b>
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	Budget £m	Revenue Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Variance		Movement (+/-) £m
			Net Revenue Forecast Variance £m	<i>Last reported position (July) £m</i>	
Highways, Transportation & Waste	150.4	150.7	0.3	0.3	0.0
Environment, Planning & Enforcement	17.5	17.1	(0.4)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Libraries, Registration & Archives	8.6	8.5	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Economic Development	4.4	4.5	0.1	0.1	0.1
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (GET)	1.4	1.3	(0.1)	0.0	0.0
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>	<b>182.3</b>	<b>182.1</b>	<b>(0.2)</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>

	Budget £m	Revenue Forecast Outturn £m	Net Revenue Forecast Variance £m	Contribution to/(from) Reserves £m	Net impact on General Fund £m
<b>Covid-19 forecast position</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>(1.7)</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The Growth, Environment & Transport directorate is projected to be underspent by -£0.2m excluding Covid-19 adjustments. The Environment, Planning & Enforcement division is requesting a roll-forward of £0.1m relating to the Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) pilot, which has been delayed and was funded from one-off sources.

The £182.1m forecast includes a net £1.6m drawdown from reserves. The drawdowns include £0.7m relating to Brexit costs in Traffic Management and Trading Standards and £0.4m for Helping Hands schemes in Economic Development. In addition, there are smaller drawdowns from reserves to fund asset renewals.

The Covid-19 underlying expenditure is £1.7m above budget, before contributions from reserves of £1.7m are applied to present a breakeven position. Uncertainty remains around the ongoing impact that Covid-19 will have on services and whether current activity levels are still part of recovery or are indeed the new-normal going forward.

Details of the significant variance on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Highway Asset Management (Roads & Footways), (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	+£1.5m	Shortfall in income	Reduction in fee income relating to managing and co-ordinating the construction of the White Cliffs inland border facility near Dover. This is now being managed through DEFRA, rather than the County Council so less income is forecast to be received.
Residual Waste (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	+£1.3m	Inflationary price pressures.	The inflation index has risen significantly since the budget was approved, and this is reflected in contract values that are now being let which causes a pressure.
Highway Asset Management (Other), (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	-£0.4m	Additional income and other minor variances slightly offset by staffing overspends.	Additional permit and street works' income, partially offset by staffing overspends and additional soft landscaping costs.
Kent Travel Saver (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	-£0.4m	Payments to operators lower than anticipated.	This is due to anticipated additional costs not materialising.
Public Protection (Enforcement) (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)	-£0.5m	Staffing, additional income and other minor variances.	Staffing vacancy management and several other minor variances including additional income within Trading Standards.
Highways, Transport & Waste Management Costs & Commercial Operations (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	-£0.6m	Staffing, additional income and other minor variances.	Staff vacancy management and several other minor variances, including additional grant income within the Public Transport business budget.
Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	-£1.1m	Favourable recycling prices	<p>Favourable prices relating to the material recycling facility and anaerobic digester contracts, as well as additional income for paper, card and metal (-£3.4m).</p> <p>This improved position will be reflected in the 2022-23 budget build. These savings are offset in part by pressures, primarily the non-delivery in the current year of the expected saving through managing demand at HWRCs by use of a booking system as unrestricted access is currently permitted (+£1.3m) and tonnages are now above budgeted levels. In addition, there are one-off costs relating to new contracts in East Kent and some refurbishments at HWRCs (+£0.7m).</p>

Details of the Covid-19 forecast are shown here:

Grant Category	Forecast	Explanation
Covid-19 Allocation held corporately	£0.4m	
Forecast Real Spend	£4.2m	Primarily relates to the sustained increase in kerbside tonnes being presented at Waste Transfer Stations, together with other minor costs within Coroners and Economic Development around backlogs and social distancing measures.
Underspends	(£13.7m)	Public Transport costs eligible for Government grant and a reduction in English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) journeys is the primary element. Other general underspends across the directorate due to homeworking and reduced activity. Reduced activity levels will be reflected in the 2022-23 budget build, on the assumption that this will be the budgeted level of usage going forward.
Loss of income	£3.1m	Income loss primarily resulting from fewer Kent Travel Saver (KTS) passes issues, reduced operations at Libraries and fewer Driver Awareness Courses, with other minor income impacts across various services.
Unrealised savings	£0.1m	
Payments for undelivered variable fee services	£8.4m	Support to maintain financial stability, mainly in public transport (ENCTS and KTS), partially offset by Government grant.
<b>Total Covid-19 Forecast</b>	<b>£2.1m</b>	
<b>Covid-19 additional spend</b>	<b>£1.7m</b>	<b>(includes £0.4m allocation held corporately)</b>
Contribution to/ (from) Reserves	<b>(£1.7m)</b>	
<b>Revised Covid-19 position</b>	<b>£0.0m</b>	

						Forecast Variance	
	Budget	Revenue Forecast Outturn	Net Revenue Forecast Variance	Last reported position (July)	Movement (+/-)		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
Infrastructure	28.2	27.5	(0.7)	0.0	(0.7)		
Corporate Landlord	25.4	24.9	(0.5)	(0.1)	(0.4)		
People & Communication	13.3	13.2	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)		
Finance	12.3	12.4	0.1	0.0	0.1		
Strategic Commissioning	7.4	7.3	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)		
Governance, Law & Democracy	6.9	7.1	0.2	(0.1)	0.3		
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	3.8	3.8	0.0	0.1	(0.1)		
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (S&CS)	(1.7)	(2.0)	(0.3)	0.0	(0.3)		
<b>Strategic &amp; Corporate Services</b>	<b>95.5</b>	<b>94.1</b>	<b>(1.4)</b>	<b>(0.1)</b>	<b>(1.3)</b>		
						Net Revenue Forecast Variance	
	Budget	Revenue Forecast Outturn	Net Revenue Forecast Variance	Contribution to/(from) Reserves	Net impact on General Fund		
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m		
<b>Covid-19 forecast position</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>9.2</b>	<b>(9.2)</b>	<b>0.0</b>		

The Strategic & Corporate Services directorate is projected to underspend by -£1.4m excluding Covid.

The £94.1m forecast includes a £5.4m net drawdown from reserves. The drawdowns include £3.1m for the Strategic Reset Programme, £1.8m to cover election costs and £1.1m for ICT contracts

The Covid-19 underlying expenditure is +£9.2m (before contributions from reserves of £9.2m). Uncertainty remains around the ongoing impact Covid-19 will have on services.

Details of the significant variance on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Infrastructure	-£0.7m	Staff vacancies held whilst new structure is finalised	Underspend against staffing budgets in both Property and ICT services due to vacancies unfilled until new structure is agreed. Unbudgeted income from school meals contract rebates related to prior years. Staffing underspend on emergency planning service due to the early delivery of a 2022/23 saving from ending the on-call payments scheme.
Corporate Landlord	-£0.5m	Refunds due to business rates reviews	Reduced costs on business rates due to rates reviews. Lower value orders than planned.

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Strategic Management and Directorate Budgets	-£0.3m	Reduced early retirement costs	Due primarily to reduced early retirement costs.
Governance Law and Democracy	+£0.2m	Increased specialist fees	General Counsel, mainly due to increased staffing and specialist fees partially offset by additional appeals income.

Details of the Covid-19 forecast are shown here:

Grant Category	Forecast	Explanation
Covid-19 Allocation held corporately	£1.3m	
Forecast Real spend	£10.9m	Council Tax and hardship fund support payments to district councils, part of the Helping Hands project. Other Helping Hands payments to Kent Community Foundation, crowd funding match funding, and Members' Local Covid Support Grants. Additional council wide costs including PPE warehousing and distribution costs, part of which is subject to a separate claim for central government funding which is uncertain, so cost forecast is included here. Increased revenue contribution to capital because of delays to capital projects due to Covid-19. Additional ICT infrastructure to enable staff to work from home, such as laptops and licenses for A2K and Microsoft Teams, and mobile hand held devices. Call diversion costs on SIP exchange and early implementation of Microsoft E5 licences. Enhanced cleaning specification. Costs of social distancing in elections.
Underspends	(£1.4m)	Reduced costs for printing and copying with an offsetting reduction included in Loss of Income (below). There are savings on Total Facilities Management and utility costs due to some properties being closed for the early part of the year.
Loss of income	£1.1m	For Managed Print there is forecast reduced income with an offsetting cost saving in underspends (above), Forecast loss of rental income on various properties.
<b>Total Covid-19 Forecast</b>	<b>£10.5m</b>	
<b>Covid-19 additional spend</b>	<b>+£9.2m</b>	
Contribution from Reserves	(£9.2m)	
<b>Revised Covid-19 position</b>	<b>£0.0m</b>	



## 9 Non-Attributable Costs

General Fund forecast (£0.5m) underspend  
Covid-19 forecast breakeven

	Budget £m	Revenue Forecast Outturn £m	Forecast Variance		Movement (+/-) £m
			Revenue Forecast Variance £m	Net Revenue Forecast Variance £m	
Non-Attributable Costs	115.8	115.8	0.0	<i>Last reported position (July)</i> <b>(0.3)</b>	<b>+0.3</b>
Earmarked Budgets Held Corporately	0.5	0.0	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Net Total incl provisional share of CHB</b>	<b>116.4</b>	<b>115.8</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>(0.8)</b>	<b>+0.3</b>

	Budget £m	Revenue Forecast Outturn £m	Net Revenue Forecast Variance £m	Contribution to/(from) Reserves £m	Net impact on General Fund £m
<b>Covid-19 forecast position</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>(1.8)</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The Non-Attributable Costs are projected to be breakeven. The £115.8m forecast includes a net contribution to reserves of £6.9m. The main contributions are £5.5m relating to the expected return from our wholly owned subsidiaries and £1.9m due to MRP recalculation. There are other smaller contributions linked to retained business rates levy and the Insurance Fund. In addition, there is a drawdown of £1.1m to fund the shortfall in S31 grant for Covid related Business Rate reliefs.

There is an underlying Covid-19 projected spend less than budget of (£1.8m). Uncertainty remains around the ongoing impact Covid-19 will have on services. At year-end any underspend will be transferred to reserves.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown below:

Key Service (Division)	Variance	Summary	Detail
Non-Attributable Costs	£0.0m	Compensating under and overspends.	<p>There are a number of compensating under and overspends, of which the main variances are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+£0.9m reduction in Council Tax Income Guarantee (TIG) compared to the budget assumption.</li> <li>+£0.8m net shortfall in compensation for 2020-21 covid related losses of sales, fees and charges compared to the accrual in the 2020-21 accounts and estimated compensation losses in the first quarter of 2021-22.</li> <li>-£0.7m Business Rates TIG that had not been reflected in the budget due to lack of robust estimates.</li> <li>-£0.5m increase in Extended Rights to Free Travel grant.</li> <li>-£0.2m underspend on net debt costs.</li> </ul>

Details of the Covid-19 forecast are shown here:

Grant Category	Forecast	Explanation
Covid-19 Allocation held corporately	£2.1m	
Loss of income	£0.3m	Loss of investment income
<b>Total Covid-19 Forecast</b>	<b>£0.3m</b>	
<b>Covid-19 spend less than budget</b>	<b>(£1.8m)</b>	
Contribution to Reserves	£1.8m	
<b>Revised Covid-19 position</b>	<b>£0.0m</b>	

**The latest forecast for the Schools' Delegated Budget reserves is a surplus of £55.4m on individual maintained school balances, and a deficit on the central schools' reserve of £103.4m.**

The balances of individual schools cannot be used to offset the overspend on the central schools reserves and therefore should be viewed separately. The table below provides the detailed movements on each reserve.

The Central Schools Reserve holds the balance of any over or underspend relating to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is a specific ring-fenced grant payable to local authorities to support the schools' budget. It is split into four main funding blocks, schools, early years, high needs and central, each with a different purpose and specific rules attached. The Council is required to hold any under or overspend relating to this grant in a specific reserve and is expected to deal with any surplus or deficits through future years' spending plans.

	Individual School Reserves	Central Schools Reserve	<i>Note: a negative figure indicates a drawdown from reserves/deficit</i>
Balance brought forward	55.9	-51.1	
Forecast movement in reserves:			
Academy conversions and closing school deficits	-0.5		
Schools Block Related Spend		-11.1	
High Needs Placements, Support & Inclusion Fund		-39.8	
Early Years		-0.5	
Overspend on Central DSG Budgets		-0.9	
Forecast reserve balance	55.4	-103.4	

In accordance with the statutory override implemented by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) during 2020-21, and in line with the Department for Education (DfE) advice that local authorities are not expected to repay deficits on the DSG from the General Fund and can only do so with Secretary of State approval, the central DSG deficit of £103m will be held in a separate unusable reserve from the main council reserves. This statutory override is expected to be in place until April 2023 whilst Councils implement recovery plans. The Council continues to work with the Schools Funding Forum to set out the challenge and agree a plan to address the deficit. The DfE is expected to make contact with local authorities to discuss the detail of their plan and next steps although it is not clear when this might be. The DSG deficit is the Council's single biggest financial risk; therefore the finalisation and successful implementation of the Council's deficit recovery plan is critical.

Key Issues	Details
Schools Block: One-off Settlement	The DSG Reserve as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021 of £51m is formed from a net surplus on the Schools Block of £11m and a net deficit on the High Needs block of £62m. The two blocks of funding have different purposes and rules and Secretary of State Approval is needed to transfer funding from the schools block to other funding blocks. The Schools Block funds primary and secondary schools' budgets, and the accumulated balance from previous years' underspend of £11m, has been fully committed to be paid to schools in 2021-22, as a one-off additional payment to support the cost of changes to the calculation of pay for term time only staff.
Early Years: funding insufficient to meet estimated demand	The Early Years Block is used to fund early years' providers the free entitlement for eligible two, three and four-year olds. There are concerns the funding from the Department of Education will not follow closely enough the payments made to providers during the year, particularly if numbers recover to pre-COVID levels in the Autumn term, leading to a forecast overspend of £0.5m.
Reduction in government funding for Central Services	Since 2020-21, the Government has reduced the funding used to support some of the central services currently funded from the DSG (£2.5m). In the short-term this has been addressed through the Medium-Term Financial Plan (£1.8m) without any direct impact to schools; however, during the next year we will need to review our relationship with schools in line with Government policy and funding and implement changes that will eliminate the funding shortfall.

Higher demand and higher cost for high needs placements

The High Needs Block (HNB) is intended to support the educational attainment of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and pupils attending alternative education provision. The HNB funds payments to maintained schools and academies (both mainstream and special), independent schools, further education colleges, specialist independent providers and pupil referral units. Some of the HNB is also retained by KCC to support some SEND services (staffing/centrally commissioned services) and overheads

The net deficit on the high needs block was £62m as at 31st March 2021 and is estimated to increase to over £103m by 31st March 2022. The overspend on the high needs block has been growing significantly over recent years and is the most significant financial risk to the council.

The forecast in-year funding shortfall for High Needs placements and support in 21-22 is +£48m due to a combination of both higher demand for additional SEN support and higher cost per child resulting from greater demand for more specialist provision. One consequence of this is the council now placing a greater proportion of children in both special and independent schools compared to other local authorities, and a smaller proportion of children with SEND included in mainstream schools. The levels of growth are similar to previous years, since the introduction of the legislative changes in 2014, which also saw the expansion of duties to the age of 25 without sufficient extra funding. The tables below detail the trend in both spend and number of HNB funded places or additional support across the main placement types. In 2021-22 this pressure is being partially offset by a one-off underspend on activities to support inclusive practices in mainstream schools (-£8.0m). Work has been underway to establish how this fund should be used but activity in relation to this programme of spend did not start until September 2021 due to Covid-19 related delays.

Table: Total Spend on High Needs Block by main spend type

	18-19 £'ms	19-20 £'ms	20-21 £'ms	21-22 £'ms
Maintained Special School	87	97	106	121
Independent Schools	36	40	49	59
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP* **	31	38	46	54
Post 16 institutions***	16	16	17	18
Other SEN Support Services	42	44	49	47
Total Spend	212	234	264	299

\*Specialist Resource Provision

\*\* Please note this data excludes any costs incurred by primary & secondary schools from their own school budget.

\*\*\*Individual support for students at FE College and Specialist Provision Institutions (SPIs)

Table: Average number of HNB funded pupils receiving individualised SEN Support/placements. This is not the total number of children with SEN or number of EHCPs.

	18-19 No	19-20 No	20-21 No	21-22 No
Maintained Special School	4,349	4,751	5,118	5,559
Independent Schools	796	907	1,126	1,330
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP*	3,278	39,22	4,510	5,381
Post 16 institutions***	1,046	1,196	1,281	1,376
Total Number of Pupils	9,468	10,776	12,035	13,646

Table: Average cost of HNB funded pupils receiving individualised SEN Support or placement cost.

	18-19 £s per pupil	19-20 £s per pupil	20-21 £s per pupil	21-22 £s per pupil
Maintained Special School	£20,010	£20,330	£20,629	£21,669
Independent Schools	£44,871	£43,851	£43,734	£44,361
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP* **	£9,461	£9,691	£10,294	£9,955
Post 16 institutions***	£15,723	£13,393	£13,309	£13,453

The Government has launched a major review into support for children with SEN; however, the outcome has been delayed again and is not expected until Spring 2022. In the interim, further funding is being provided; however, as can be seen from the forecast, this has been insufficient to meet the demand and Kent will need to take further actions to ensure we are able to support children with SEN sustainably, in partnership with the Schools Funding Forum.

The Written Statement of Action (WSOA), put in place to address a number of areas of concern raised in the 2019 Ofsted/CQC Local Area SEND Inspection, overlaps in a number of places with our strategy for reducing the deficit on the High Needs budget which includes:

- Reviewing our commissioning strategy for SEN provision across the county, including supporting the development of new special schools and Specialist Resource Provisions to reduce our increasing reliance on independent schools, including the opening of two new special schools last year which when fully opened will avoid over 350 higher cost placements.
- Reviewing commissioning arrangements including independent providers, home tuition and therapy services.
- Improving parental confidence through supporting inclusive practice and capacity building in mainstream schools to reduce reliance on special and independent schools
- Further collaborative working with Health and Social Care partners

Work is progressing; however, progress has been slower/paused/stopped due to the Covid-19 pandemic. There are also wider concerns on the longer-term impact of children being out of school during the last year on this budget. However, we are unlikely to know the full impact of the pandemic until 2022-23.

Directorate	21-22 Target £m	Previous year saving delivered in 2021-22 £m	Not achieved in 2021-22 £m	Not Deliverable £m	Over Recovery £m	Forecast Savings 2021-22 £m
Adult Social Care & Health	13.0		(4.1)			8.9
Public Health	4.7					3.5
Children, Young People & Education	5.9	2.2	(5.9)			2.2
Growth, Environment & Transport	8.5			(2.6)		5.9
Strategic & Corporate Services	1.4					1.4
Non Attributable Costs	5.9				2.2	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>(10.0)</b>	<b>(2.6)</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>30.0</b>

The savings target for 2021-22 is £39.4m with £30.0m forecast to be achieved.

- £27.8m of the £39.4m 21-22 savings is identified as being on track to deliver savings.
- CYPE have identified a saving of £2.2m in relation to the previous year's savings; This brings the total forecast saving to £30m in 2021-22
- A net position of £10.0m is forecast for ASCH and CYPE as not achieved in 2021-22 and will slip into future years due to timing issues;
- £2.6m has been identified by GET as undeliverable;
- £2.2m of savings from the previous year have been overachieved in 2021-22.
- The Public Health grant announcement in March 2021 means that £1.2m of the budgeted savings are no longer required.
- The ASCH budget savings for 2021-22 are £13.0m of which £8.9m is identified as being on track to be delivered and £4.1m forecast to slip into future years. The slippage is due to delays in delivering the service redesign because of the immense pressure on the service due to the COVID pandemic, both in terms of increased demand and people with more complex needs requiring support. In addition, there are severe pressures in the social care market especially relating to workforce capacity, meaning that it has been more difficult for some of the proposed new ways to commission and arrange support to be delivered in the original time frames.
- The CYPE budget savings for 2021-22 are £5.9m, all of which has slipped into future years. However, £2.2m relating to a prior year savings target has been included and is in respect of CFKC savings. The slippage is mainly due to the restructure and retender of SEN transport network not being delivered until 2022/23 due to delays in re-procurement. In addition, efficiency savings to offset the anticipated 20% annual reduction in Dedicated Schools Grant: Central Services for Schools Block has not been achieved and is to be considered as part of a wider review of the DSG and services currently paid for on behalf of the schools.
- The GET budget savings for 2021-22 are £8.5m of which £5.9m is identified as being on track to be delivered and £2.6m has been identified as undeliverable. The key challenges relate to £1.3m of the £2m management fee saving relating to White Cliffs management which is no longer achievable due to change of control at



government department level. The Highways Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) booking system £1.3m saving is not achievable in 2021-22 due to relaxation on usage. The undeliverable savings identified are fully offset by other operational underspends.

- The S&CS budget savings for 2021-22 are £1.4m and are on track to be delivered.
- The NAC budget savings for 2020-21 are £5.9m with £8.1m forecast to be achieved. The £2.2m over achievement relates to additional Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) saving due to fewer assets becoming operational in 2020-21 due to slippage in the programme, but this is simply re-phasing of MRP into future years. In addition, there is a reduction in PWLB borrowing costs due to using cash balances or short-term borrowing to fund capital expenditure.

Directorate	Capital Budget	Variance excl. Covid-19	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Covid-19 Forecast
Adult Social Care & Health	3.7	-2.2	-0.1	-2.1	0.0
Children, Young People & Education	161.6	-65.6	-4.5	-61.1	2.8
Growth, Environment & Transport	271.5	-32.4	26.5	-58.9	0.1
Strategic & Corporate Services	24.9	-3.2	0.0	-3.2	0.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>461.7</b>	<b>-103.4</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>-125.3</b>	<b>3.7</b>

The total approved General Fund capital programme in 2021/22 is £461.7m. This includes a total of £58.3m slippage rolled forward from the previous year.

The current estimated capital programme spend for the year is forecast at £359.3m, which represents 77.8% of the approved budget. The spend to date is £157.9m, representing 34% of the total approved budget.

The directorates are projecting a -£103.4m underspend against the budget, this is split between a +£21.9m real variance and -£125.3m re-phasing variance.

The major variances (>£0.1m real variances and >£1.0m rephasing variances) are described below. Previously reported variances are shown in italics:

#### Adult Social Care & Health:

Project	Real Variance £m	Rephasing Variance £m	Detail
<u>New variances to report:</u>			
Learning Disability Good Day Programme		-1.6	All projects within this programme are on hold pending review.

#### Children, Young People & Education:

Project	Real Variance £m	Rephasing Variance £m	Detail
<u>New Variances to Report:</u>			
Annual Planned Enhancement	-0.2		The real variance reflects contributions towards Harrietsham

Programme	Primary School (in KCP16) £0.05m, and Benenden Primary School in Priority School Build Programme (£0.110m). Cash limit adjustments are requested as part of this report.
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2016	<p>-0.2</p> <p>The main projects making up the real underspend are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£1.635m Wilmington Grammar, due to an additional contribution of Condition Improvement Funding (CIF).</li> <li>+£0.360m Wilmington Academy, due to additional highways works.</li> <li>+£0.180m Whitfield &amp; Aspen, due to additional soil removal costs and completion delays.</li> <li>-£0.180m Sellindge Primary, final costs are less than expected.</li> <li>+£0.05m Harrietsham Primary, contribution requested from Annual Planned Enhancement Programme (see cash limit adjustments).</li> </ul>
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2017	<p>-2.0      -24.2</p> <p>The real variance is due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£1.0m savings due to 3 projects completing early.</li> <li>-£1.9m additional developer contributions across a number of projects which reduces the forecast overspend.</li> <li>+£0.2m Canterbury Academy, due to original budget allocation being incorrect.</li> </ul> <p>The rephasing variance is due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£8m Park Crescent Academy, delays due to pre-project works, demolition and planning.</li> <li>-£5.0m Meopham School, delays due to a highways planning objection, redesign required and re-submission for planning approval.</li> <li>-£3.8m Thamesview School, school not now required until 2023.</li> <li>-£3.0m SEN satellite required in West Kent, site to be determined.</li> <li>-£2.5m Beacon Satellite, commercial strategy with procurement has led to delays in obtaining approval.</li> <li>-£1.5m Ursuline College, rephasing due to design clarifications required.</li> </ul>
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2018	<p>-16.7</p> <p>Rephasing is due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£6.2m Gravesend Grammar School, first design has been rejected and a redesign is required.</li> <li>-£4.2m Simon Langton Boys School, rephasing due to planning issues.</li> <li>-£3.3m The Abbey School, although internal works have been completed during the summer of 2021, the main scheme has been deferred until next year.</li> <li>-£2.5m Dartford Bridge Primary, project rephased as it is not now required until a later year.</li> <li>-£0.6m Garlinge Primary, rephasing due to a change to the location of the expansion.</li> </ul>

Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2019	2.5	-10.0	Real variance due to: +£1.4m relating to early project costs across 4 schemes where main delivery is not required until later years.  Rephasing is due to: -£3.6m Wrotham School, rephasing pending confirmation of a CIF bid. -£2.4m Invicta Grammar, rephasing pending funding agreement with the school. -£1.7m Queen Elizabeth's Grammar, rephasing due to feasibilities being re-done. -£1.2m Nexus, rephasing due to feasibility studies taking longer than anticipated due to site constraints.
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2021-25	-3.2	-3.5	Real variance is due to: -£4.3m The Beacon, removed as already within KCP17. +£0.5m St Peter's Aylesford, 0.5FE added to the project +£0.6m Guston Primary and Dover Christ Church Academy, to cover early feasibility costs. +£0.4m St Mary of Charity, 1FE added to the project.  Rephasing is due to: -£3.5m the Abbey School, subsequent phase of this project has been deferred.
Overall Basic Need Programmes			Over the life of the Basic Need Programmes there is currently a forecast overspend predominantly due to projects required to commence in the next three-year period, which is earlier than originally predicted. This is being carefully monitored and funding streams such as developer contributions are being sought to reduce the overall pressure.
Priority School Build Programme	0.5		Real variance is due to: +£0.1m covid costs to be funded from revenue grant. +£0.1m contribution from Annual Planned Enhancement Programme (cash limit change requested). The remaining overspend is to be funded from additional grant.
Nest 2		-1.5	The project is still at discussion/planning stage hence the rephasing.
<i>Previously Reported Variances:</i>			
Annual Planned Enhancement Programme	0.2	-1.6	<i>The rephasing is due to delays on projects across the programme due to covid. Previously reported -£2.2m</i>
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2016	0.9		<i>Additional soil removal costs and highway changes have increased project forecasts at two schools.</i>

<i>Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2017</i>	-0.8	-12.7	<p><i>Rephasing due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£5m Park Crescent Academy delays due to pre-project works, demolition &amp; planning,</li> <li>-£4.4m due to planning objection with Highways, redesign required and re-submission for planning approval,</li> <li>-£3.7m Thamesview School is not required until 2023.</li> </ul> <p><i>Real variance due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£0.7m due to early completion on Bennett Memorial School.</li> </ul>
<i>Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2018</i>	0.2	-12.5	<p><i>Rephasing due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£4.6m Gravesend Grammar School - first design has been rejected and a redesign is now required.</li> <li>-£2.4m The Abbey School - internal works are to be completed in summer 2021, main scheme is deferred until next year.</li> <li>-£2.0m Dartford Bridge Primary - project not now required until a later year</li> <li>-£3.0m Simon Langton School for Boys - planning issues have meant the works have been rephased.</li> </ul>
<i>Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan 2019</i>	1.4	-8.3	<p><i>Rephasing due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£3.3m Wrotham School - pending confirmation of a successful Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) bid.</li> <li>-£2.5m Maidstone Grammar School for Girls - project has been rephased completion now expected December 2023.</li> <li>-£1.5m Queen Elizabeth's Grammar – rephasing due to feasibilities being re-done so the project has been pushed back.</li> </ul> <p><i>Real variance due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+£1.4m costs forecast for initial works across four projects where main project delivery is not required until later years</li> </ul>
<i>Basic Need KCP 2021-25</i>	-2.0		<p><i>The real underspend on this programme is due to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-£4.3m The Beacon project which was duplicated as it is within KCP17,</li> <li>+£0.8m St Peters Aylesford and +£0.4m St Mary of Charity – these projects have been added to the programme as additional places are required.</li> <li>+£0.5m Guston CEPS for early feasibility costs,</li> <li>+£0.5m Dover Christ Church Academy for early feasibility costs,</li> <li>+£0.08m Goldwyn School – internal adaptations required for additional places needed September 2021.</li> </ul>
<i>High Needs Provision</i>	2.0		<i>Additional grant received.</i>
<i>Barton Court Academy Free School</i>		+1.5	<i>This is a Department for Education (DfE) project being managed by KCC. The project is now progressing well and is ahead of schedule.</i>

School Roofs	-4.2	The works on Birchington Primary will now be completed in summer 2022. Previously reported -£3.2m
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## Growth, Environment &amp; Transport:

Project	Real Variance £m	Rephasing Variance £m	Detail
<u>New Variances to Report:</u>			
Highway Major Enhancement (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	0.1		The real variance relates to works on a signal box in Dover which is to be funded from revenue.
Government Transition Works (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	19.6		This project is fully funded from the Department for Transport who have requested further works at the Ashford Sevington site. Additional grant funding is being claimed to cover these works. (Previously reported £12.8m).
Dover Inter Border Facility (Highways, Transportation & Waste)	-3.0		The works on the access road are to be undertaken by the Dover Bus Rapid Transit project and funding will be transferred to that budget (see cash limit changes).
National Productivity Investment Fund – Kent Medical Campus (Highways, Transportation and Waste)		-3.7	A planning delay has pushed back the start of construction works until October/November 2021. (Previously reported -£3.0m).
Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (Highways, Transportation and Waste)		-5.0	There has been a delay to the Thames Way project due to the designation of a “site of specific scientific interest” of the Swanscombe peninsular and Ebbsfleet Central area.
Maidstone Integrated Transport (Highways, Transportation and Waste)		-3.4	The rephasing is due to various planning issues and amendments to the programme. A full overhaul of the programme and spend profile is currently underway.
Tunbridge Wells Junction Improvements (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	-0.6		There is no viable project for the final phase and following a decision by the SELEP accountability board it has been agreed to return the unspent grant.
Sturry Link Road (Highways, Transportation & Waste)		-6.0	The project has been delayed by approximately 6 months due to waiting for planning permission, which has now been granted. (Previously reported -£5.6m)

Kent Strategic Congestion Management (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	0.9		The A2/A251 priority junction scheme was added to this project within the Local Growth Fund programme in 20/21 following approval by KMED and SELEP Boards. It aims to make improvements to the junction capacity and promote journey time improvements through the signalisation of the junction. The real variance is the external funding that has been received into the programme and which is required to complete this scheme. <i>(Previously reported +£1.2m).</i>
Herne Relief Road (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	-2.0		The rephasing is due to planning delays and delays securing the land agreements which are now in place.
Housing Infrastructure Fund – Swale (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	-4.4		Spend was reprofiled to reduce KCC liability and risk in year 20-21, with a knock-on effect of delays on the programme through planning and construction. Although a funding agreement has been signed with Homes England this is conditional on the M2 Junction 5 project being delivered by Highways England coming forward. An extension to the funding agreement has been accepted by Homes England with funding extension granted until June 2024. <i>(Previously reported -£3.1m).</i>
Dover Bus Rapid Transit (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	1.1		The real variance is due to an increase in the scope of works which will be funded from additional grant.
Fastrack Full Network – Bean Road Tunnels (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	-9.4		The construction start has been delayed due to the design being more challenging than originally expected. Construction will now start at the end of 2022. <i>(Previously reported -£3.5m).</i>
Market Square, Dover (Highways, Transportation and Waste)	0.7	-1.6	Dover District Council have agreed to increase their contribution by £0.7m. The delays on the project are due to more extensive archaeology surveys being required.
Leigh Flood Storage Areas (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)		-1.5	The rephasing is due to awaiting the decision from the Secretary of State on this scheme following a public enquiry earlier this year.
Public Rights of Way (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)	0.4		Additional schemes have been added for which additional grant and external funding is expected. <i>(Previously reported +£0.1m).</i>
Kent Scientific Services Equipment & Vehicles (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)	0.4		Purchase of new equipment and a vehicle to be funded from revenue.
Digital Autopsy (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)		-2.2	Delivery of this project has been pushed back due to delays in the procurement of the digital autopsy provider.
Javelin Way Development (Economic Development)	0.1		To be funded by additional external funding.

Kent & Medway Business Fund (Economic Development)	2.2	-8.6	Real variance is due to transfer from the Recovery Loan Fund and the Capital Growth Fund, both of which have come to an end.  Rephasing variance is due to funds not being able to be defrayed in the current environment.
Kent & Medway Business Fund – Recovery Loan Fund (Economic Development)	-1.2		Transferred back to the Kent and Medway Business Fund as this fund has come to an end.
Kent & Medway Business Fund – Capital Growth (Economic Development)	-1.0		Transferred back to the Kent and Medway Business Fund as this fund has come to an end.
Kent Empty Property Initiative (Economic Development)	+0.9		Anticipated additional external and grant contributions. (Previously reported +£0.15m)
Marsh Million	-0.3		The project has come to an end.
Decarbonisation Fund – Kings Hill and West End Solar Farms (Economic Development)	+0.2		The variance is due to the forecast spend exceeding the current cash limits allocated for these projects.
<u>Previously reported variances:</u>			
Thanet Parkway (Environment, Planning & Enforcement)		6.4	Phasing of the scheme has been brought forward in line with latest project plans. The overall cost of the scheme has increased due to Network Rail cost increases and higher than expected costs for the level crossings. The forecast overspend on the scheme over the life of the project is £7.3m. This is partially offset by an award of £3.4m from the New Stations Fund, and alternative funding is being sought for the remaining £3.9m.
Highway Major Enhancement (Highways, Transportation & Waste)		-3.5	This relates to works on the A299 Thanet Way which have been postponed due to the likelihood of more “staycations” and the impact of closing the Thanet Way could risk the recovery of businesses around the coastal areas. Most of this work will take place in Spring 2022.
Green Corridors (Highways, Transportation and Waste)		-2.4	The programme is just getting started and some stages will not begin until 22-23.
A2 Off Slip Wincheap, Canterbury (Highways, Transportation and Waste)		-1.5	All budgets rephased to future years as the Homes England bid was not successful but alternative funding is being sought.



*Trees Outside Woodlands (Highways,  
Transportation & Waste)*

0.1

*The project is funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the real variance reflects expected funding; the cash limits for which will be amended once funding is received.*

*Innovation Investment Initiative (i3)  
(Economic Development)*

-2.0

*The rephasing reflects that there is unlikely to be another application round during this financial year due to time constraints and the focus on the Kent & Medway Business Fund Scheme.*

## Strategic & Corporate Services:

Project	Real Variance £m	Rephasing Variance £m	Detail
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### New variances to report:

Dover Discovery Centre

-1.5

Rephasing due to planning risk which could delay the project.

### Previously reported variances:

*Live Margate*

-1.7

*The actual plots of the surplus properties on the Royal School for the Deaf site are unlikely to be confirmed until the actual footprint for the new school is confirmed, therefore the majority of the Live Margate acquisition and development costs are now expected to be incurred in 22-23.*

## 13 Capital Budget Changes

### Cabinet is asked to note the following changes to the Capital Budget:

Project	Year	Amount (£m)	Reason
Basic Need Kent Commissioning Plan (KCP) 17 (CYPE)	21-22	-0.008	Revised developer contributions available to fund the programme.
Basic Need KCP18 (CYPE)	21-22	0.149	Revised developer contributions available to fund the programme.
	22-23	-1.014	
Basic Need KCP19 (CYPE)	21-22	1.398	Revised developer contributions available to fund the programme.
Basic Need KCP21-25 (CYPE)	22-23	0.373	Revised developer contributions available to fund the programme.
	23-24	0.548	
Tunbridge Wells Junction Improvement (GET)	21-22	-0.615	Grant to be returned as no further works are planned.
Government Transition Works (GET)	21-22	19.589	Additional DfT grant to fund works at Sevington.
Southborough Hub (GET)	21-22	0.017	Additional external funding.
Tunbridge Wells Cultural Hub (GET)	21-22	-0.083	Developer contributions are now being paid directly to the borough council, not through KCC.

### Cabinet is asked to approve the following changes:

Project	Year	Amount (£m)	Reason
Policy & Quality Assurance – Software Purchase (ASCH)	21-22	0.025	Revenue contribution towards software purchase.
Annual Planned Enhancement Programme (CYPE)	21-22	-0.050	Contribution of Schools Condition Allocation (SCA) Funding to Harrietsham School in basic need.
	21-22	-0.110	Contribution towards Priority School Build Programme.
Basic Need Programme KCP16 (CYPE)	21-22	+0.050	Contribution of SCA grant from Annual Planned Enhancement Programme
Priority School Build Programme (CYPE)	21-22	0.110	Contribution from Annual Planned Enhancement Programme
Community Sexual Health Services (ASCH)	21-22	0.750	To reflect the move of this service to ASCH directorate.
Community Sexual Health Services (S&CS)	21-22	-0.750	To reflect the move of this service to ASCH directorate.

## 13 Capital Budget Changes

Highway Major Enhancement (GET)	21-22	0.111	Revenue contribution to fund signal box works in Dover.
Integrated Transport (GET)	21-22	0.056	Revenue contribution from the combined members grant scheme for works on Astor Avenue.
Dover Inter Border Facility (GET)	21-22	-3.000	To move grant funding to Dover Bus Rapid Transit Scheme as access road works are to be undertaken as part of this project.
Dover Bus Rapid Transit (GET)	21-22 22-23	1.063 1.937	To move grant funding from Dover Inter Border Facility to Dover Bus Rapid Transit Scheme as access road works are to be undertaken as part of this project.
Kings Hill Solar Farm (GET)	21-22	0.145	To increase cash limits funded by banked grant to progress this scheme.
West End Solar Farm (GET)	21-22	0.155	To increase cash limits funded by banked grant to progress this scheme.

## 14 Treasury Management Monitoring

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Treasury management relates to the management of the Council's debt portfolio (accumulated borrowing to fund previous and current capital infrastructure investments) and investments of cash balances. The Council has a comparatively high level of very long term debt, a significant proportion of which was undertaken through the previous supported borrowing regime.

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14.1 Total external debt outstanding in September was £848.9m down by £2.3m since 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

KCC debt includes £448.28m of borrowing from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB). The vast majority is maturity debt (debt is only repaid upon maturity) at a fixed rate of interest. The average length to maturity of PWLB debt is 15.5 years at an average interest rate of 4.84%.

Outstanding loans from banks amount to £291.8m. This is also at fixed term rates with average length to maturity of 37.0 years at an average interest rate of 4.4%.

The council has £90m of Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans. These loans can only be renegotiated should the lender propose an increase in interest rates. The average length to maturity of LOBO loans is 42.4 years at an average interest rate of 4.15%.

The balance of debt relates to loans from Salix Finance for LED streetlighting programme. The outstanding balance is £19.8m with average of 10.4 years to maturity at an average rate of 1.41%.

KCC's principal objective for borrowing is to achieve an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest rates and certainty of financing costs. This is achieved by seeking to fund capital spending from internal resources and short-term borrowing, only considering external long-term borrowing at advantageous interest rates.

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14.2 Majority is long term debt with 15% due to mature within 5 years

Maturity 0 to 5 years £127.1m (15%)  
Maturity 5 to 10 years is minimal  
Maturity 10 to 20 years £215.2m (25.3%)  
Maturity over 20 years £507.6m (59.7%)

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14.3 Total cash balance at end of September was £597m, up by £50m from the end of August

Cash balances accrue from the council's reserves and timing differences between the receipt of grants and other income and expenditure. Balances are forecast to decline throughout the remainder of the year to £499m (close to the same balance as at 31st March 2021)

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14.4 Cash balances are invested in a range of short-term, medium term and long term deposits

Investments are made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy agreed by full Council alongside the revenue and capital budgets. The treasury strategy represents a prudent approach to achieve an appropriate balance between risk, liquidity and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses on the sum invested. Longer term investments aim to achieve a rate of return equal or exceeding prevailing inflation rates.

Short term deposits (same day availability) are held in bank accounts and money market funds. Current balances in short-term deposits in September were £164.8m (27.5% of cash balances). Short-term deposits enable the Council to manage liquidity. Bank accounts and money market funds are currently earning less than 0.1% return

Deposits are made through the Debt Management Office (an executive agency responsible for debt and cash management for the UK Government, lending to local authorities and managing certain public sector funds). As at September the Council had £93.9m in DMO deposits and a further £37m in government bonds. In total these deposits represent 21.8% of cash investments with an average rate of return of 0.01%.

Loans to other local authorities now total £14m achieving an average rate of return of 0.22%. Since the end of March 2021 £37m of loans have been allowed to mature and not renewed. Each request to borrow or to renew an existing loan is assessed in terms of our own cashflow requirements and within our effective lending policies and procedures.

Medium term deposits include covered bonds, a form of secured bond issued by a financial institution that is backed by mortgages or public sector loans. In the UK the covered bond programmes are supervised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). King and Shaxson acts as the Council's broker and custodian for its bond portfolio. Currently the Council has £95.2m invested in covered bonds earning an average rate of return of 0.68%.

The Council has lent £11.8m through the No Use Empty Loans programme which achieve a return of 1.5% that is available to fund general services. This total includes £6.2m of loans made since March.

Long term investments are made through Strategic Pooled Funds. These include a variety of UK and Global Equity Funds, Multi Asset Funds and Property Funds. In total the Council has £181.4m invested in pooled funds (30.2% of cash balances). These funds have earned a total of £33.0m since investment at an average annual rate of 4.2%. Returns on pooled funds can be volatile.

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## 14 Treasury Management Monitoring

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14.5	Treasury Management Advice	The Council secures external specialist treasury management advice from Arlingclose. They advise on the overall strategy as well as borrowing options and investment opportunities. Arlingclose provide regular performance monitoring reports.
14.6	Quarterly and Bi-annual reports	A fuller report is presented to Governance and Audit Committee on a regular quarterly basis. A report on treasury performance is reported twice a year to full Council.

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**The purpose of this section is to provide an early indication of how discounts and collection rates are changing/recovering throughout the year and the likely impact of these changes on the collection fund and the Council Tax Base to be included in the following years budget.**

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15.1 Council Tax income is vital source of funding for the Council's revenue budget

Council Tax income is a key source of funding for council services and makes up almost 70% of our net budget (and just under 50% of our gross budget). The amount generated through Council Tax is principally determined by the Council Taxbase. The Council Taxbase is the number of properties (expressed as the number of weighted band D equivalent properties) adjusted for exemptions, discounts and premiums, other minor adjustments (e.g. estimated new builds), the band D charge per property and the collection rate. The most significant discounts are the 25% single persons discount and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (CTRS) for low income households.

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15.2 The budget is based on estimated Council Tax collection. Actual collections are managed through local district collection funds

The twelve Kent districts provide the budgeted Council Taxbase which forms the basis for the County Council precept after applying the county's share of the council tax charge (including a separate precept for adult social care), and is included in the annual budget. Districts must provide the budgeted precept to the County Council in-year and any difference between the budgeted precept and the actual Council Tax collected is accounted for by districts through the local collection fund.

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15.3 The budgeted taxbase for 2021-22 shows an unprecedented reduction and collection fund for 2020-21 significant deficit due to the pandemic

From 2015-16 to 2020-21 the budgeted taxbase increased each year by an average of 1.95%. A 1% increase to the taxbase provides £7.8m additional council tax income for the County Council. During this period we also saw collection fund surpluses ranging from £3.9m to £12.5m reflecting over collection on the budgeted precept. The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly affected both the discounts provided through the CTRS and the collection rate. This caused an unprecedented reduction of just over 1% to the 2021-22 budgeted taxbase and a large collection fund deficit of £13.9m in 2020-21. This deficit will be accounted for over three years from 2021-22 to 2023-24.

The purpose of this section of the monitoring report is to provide an early indication of how discounts and collection rates are changing/recovering throughout the year and the likely impact of these changes on the collection fund and the Council Taxbase to be included in the forthcoming year's budget.

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## Budgeted Tax Base 2021-22

- 15.4 548,862.48 band D Equivalents = £778.7m for the County Council precept
- The 2021-22 net budgeted Council Taxbase for Kent is 548,862.48 band D equivalents which produces the County Council precept of £778.7m. The precept includes £70.9m reduction due to single persons discount, £79.5m Council Tax Reduction Scheme and £17.6m loss for the expected collection rate. The table below shows the composition of the budgeted Council Taxbase for Kent County Council precept:

	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	7,980.72	11.3
Less Collection Losses	-12,377.44	-17.6
Net Taxbase/Precept	548,862.48	778.7

The net precept of £778.7m includes £87.2m for the Adult Social Care precept.

## Council Tax Charge Increase

- 15.5 KCC's element of individual household council tax charge for 2021-22 increased by 4.995% compared to 2020-21
- The 2021-22 budget, which was approved by full council on 11th February 2021, included a 4.995% increase to the council tax charge. This increased the band D charge by £67.50 from £1,351.26 to £1,418.76. This increase consists of a £27.00 (1.998%) general increase up to the referendum limit and a £40.50 (2.997%) maximum permitted increase for the Adult Social Care Precept.
- Kent County Council and Kent Fire and Rescue Service have a total band D charge of £1,499.58. It is essential to include the Fire share of council tax for comparison purposes with other Shire Counties as some are still responsible for Fire & Rescue Services and do not levy a separate precept. The charge in Kent is ranked 9th out of 24 when compared with other Shire Counties, the highest charge is £1,663.80 and the lowest is £1,364.16.



## Monitoring

15.6 Monitoring is showing that CTRS discounts continued to reduce during the summer months (and are now reducing the tax share by less than budgeted).

Collection rates in the year to date remain lower than prior to the pandemic, however there is some evidence that more households are taking up the option to spread payments over twelve months which could lead to higher collection rates by year end.

The twelve Kent Districts have been providing updates on the existing collection rate and level of CTRS claimants. The table below shows a forecast based on the current level of CTRS discounts and collection rate. This shows that assuming the current levels stay the same for the remainder of the year there would be a potential collection fund deficit for KCC of approximately £7.7m due to higher than budgeted CTRS and lower than estimated collection rates:

	Budget	Forecast	Variance
CTRS	-£79.5m	-£78.3m	-£1.2m
Collection Rate	97.8%	96.7%	1.1% = £8.9m
Potential Collection Fund Deficit			£7.7m

However, this does not take into consideration any payments against 2020-21 arrears or the impact of the change to twelve monthly instalments. These would reduce the collection fund deficit. We are working with the District Councils to gather this information and plan to include this in future reports. Early indications from six of our twelve Districts indicates a possible healthy collection fund surplus before the application of bad debt provision. Even after such provisions this sample of six Districts indicates possible collection surplus of £3m, somewhat healthier than the mathematical forecast above.

Furthermore, the number and value of CTRS discounts initially increased from the budgeted position and peaked at the end of April. The number and value of CTRS discounts has reduced in each month to August. There was a slight increase in September. CTRS discounts are still higher than the budgeted level.

If the CTRS discounts stay at the current level, then we estimate the 2022-23 Taxbase would increase by 0.19% which equates to additional Council Tax income of £1.5m (based on the 2021-22 band D charge). The impact in 2022-23 is greater than in 2021-22 because the levels of discount in the early months of 2021-22 were higher than the current level. The increase of £1.5m in 2022-23 assumes that discounts remain at the current level for the whole of 2022-23.

The collection rate has not recovered to pre pandemic levels as we had hoped. If the anticipated collection rate for 2022-23 remains at the current rate, then this would lead to the 2022-23 Taxbase reducing by 1.1% which equates to a further £8.9m loss of Council Tax income (based on the 2021-22 band D charge).

Taking all of the available information into account, we consider it likely that the 2022-23 estimated taxbase will be show an improved position.

### Additional Support for Kent Residents

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15.7 Additional £50 reduction for working age CTRS claimants at an estimated total cost of £3.6m

At the County Council meeting on 11th February, the Leader announced a new scheme to support working age households currently receiving CTRS discounts through the recovery stage of the pandemic. This additional support provided an additional up to £50 reduction to the Council Tax demand notice for 2021-22 for qualifying households<sup>1</sup>.

To date 77,075 households have received this additional reduction to their bills and the total discount provided to date is £3.7m. £3.6m was provided in the budget to fund this scheme. There is therefore likely to be a small overspend against this budget as the discount will be awarded to any new CTRS recipients for the rest of the financial year.

15.8 Additional £2.4m Hardship Fund

At the County Council meeting on 11th February, the Leader also announced a hardship fund to support household suffering significant financial difficulty. This is in addition to the existing hardship schemes runs by the District Councils.

To date £0.3m has been provided to 692 households

Each District Council has been allocated a share of £2.4m budgeted for this scheme. The share allocated to each district was weighted based on the level of deprivation in the district, the number of CTRS claimants and the total number of households. Further work is underway to increase the take up of the hardship relief scheme.

15.9 **Conclusion**

Council Tax remains a significant source of income and the forthcoming year's budget will be dependent on the scale and pace of recovery in both the level of CTRS discounts and the collection rate. We consider it likely that we will see an improved position on Council Taxbase growth and the collection rate by the end of the year.

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<sup>1</sup> Qualifying households received an additional discount of up to £50 in 2020-21 under national government support scheme

## Appendix 1 - Key Service Summary as at September 2021-22

	Revenue Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid- 19 £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Variance incl. Covid-19 £m
Community Based Preventative Services	17.2	(0.6)	0.0	(0.6)
Housing Related Support	6.9	0.1	0.0	0.1
Statutory and Policy Support	1.2	0.2	0.0	0.2
Strategic Management & Directorate Support (ASCH)	4.5	(0.7)	6.6	6.0
Social Support for Carers	3.1	0.6	0.0	0.6
Partnership Support Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Strategic Safeguarding	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Sexual Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Advice and Other Staffing	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Mental Health, Substance Misuse & Community Safety	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Health - Children's Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>(0.4)</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>6.2</b>
Adult In House Carer Services	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adult In House Community Services	6.9	(0.8)	0.0	(0.8)
Adult In House Enablement Services	7.1	(0.5)	0.0	(0.5)
Adult Learning Disability - Case Management & Assessment Service	5.1	(0.4)	0.2	(0.2)
Adult Learning Disability - Community Based Services & Support for Carers	92.5	1.0	0.1	1.1
Adult Learning Disability - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	65.8	4.5	0.0	4.6
Adult Mental Health - Case Management & Assessment Services	8.7	0.1	0.0	0.1
Adult Mental Health - Community Based Services	8.5	2.2	2.2	4.4
Adult Mental Health - Residential Care Services	16.9	0.1	0.0	0.2
Adult Physical Disability - Community Based Services	18.5	2.3	0.0	2.2
Adult Physical Disability - Residential Care Services	17.3	0.4	0.0	0.4
ASCH Operations - Divisional Management & Support	6.2	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Older People - Community Based Services	46.3	(4.7)	1.1	(3.5)
Older People - In House Provision	15.2	(0.2)	0.0	(0.2)
Older People - Residential Care Services	34.5	12.2	2.5	14.8
Older People & Physical Disability - Assessment and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Services	22.3	0.2	0.3	0.5
Older People & Physical Disability - In House Community Homecare Service	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Older People & Physical Disability Carer Support - Commissioned	0.8	0.2	0.0	0.2
Physical Disability 26+ Lifespan Pathway & Sensory and Autism 18+ - Community Based Services	7.2	(1.9)	0.0	(1.9)
Physical Disability 26+ Lifespan Pathway & Sensory and Autism 18+ - Residential Care Services	1.4	(0.3)	0.0	(0.3)
Sensory & Autism - Assessment Service	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service Provision - Divisional Management & Support	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adaptive & Assistive Technology	2.1	(0.2)	0.0	(0.2)
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Operations</b>	<b>387.6</b>	<b>14.3</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>20.8</b>
Business Delivery	9.7	0.0	0.1	0.0
Safeguarding Adults	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Independent Living Support	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Business Delivery Unit</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	<b>431.5</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>13.1</b>	<b>27.0</b>

	Revenue Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid- 19 £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Variance incl. Covid-19 £m
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	4.0	(0.5)	0.0	(0.5)
Community Learning & Skills (CLS)	(0.6)	0.1	0.6	0.7
Early Years Education	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Education Management & Division Support	1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Education Services provided by The Education People	4.7	0.1	0.0	0.1
Fair Access & Planning Services	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1
Home to School & College Transport	44.5	5.3	0.8	6.1
Other School Services	6.0	0.5	3.3	3.8
Education	56.2	6.1	4.7	10.8
Adoption & Special Guardianship Arrangements & Service	15.2	0.2	0.0	0.2
Asylum	(0.1)	(0.2)	0.0	(0.2)
Care Leavers Service	7.7	(2.2)	0.0	(2.2)
Children in Need - Care & Support	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Children's Centres	3.6	(0.2)	0.0	(0.2)
Children's Social Work Services - Assessment & Safeguarding Service	47.8	1.5	1.0	2.6
Early Help & Preventative Services	8.0	0.3	0.0	0.3
Integrated Services (Children's) Management & Directorate Support	5.6	(0.2)	(0.0)	(0.2)
Looked After Children - Care & Support	65.9	1.1	3.5	4.6
Pupil Referral Units & Inclusion	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Youth Services	4.8	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Integrated Children's Services (East & West)	161.9	0.3	4.5	4.8
Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Community Based Services	30.1	(1.0)	0.5	(0.4)
Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	9.1	0.3	0.0	0.3
Children in Need (Disability) - Care & Support	5.1	0.2	0.0	0.2
Children's Disability 0-18 Commissioning	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Disabled Children & Young People Service (0-25 LD & Complex PD) - Assessment Service	7.9	0.5	0.0	0.5
Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care & Support	10.8	0.7	0.6	1.3
Looked After Children (with Disability) - In House Provision	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Special Educational Needs & Disability Management & Divisional Support	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Special Educational Needs & Psychology Services	11.6	0.2	1.6	1.8
Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	80.1	1.1	2.7	3.7
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>	<b>302.3</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>18.7</b>

	Revenue Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid- 19 £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Variance incl. Covid-19 £m
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	1.4	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Arts	1.4	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Economic Development	3.1	0.2	0.4	0.5
Economic Development	4.4	0.1	0.4	0.4
Highway Transportation (including School Crossing Patrols)	6.2	(0.1)	0.0	(0.1)
Highway Asset Management (Roads and Footways)	13.4	1.5	0.0	1.5
Highway Asset Management (Other)	18.9	(0.4)	0.0	(0.4)
Subsidised Buses and Community Transport	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Concessionary Fares	17.2	0.0	(1.2)	(1.2)
Kent Travel Saver	7.6	(0.4)	(1.1)	(1.5)
Residual Waste	39.8	1.3	2.5	3.8
Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres	34.2	(1.1)	0.9	(0.2)
Highways, Transport & Waste Management Costs and Commercial Operations	6.6	(0.6)	0.0	(0.6)
Highways, Transportation & Waste	150.4	0.3	1.0	1.3
Environment & Planning	6.1	0.1	0.1	0.2
Environment, Planning & Enforcement Management Costs	0.7	0.0	0.2	0.2
Public Protection (Enforcement)	10.6	(0.5)	0.3	(0.3)
Environment, Planning & Enforcement	17.5	(0.4)	0.5	0.1
Libraries, Registration & Archives	8.6	(0.1)	0.3	0.2
Growth, Environment & Transport	182.3	(0.2)	2.1	1.9

	Revenue Budget £m	Variance excl. Covid- 19 £m	Covid-19 Forecast £m	Variance incl. Covid-19 £m
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	(1.7)	(0.3)	0.0	(0.3)
Customer Contact, Communications & Consultations	5.4	0.1	0.0	0.2
Human Resources related services	8.0	(0.2)	0.0	(0.2)
People & Communication	13.3	(0.1)	0.1	(0.0)
Finance	12.3	0.1	6.7	6.8
Governance & Law	6.1	0.2	0.1	0.4
Local Member Grants	0.8	0.0	0.5	0.5
Governance, Law & Democracy	6.9	0.2	0.6	0.9
ICT related services	22.4	(0.1)	0.9	0.8
Property related services	5.8	(0.6)	0.8	0.2
Infrastructure	28.2	(0.7)	1.8	1.1
Corporate Landlord	25.3	(0.5)	0.1	(0.4)
Strategic Commissioning	7.3	(0.1)	0.8	0.6
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	3.8	0.0	0.5	0.5
<b>Total - Strategic &amp; Corporate Services</b>	<b>95.5</b>	<b>(1.4)</b>	<b>10.5</b>	<b>9.2</b>
Non Attributable Costs	115.8	0.0	0.3	16.5
Corporately Held Budgets (to be allocated)	0.5	(0.5)	0.0	(0.5)
<b>Total excluding Schools' Delegated Budgets</b>	<b>1,127.9</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>37.9</b>	<b>56.6</b>

## Appendix 2 - Monitoring of Prudential Indicators as at 30 September 2021

The prudential indicators consider the affordability and impact of capital expenditure plans, in line with the prudential code.

### Prudential Indicator 1 : Estimates of Capital Expenditure (£m)

	20-21 Actuals	21-22 Budget	21-22 Forecast
Total	340.63	424.2	363.00

### Prudential Indicator 2: Estimate of Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) (£m)

The CFR is the total outstanding capital expenditure not yet financed by revenue or capital resources. It is a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need.

	20-21 Actuals	21-22 Budget	21-22 Forecast
Total CFR	1,269.16	1,402.50	1,317.58

### Prudential Indicator 3: Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement (£m)

Projected levels of the Authority's total outstanding debt (which comprises borrowing, PFI liabilities, leases and transferred debt) are shown below, compared with the CFR.

	20-21 Actuals	21-22 Budget	21-22 Forecast
Other Long-term Liabilities	235.80	245.20	245.20
External Borrowing	853.73	826.00	849.80
Total Debt	1,089.53	1,071.20	1,095.00
Capital Financing Requirement	1,269.16	1,402.50	1,317.58
Internal Borrowing	179.63	331.30	222.58

### Prudential Indicator 4 : Authorised Limit and Operation Boundary for External Debt (£m)

The Authority is legally obliged to set an affordable borrowing limit (the authorised limit for external debt). A lower "operation boundary" is set should debt approach the limit.

	20-21 Actuals	21-22 Limit	21-22 Forecast
Authorised Limit - borrowing	854	1,016	850
Authorised Limit - PFI and leases	246	245	245
Authorised Limit - total external debt	1,100	1,261	1,095
Operational Boundary - borrowing	854	991	850
Operational Boundary - PFI and leases	246	245	245
Operation Boundary - total external debt	1,100	1,236	1,095

### Prudential Indicator 5: Proportion of Finance Costs to Net Revenue Stream (%)

Financing costs comprise interest on loans and minimum revenue provision (MRP) and are charged to revenue. This indicator compares the net financing costs of the Authority to the net revenue stream.

	20-21 Actual	21-22 Budget	21-22 Forecast
Proportion of net revenue stream	9.57%	9.59%	9.20%

### Appendix 3 - Reserves Monitoring as at 30 September 2021

	Balance as at 1 April 2021 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2022 £m
<b>General Fund (GF) Balance</b>	42.5		42.5
Budgeted contribution to/(from) in MTFP		14.0	14.0
	<b>42.5</b>	<b>14.0</b>	<b>56.5</b>

<b>Earmarked reserves:</b>			
Vehicle, Plant & Equipment (VPE)	16.2	0.0	16.2
Smoothing	121.8	(11.9)	109.9
Major Projects	54.7	(6.5)	48.2
Partnerships	26.9	(0.5)	26.4
Grant/External Funds*	90.8	(50.9)	39.9
Departmental Under/Overspends**	13.7	(20.3)	(6.6)
Insurance	13.8	0.1	13.9
Public Health	11.1	(1.6)	9.5
Trading	0.7	0.0	0.7
Special Funds	0.6	0.0	0.6

<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>350.3</b>	<b>(91.6)</b>	<b>258.7</b>
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<b>Total GF and Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>392.8</b>	<b>(77.6)</b>	<b>315.2</b>
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	Balance as at 1 April 2021 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2022 £m
<b>Schools Reserves</b>			
School delegated revenue budget reserve - committed	21.9	0.0	21.9
School delegated revenue budget reserve - uncommitted	33.9	(0.5)	33.4
Community Focussed Extended Schools Reserves	0.1	0.0	0.1
<b>Total School Reserves</b>	<b>55.9</b>	<b>(0.5)</b>	<b>55.4</b>



## DSG Adjustment Account - Unusable Reserve

	Balance as at 1 April 2021 £m	Forecast Contribution to/(from) Reserve £m	Projected Balance at 31 March 2022 £m
<b>Unallocated Schools Budget</b>	<b>(51.0)</b>	<b>(52.3)</b>	<b>(103.3)</b>

The General fund Reserve has been increased as agreed by County Council in the 2021-22 MTFP.

The earmarked reserves are decreasing mainly due to the following:

- Grant/External Funds\*

	£m	£m
<b>Balance as at 1 April 2021</b>		<b>90.8</b>
<b>S31 Compensation grants</b>		<b>(28.0)</b>
ASCH additional COVID-19 spend	(6.1)	
CYPE additional COVID-19 spend	(6.6)	
GET additional COVID-19 spend	(1.7)	
S&CS additional COVID-19 spend	(9.2)	
NAC reduction in COVID-19 spend	1.8	
<b>COVID-19 Emergency Grant:</b>		<b>(21.8)</b>
ASCH - Community Discharge Grant		(0.6)
GET - Bus Services Operators Grant		(0.3)
GET - Supported Bus Grant		(0.2)
<b>Balance as at 31 March 2022</b>		<b>39.9</b>

- Anticipated but not agreed funding of the business as usual forecast outturn overspend\*\*
- Each of the Directorates have referenced net drawdowns from reserves. ASCH £1.5m, CYPE £1.3m, GET £1.6m, SCS £5.4m and NAC £6.9m contribution to reserves. These are mainly funded from the Strategic Reset and ICT reserves.

The DSG Adjustment Account deficit has increased due to pressures in Schools Funding. More details can be found in Section 10.

The net £77.6m drawdown reflected in the table above covers more than the reserve drawdowns set out in the Directorate sections of this report, as this includes funding elements, which are roll forwards and the S31 Compensation grants.

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From: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council  
David Cockburn – Corporate Director, Strategic and Corporate Services

To: Cabinet – 9 December 2021

Decision No: n/a

Subject: **Quarterly Performance Report, Quarter 2, 2021/22**

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:** The purpose of the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is to inform Cabinet about key areas of performance for the authority. This report presents performance to the end of September 2021 (Quarter 2, 2021/22).

Of the 33 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) contained within the QPR, 26 achieved target (Green), 4 achieved and exceeded the floor standard but did not meet target (Amber). 3 KPIs did not meet the floor standard (Red).

**Recommendation(s):** Cabinet is asked to NOTE the Quarter 2 Performance Report.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Quarterly Performance Report (QPR) is a key mechanism within the Performance Management Framework for the Council. The report for Quarter 2, 2021/22 is attached at Appendix 1, and includes data up to the end of September 2021.
- 1.2. The QPR includes 33 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) where results are assessed against Targets set at the start of the financial year.

## 2. Quarter 2 Performance Report

- 2.1. Results for KPIs compared to Target are assessed using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status.
- 2.2. Of the 33 KPIs included in the report, the latest RAG status are as follows:
  - 26 are rated Green – the target was achieved or exceeded. An increase of 4 on the previous Quarter.
  - 4 are rated Amber – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet target.
  - 3 are rated Red – Performance did not meet the expected floor standard. An increase of 1 on the previous Quarter.
- 2.3. With regards to Direction of Travel, 12 indicators show a positive trend, 19 are stable or with no clear trend, and 2 are showing a negative trend.

2.4. The 3 indicators where the RAG rating is Red, are in:

- Customer Services
  - Percentage of phone calls to Contact Point which were answered.
  - Percentage of complaints responded to within timescale.
- Children, Young People and Education
  - Percentage of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks.

### 3. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to NOTE the Quarter 2 Performance Report
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### 4. Contact details

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**Kent County Council**

**Quarterly Performance Report**

**Quarter 2**

**2021/22**

Produced by: Kent Analytics  
E-mail: [performance@kent.gov.uk](mailto:performance@kent.gov.uk)  
Phone: 03000 416205



## Executive Summary

26 of the 33 indicators are rated as Green, on or ahead of target, an increase of 4 on the previous Quarter. 4 indicators reached or exceeded the floor standard (Amber) with 3 indicators not achieving the floor standard (Red), an increase of 1 on the previous Quarter. 12 indicators were showing an improving trend, with 2 showing a worsening trend.

	G	A	R	↑	⇒	↓
Customer Services	1		2		2	1
Growth, Economic Development & Communities	2				2	
Environment and Transport	6			1	5	
Children, Young People and Education	9	2	1	5	7	
Adult Social Care	4	1		2	2	1
Public Health	4	1		4	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>

**Customer Services** - Satisfaction with Contact Point advisors continued to meet target. The percentage of calls answered dropped further below floor standard to 84% and remains RAG rated Red, with high staff turnover continuing to impact on service delivery. The percentage of complaints responded to within timescale decreased to move below floor standard. Visits to the KCC website remained above the upper level of expectations.

<b>Customer Services KPIs</b>	RAG rating	DoT
% of callers to Contact Point who rated the advisor who dealt with their call as good	GREEN	⇒
% of phone calls to Contact Point which were answered	RED	↓
% of complaints responded to within timescale	RED	⇒

**Growth, Economic Development & Communities** – The No Use Empty programme, which returns long term empty domestic properties into active use, continues to exceed its rolling 12 months target. The amount of Developer Contributions secured achieved 99% of the total sought, exceeding target. The number of books issued from libraries increased to its highest level since September 2019.

<b>Growth, Economic Development &amp; Communities KPIs</b>	RAG rating	DoT
No. of homes brought back to market through No Use Empty (NUE)	GREEN	⇒
Developer contributions secured as a percentage of amount sought	GREEN	⇒

**Environment & Transport** – All four indicators for Highways and Transport achieved or exceeded target, with 3 of these improving on their performance last Quarter. The percentage of waste diverted from landfill over the last 12 months is now meeting its 99% target. This new Greenhouse Gas KPI which will measure progress towards Net Zero in 2030, is ahead of target.

<b><u>Environment &amp; Transport KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
% of routine pothole repairs completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
% of routine highway repairs reported by residents completed within 28 days	GREEN	⇒
Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification	GREEN	⇒
% of satisfied callers for Kent Highways & Transportation, 100 call back survey	GREEN	⇒
% of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒
Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑

**Education & Wider Early Help** – Ofsted restarted their routine inspections in September 2021 for all school types having ceased their full programme of graded inspections in March 2020, Schools and Early Years settings continue to meet inspection targets. Completion of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) in timescale is now showing an upward trend but remains below the floor standard. Permanent pupil exclusions remains ahead of target. The number of first-time entrants to the youth justice system improved and remains within target.

<b><u>Education &amp; Wider Early Help KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
% of all schools with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (data to March 20)	GREEN	↑
% of Early Years settings with Good or Outstanding Ofsted inspection judgements (childcare on non-domestic premises) (data to March 20)	GREEN	⇒
% of Education, Health Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks – rolling 12 months	RED	↑
% of pupils permanently excluded from school – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒
No. of first-time entrants to youth justice system – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒

**Children’s Social Care & Early Help** – Five of the seven indicators met target, one more than last quarter, with the other two achieving the floor standard. Three have an upward trajectory, with the other four being stable or with no clear direction of travel. The number of children in care (including unaccompanied asylum seeking children) decreased, and the number of care leavers increased slightly.

<b><u>Children’s Social Care &amp; Early Help KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months	GREEN	↑
% of case holding posts filled by permanent qualified social workers	GREEN	⇒
% of children social care referrals that were repeat referrals within 12 months	GREEN	↑

<b><u>Children's Social Care &amp; Early Help KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
% of child protection plans that were repeat plans	GREEN	↑
Average no. of days between becoming a child in care and moving in with an adoptive family – rolling 12 months	GREEN	⇒
% of foster care placements which are in-house or with relatives and friends (excluding UASC)	AMBER	⇒
% of care leavers in education, employment or training (of those KCC is in touch with)	AMBER	⇒

**Adult Social Care** – Four out of the five KPIs met or exceeded target, and were RAG rated Green. The proportion of clients receiving Direct Payments remains below target. There was an increase in the number of people receiving long term services, as well as those who have a mental health need.

<b><u>Adult Social Care KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
Proportion of people who have received short term services for which the outcome was either support at a lower level or no ongoing support	GREEN	↑
Proportion of clients receiving Direct Payments	AMBER	↓
Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	GREEN	⇒
Proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding	GREEN	↑
Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services	GREEN	⇒

**Public Health** – NHS Health Check delivery continues to recover and exceeded the Quarter 2 target. Health visiting for mandated checks continues to exceed target and maintained an upward trend. This is the second report to include the new sexual health indicator which monitors the percentage of new patients who are offered a full sexual health screen, and this was under target. The other two indicators maintained above target performance.

<b><u>Public Health KPIs</u></b>	<b>RAG rating</b>	<b>DoT</b>
Number of eligible people receiving an NHS Health Check – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑
Number of mandated universal checks delivered by the health visiting service – rolling 12 months	GREEN	↑
% of first-time patients (at any sexual health clinics or telephone triage) who are offered a full sexual health screen	AMBER	↑
Successful completion of drug and alcohol treatment	GREEN	↑
% of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends or someone in a similar situation	GREEN	⇒



<b>Customer Services</b>	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Bryan Sweetland
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Amanda Beer

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	1		2		3	

Customer contact through Contact Point (KCC's call centre) is provided via a strategic partnership, whilst Digital services are provided by KCC.

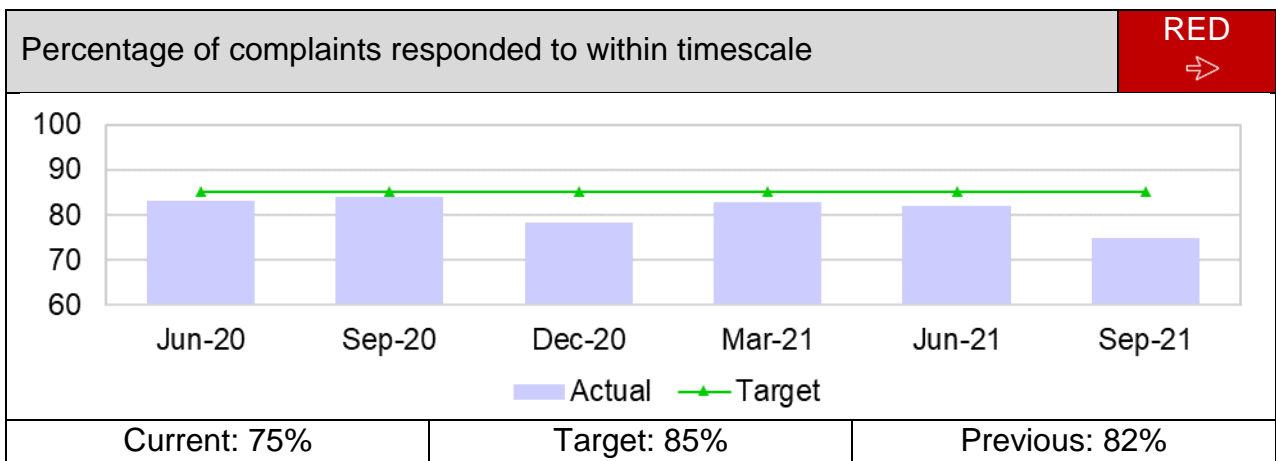
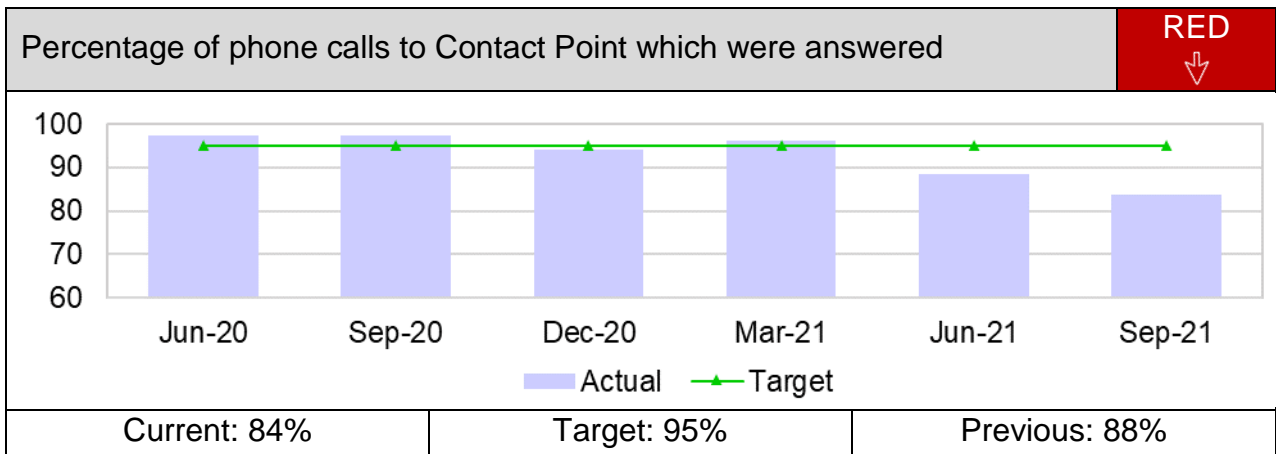
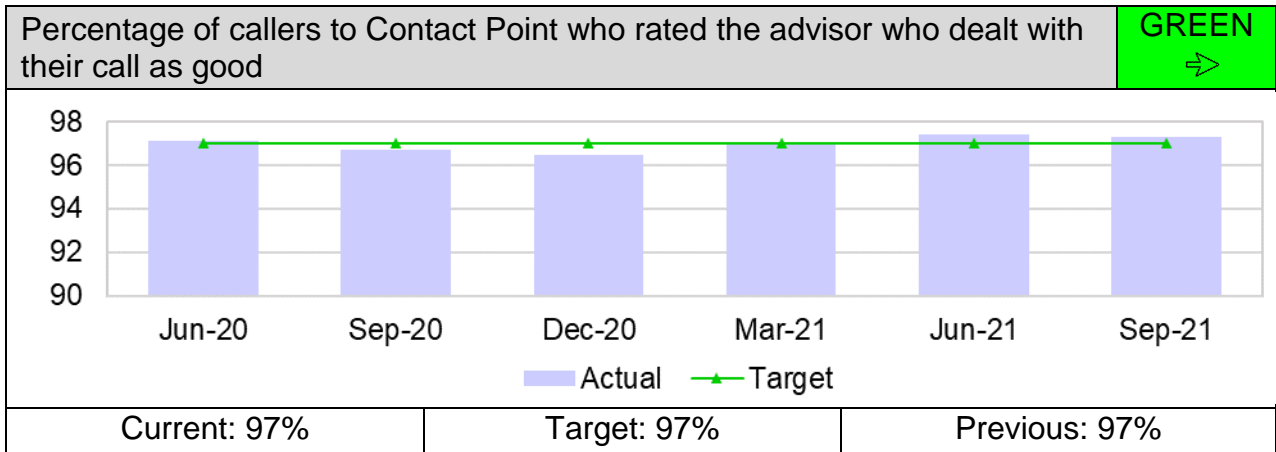
The percentage of callers who rated their advisor as good, remained at 97% and met target. The percentage of calls answered by Contact Point dropped further below floor standard to 84%. There is a continuing issue with staffing, which has been impacted by attrition rate (staff leaving) and difficulty recruiting. Although the recruitment and subsequent training has stabilised for the Out Of Hours service, attrition of both newer and existing highly skilled advisors remains high for the daytime service. Recruitment is also extremely difficult but is ongoing alongside training of newer staff so that they are fully utilised. A full plan has been presented to KCC, including timescales on training. This is a nationwide problem with the job market having lots of comparable and sometimes better paid vacancies following the end of the last lockdown. The issues above also led to the average call time increasing to 6 minutes 2 seconds, which is above the target of 5 minutes 45 seconds, as newer staff take slightly longer to deal with calls due to learning system navigation and checking for the correct information.

Contact Point received 18% more calls than the previous Quarter and 3% more calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to September 2021 saw 3% fewer calls than in the 12 months to September 2020.

Visits to the KCC website increased slightly, remaining above expectations. Household Waste Recycling Centre pages remain most popular with over 300,000 visits in the Quarter. Coronavirus cases' pages were next at nearly 128,000, followed by School Term dates with 105,000 visits.

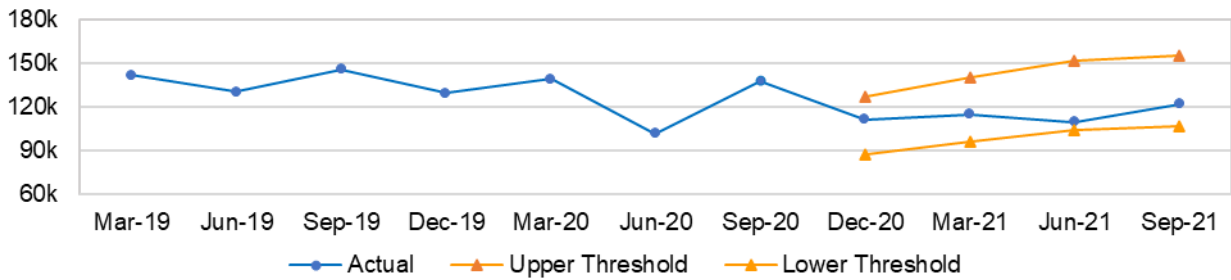
The Quarter to September saw the number of complaints received broadly in line with the previous Quarter, but this was a decrease of 25% on the same quarter in 2020 when there was a higher number than usual following the end of lockdown. There was a decrease in performance in terms of responding to complaints within timescale from the previous quarter, with 75% responded to in time, which is below the floor standard of 80%. The highest volume of late responses relate to complaints that fall under the GET Directorate, though they achieved 81% in timescale. CYPE had the lowest percentage within timescale of the five Directorates, at 58%. The volumes and complexity of complaints being received in some services alongside day-to-day management of cases, has proved challenging. Work is ongoing to improve performance where possible, however it may take some time as the backlog of cases is dealt with.

## Key Performance Indicators

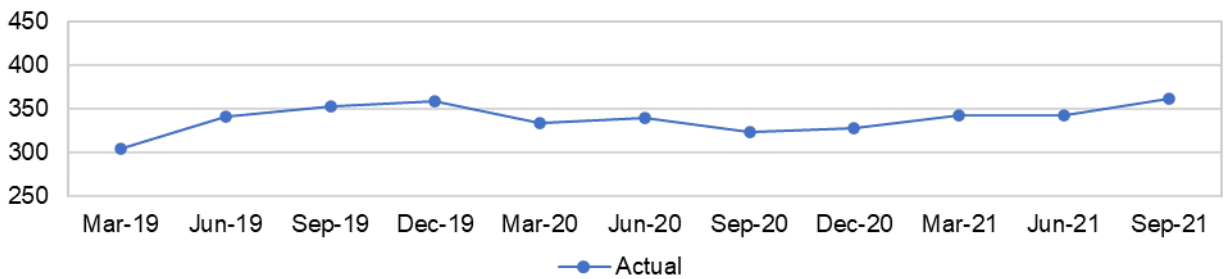


## Activity indicators

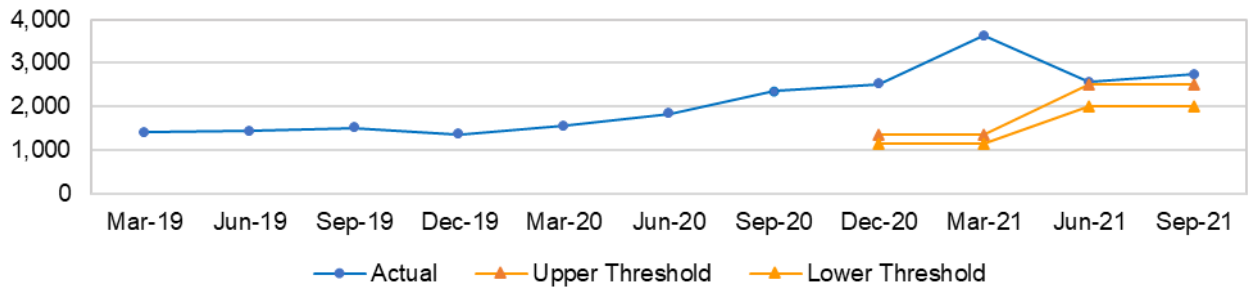
Number of phone calls responded to by Contact Point – by quarter



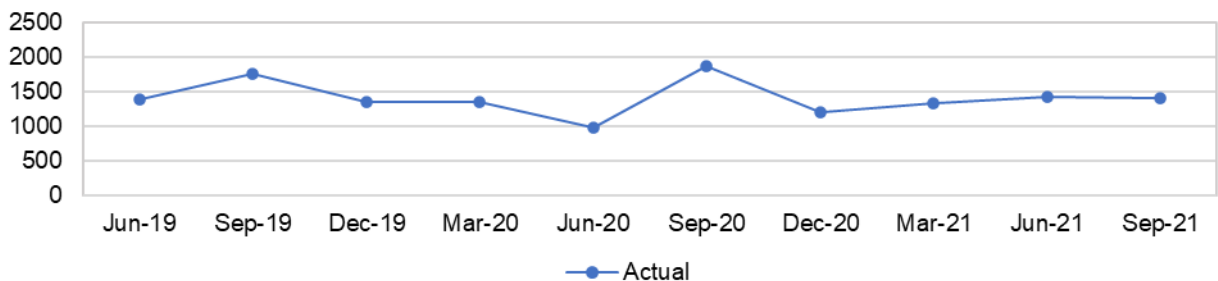
Average Contact Point call handling time in seconds – by quarter



Number of visits to the KCC website (in thousands) – by quarter



Number of complaints received each quarter



## Customer Services – Call Activity

### Number of phone calls to Contact Point (thousands)

Contact Point received 18% more calls than the previous quarter and 3% more calls than the same period last year. The 12 months to September 2021 saw 3% fewer calls than in the 12 months to September 2020.

Service area	Oct – Dec 20	Jan – Mar 21	Apr – Jun 21	Jul – Sep 21	Yr to Sep 21	Yr to Sep 20
Adult Social Care	27	30	29	27	114	120
Integrated Children's Services	18	18	18	19	73	73
Highways	14	16	17	17	64	66
Waste and Recycling	10	10	12	16	48	38
Transport Services	7	6	8	16	37	38
Blue Badges	8	8	8	10	34	44
Libraries and Archives	8	6	8	10	32	29
Registrations	5	6	5	6	21	27
Adult Education	1	1	1	5	9	12
Schools and Early Years	8	5	5	5	23	23
Driver improvement	3	2	3	4	13	20
KSAS*	4	5	4	4	16	10
Main line	3	4	3	4	14	12
Other Services	1	2	2	2	7	8
Kent together	1	1	0.4	0.5	3	6
<b>Total Calls (thousands)</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>509</b>	<b>527</b>

\* Kent Support and Assistance Service

Numbers are shown in the 1,000's and may not add exactly due to rounding. Calculations in commentary are based on unrounded numbers.

## Customer Services – Complaints Monitoring

The number of complaints received in Quarter 2 was similar to Quarter 1 but was 25% lower than the same quarter last year, when there was an increase following the end of the first national lockdown.

Over the last 12 months there has been a 4% decrease in complaints received compared to the previous year.

In Quarter 2, frequently raised issues included SEN provision, Household Waste and Recycling Centres and Public Transport with regards to schools returning in September.

Service	12 months to Sep 20	12 months to Sep 21	Quarter to Jun 21	Quarter to Sep 21
Highways, Transportation and Waste Management	3,026	2,889	770	750
Adult Social Services	1,018	731	160	203
Specialist Children’s Services	571	833	252	217
Libraries, Registrations and Archives	297	159	16	82
Education & Young People’s Services	267	285	99	66
Strategic and Corporate Services	103	213	60	42
Environment, Planning and Enforcement & Economic Development	205	211	58	49
Adult Education	62	22	6	7
<b>Total Complaints</b>	<b>5,549</b>	<b>5,343</b>	<b>1,421</b>	<b>1,416</b>

## Customer Services – Digital Take-up

The table below shows the digital/online or automated transaction completions for Key Service Areas.

Transaction type	Online Oct 20 – Dec 20	Online Jan 21 – Mar 21	Online Apr 21 - Jun 21	Online Jul 21 - Sep 21	Total Transactions Last 12 Months
Renew a library book*	79%	70%	82%	82%	399,784
Report a Highways Fault	58%	63%	59%	61%	102,923
Book a Driver Improvement Course	81%	86%	88%	86%	30,470
Apply for a KCC Travel Saver (Rolling 12 months)	98%	99%	99%	100%	22,852
Book a Birth Registration appointment	88%	88%	86%	87%	22,732
Report a Public Right of Way Fault	86%	88%	87%	85%	22,149
Apply for or renew a Blue Badge	76%	72%	70%	66%	13,129
Apply for a Concessionary Bus Pass	65%	77%	74%	65%	9,636
Highways Licence applications	97%	98%	99%	99%	7,993
Apply for a HWRC recycling voucher	99%	98%	99%	99%	4,997

\* Library issue renewals transaction data is based on individual loan items and not count of borrowers.

<b>Growth, Economic Development &amp; Communities</b>	
<b>Cabinet Members</b>	Derek Murphy, Mike Hill
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Simon Jones

### **Support for business**

Kent's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) investments have continued to create and sustain employment opportunities during Quarter 2. The impact in terms of business failures and loss of jobs caused by the economic disruption from the Coronavirus pandemic on the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) loan recipients has so far been much lower than anticipated. This, in part, appears to be due to two factors: a) The Government's staged removal of the Covid restrictions on places where people can meet and the limits on the numbers of people who can mix together has progressively enabled different sectors to come back to work more normally (a prime example of this is the hospitality sector); b) the continuing positive impact of the government support schemes in reducing business failures and protecting jobs, namely the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) and Bounce Back Loan Scheme (BBLs), which both ended in March 2021, and Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (the 'Furlough' scheme), which ended on 30th September 2021.

The KMBF management team offered all KMBF loan recipients a one-year repayment holiday (April 2020 - March 2021) to mitigate the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic: this was extended for a further six months to September 2021. Repayments resumed on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and so far the substantial majority of payments have been made in full. A small number of loan recipients have made requests to extend or amend repayment terms and these are being considered by the Investment Advisory Board's Debt Recovery Sub-Group.

Since 2017 to the end of Quarter 2 of 2021/22, the KMBF has provided funding of £15.2 million to 107 Kent and Medway businesses, creating 361 new jobs and safeguarding 111 further jobs.

In Quarter 2 of 2021-22, funds to the value of £110,000 have been provided to two companies. The KMBF plans to relaunch its lending programme in October 2021.

The KMBF management team continues to work with its equity partner, NCL Technology Ventures, to ensure that the innovative companies in which the KMBF has an equity stake receive specialist support and assistance.

The South-East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) has provided funding for the Innovation Investment Loan scheme which the KMBF team manages for Kent and Medway. Through this scheme, £6 million of loans have been made to 18 businesses. By the end of Quarter 1 of 2021/22, 106.52 Full-time Equivalent (FTE) jobs have been created and 64.5 FTE jobs safeguarded.

The Economic Development team concluded the procurement of the new Kent and Medway Growth Hub contract, which commenced on 19 July 2021.

### **Converting derelict buildings for new housing and commercial space**

In Quarter 2, 91 long term empty properties were made fit for occupation through the No Use Empty (NUE) Programme bringing the total to 7,168 since the programme began in 2005. NUE processed a further eight loan applications in Quarter 2 (26 to

date) increasing the total NUE investment in converting derelict properties to £80.1m (£43.2m from KCC recycled loans and £36.9m from private sector leverage).

Medway Council joined the NUE scheme in September 2021. The NUE team will process loan applications for premises in Medway and Medway Council will administer the loans using their own funds.

NUE received the first drawdown of £750k from the £2 million awarded under SELEP Growing Places Fund (GPF) for NUE Commercial Phase II in July. The target is to return 18 empty commercial units back into use and create 36 new homes by March 2023. A total of five projects are currently supported (in Folkestone, Herne Bay, Hythe, Ramsgate, and Sheerness) and these will return five empty commercial units back into use and create 24 homes.

Following the approval of £16m from KCC Treasury to bring forward empty/derelict sites with planning permission for new builds, NUE has processed 30 loan applications with a cumulative total value of £16m. A total of 121 new builds are currently supported, an increase of 10 since Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

Six projects have now completed: Dover (12 homes), Broadstairs (2 homes), and Ramsgate (7 homes). £2.6m of loan investment has been repaid at end of Quarter 2. Further loan repayments of £0.5m are expected in Quarter 3, all of which are being recycled to fund new projects.

NUE has identified 20 potential projects with an indicative value of £12.2m. Based on current loans repaid and value of loans due to be repaid between now and during 2022/23, NUE would be able to service 40% of the potential projects subject to final assessment next year.

### **Infrastructure projects**

In Quarter 2, the following capital funding decision was made by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership's (SELEP) Accountability Board (decisions relating to transport are covered in the Environment and Transport section of this report):

- The award of £322,872 of Local Growth Funding (LGF) to support the Kent and Medway Engineering and Design Growth and Enterprise (EDGE) Hub project. The EDGE Hub is a new industry-led centre for advanced manufacturing, life sciences and healthcare and delivers industry collaboration, research, and innovation. Based in Canterbury, the new 3,588m<sup>2</sup> facility will be supported by satellite facilities at Discovery Park in Sandwich, Kent Science Park near Sittingbourne, and the University of Kent's Medway Campus. It has been estimated the EDGE will help bring 1,250 new learners with higher level Engineering and Technology skills into the labour market by 2024.

### **Broadband**

Within Quarter 2, the Government announced that up to £203m had been allocated to Kent as part of the new national Project Gigabit Programme. The aim of this programme is to deliver gigabit-capable connections to areas that are not expected to benefit from connectivity upgrades by telecoms operators.

The Government's intention is that a single contract will be established to deliver these new connections across Kent. The procurement will be led by Building Digital UK (BDUK). Kent County Council's broadband team has been asked by BDUK to help lead and support the local delivery across Kent.



BDUK have estimated that the Kent and Medway project will cover circa 122,000 properties. They have also announced that the formal procurement will start in May 2022, with the contracted work commencing in April 2023. The pre-procurement work (which is required to meet current subsidy control and procurement legislation) started in early August following the announcement.

In the meantime, the infrastructure build for the final phase of the Kent BDUK Project continues. As of August 2021, over 143,550 faster broadband connections had been delivered by the project – which will reach 145,000 connections by the time the project build concludes in March 2022. Demand for the new BDUK voucher scheme across Kent remains strong, with Kent continuing to have one of the highest rates of take-up across the UK.

### Funding Kent's Infrastructure

KCC has a statutory right to seek financial contributions for capital investment from developers of new housing sites. In Quarter 2, sixteen Section 106 agreements were completed and a total of £9.7 million was secured.

<b>s.106 contributions secured £000s</b>	<b>Oct to Dec 2020</b>	<b>Jan to Mar 2021</b>	<b>Apr to Jun 2021</b>	<b>Jul to Sep 2021</b>
Primary Education	8,073	7,064	5,296	4,292
Secondary Education	8,491	3,699	5,464	4,554
Adult Social Care	155	128	108	128
Libraries	398	120	223	173
Community Learning	55	29	58	23
Youth & Community	76	52	52	63
Waste	*	*	47	89
Highways	*	*	464	420
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,248</b>	<b>11,092</b>	<b>11,713</b>	<b>9,742</b>
Secured as % of Amount Sought	97%	78%	96%	99%

\* Data only reported from April 2021 onwards

Section 278 schemes are developer funded works associated through the planning application approval. For Quarter 2, s278 schemes delivered a value of £2.25m worth of highway improvement works; these consist of schemes to mitigate the impact of new development on highways.

### Kent Film Office

In the 2nd quarter of 2021/22, the Film Office handled 192 filming requests and 176 related enquiries. The team logged 242 filming days bringing an estimated £2.5m direct spend into Kent.

### Libraries, Registrations and Archives

As Step 4 of the government's roadmap to ease restrictions progressed, a phased reopening of the remaining 57 libraries took place from 26<sup>th</sup> July onwards, with all 99 libraries open by 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021. Footfall for Kent in August 2021 was 44% of the August 2019 figure; this was better than the national figure of 35%, even with some libraries not being open for the full month.

The next step of the recovery is the reinstatement of physical events and activities in libraries from September, which will boost visitor figures. Local teams have been working to bring back physical events and activities in the safest way possible following recommendations from a pilot of Baby Rhyme Time sessions across four library sites. The Playground Project was launched in Quarter 2 with six summer activities for babies, pre-schoolers and their families, while the Wild World Heroes Summer Reading Challenge was delivered both physically and virtually. Over 12,300 children took part with 6,476 then completing the Challenge. Four virtual Zoolab events connecting children with nature and the environment were delivered during August.

Overall issues are increasing month on month, and September's physical issues are at 75% of what they were in September 2019. Digital issues continue to meet targets and see a sustained increase, with a 20% increase in e-issues on Quarter 2 last year.

From the end of July, the Select and Collect service available from mobile libraries was withdrawn as customers were permitted to board the mobiles to browse. Customer feedback on the interior of the new vehicles has been very positive, and issues have been increasing steadily. Mobile library issues for August and September were at 62% of the issues for the same period in 2019.

The Ceremonies Teams have successfully handled a 60% increase from pre-Covid levels in ceremonies over the summer months, delivering 2,304 ceremonies across July and August. Couples are now permitted to attend birth registration appointments, and the teams have continued to catch up with the backlog, delivering over 4,400 birth appointments during Quarter 2 alongside higher levels of death registrations (an increase of 9% on Quarter 1). Customer satisfaction with Registration is at 93% for Quarter 2.

The Archive Search Room returned to pre-Covid hours, with a phased increase in the number of sessions available to researchers. Archive enquiries have been increasing gradually back up to pre-Covid levels, with the number of enquiries this August surpassing those in August 2019 by 17%. The in-house Search Room survey combined with the Distance Enquiry survey have yielded a satisfaction rate of 97% for Archives, above this year's target of 96%.

Online contacts for both Libraries and Archives have exceeded the targets set for Quarter 2, with social media seeing increased activity, particularly during July as the Summer Reading Challenge launched.

LRA underwent the annual assessment for the Customer Service Excellence Award in September, emerging with three additional Compliance Plus ratings which reflect best practice.

Looking ahead to Quarter 3, LRA will be preparing and launching the staff and public engagement on library services to ensure the service takes stock of how it needs to adapt and further develop.

### **Community Safety**

The Kent Community Warden Service (KCWS) has continued to support communities and vulnerable people most in need during the recovery phase of the pandemic. This has included providing advice around social distancing, vaccinations, and Covid related guidelines as well as ensuring the most vulnerable had access to essential provisions. As restrictions have eased there has also been a focus on bringing communities back together by reintroducing social engagement and restarting and initiating new clubs,

events, projects and meeting points (surgeries). The KCWS undertook just over 4,000 tasks in support of these activities during this Quarter.

### **Explore Kent**

There is a sustained increase in use of footpaths and green spaces by Kent residents – this is evidenced by close to 30,000 route downloads in this quarter. Strong collaboration continued between Kent Sport's [Everyday Active campaign](#) and Explore Kent's offer of walking, cycling and connection with nature. Explore Kent worked with a number of partners to provide marketing and campaigns, including: to encourage users of public rights of way (PRoW) to respect as well as enjoy the PRoW network and countryside, to support those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic to access green space for good health, and a campaign involving production of a suite of high quality films to encourage behaviour change relating to energy and low emissions.

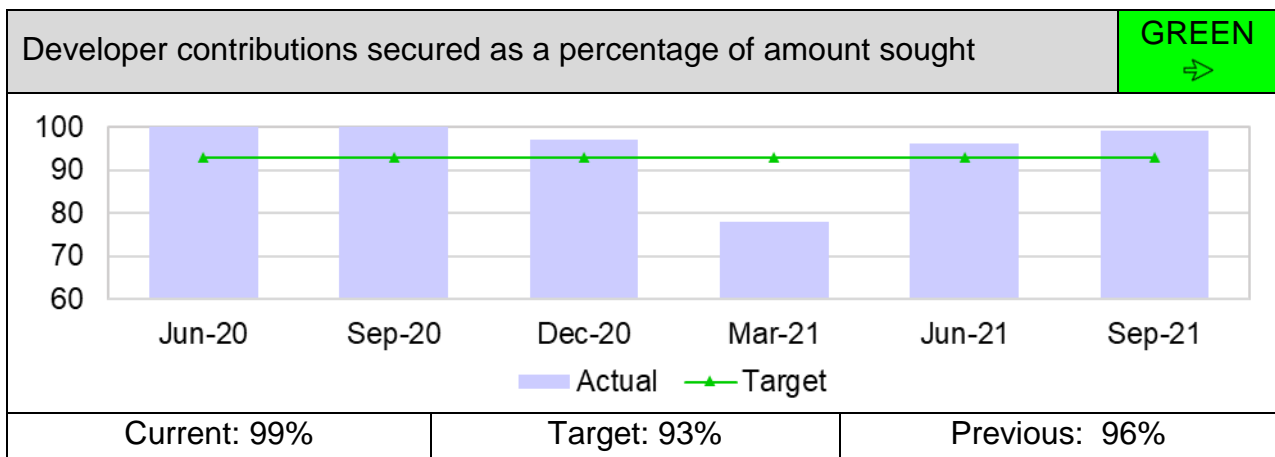
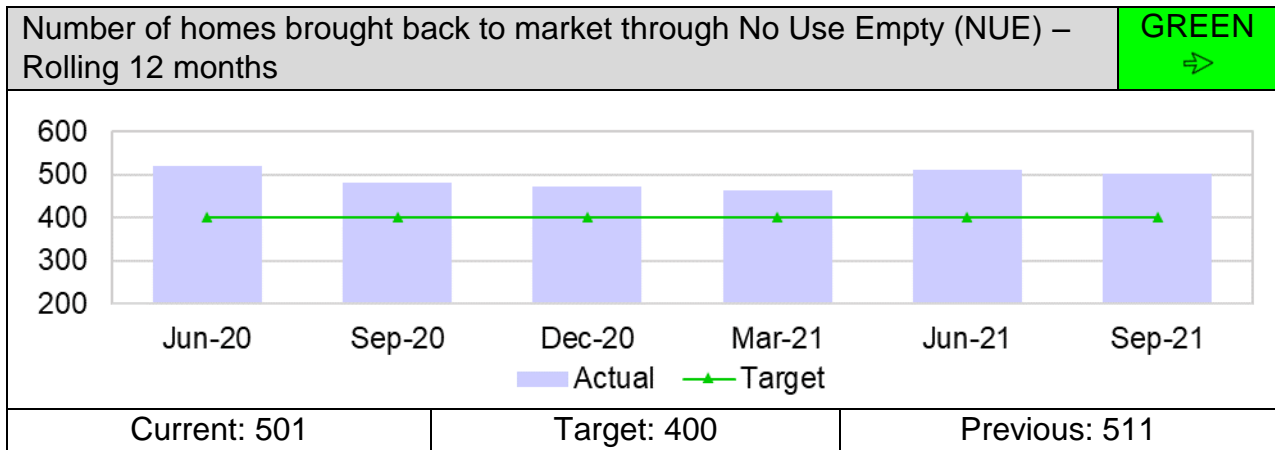
### **Kent Country Parks**

Improvement and repair work across the parks continued this Quarter. The Environment Agency have started work repairing the weir at Teston Country Park, which will continue until Spring 2022. The Trosley centre extension (better meeting the needs of visitors and volunteers as well as staff) is nearing completion and the café management has transferred to KCC Country Parks. The Visitor Survey for the Strategy renewal has been completed. Parks were busy over the summer months and the financial situation remains steady.

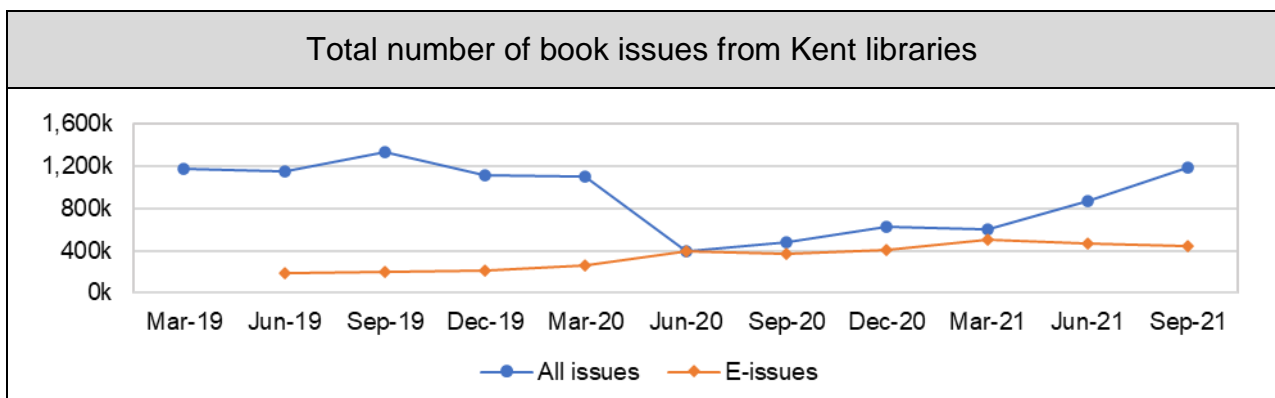
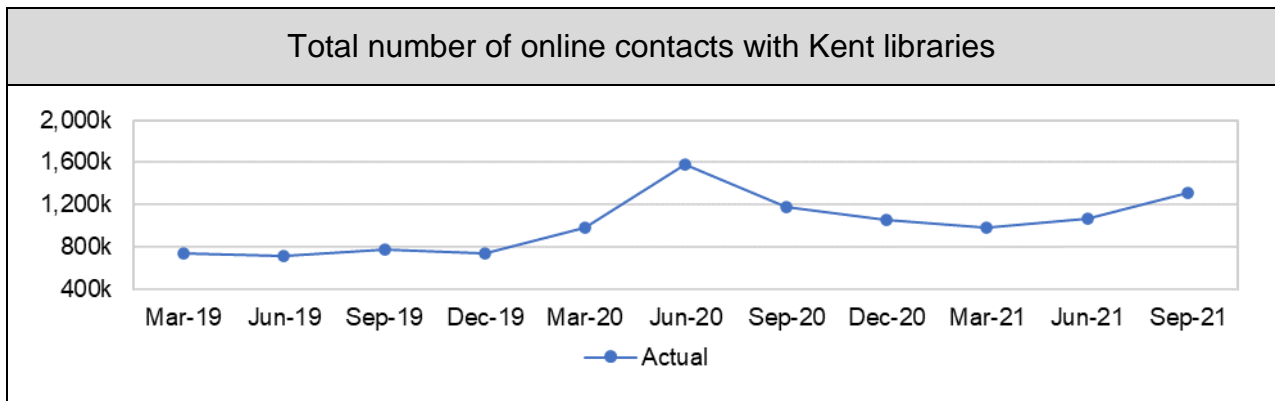
### **Sport and Physical Activity**

During Quarter 2, the service has focused on further development of the [Everyday Active website](#) and campaign. This has included increasing connections with health partners through involvement in training for health care professionals and education wellbeing practitioners. In addition, the service is continuing to work with community organisations to help reduce the negative impact of COVID-19 and reduce the widening inequalities gap of physical activity and sport among underrepresented groups. Two short videos have recently been produced demonstrating the impact that physical activity has on the lives of local people and communities. The videos, ([Nordic Walking](#) and [Cycling](#)), highlight the personal stories of two individuals who have benefitted from Sport England Tackling Inequalities funding and support provided by the service.

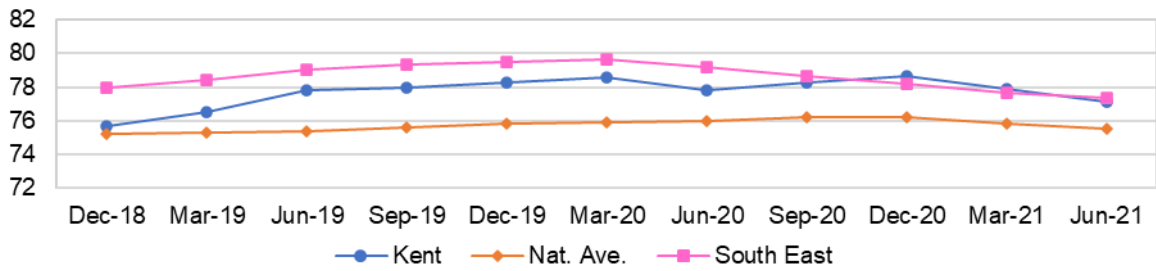
## Key Performance Indicators



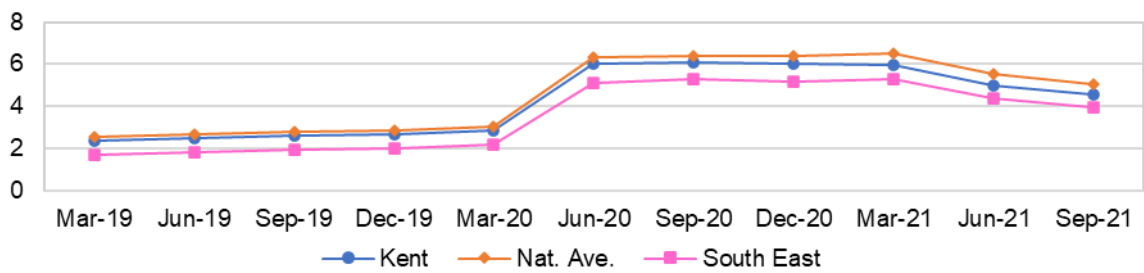
## Activity indicators



Percentage of population aged 16 to 64 in employment (from the Annual Population Survey)



Percentage of population aged 16 to 64 claiming unemployment benefits



Environment and Transport	
<b>Cabinet Members</b>	David Brazier, Susan Carey
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Simon Jones

## Highways

For the Quarter to September, all 4 of the Highways KPIs are RAG rated green. The attendance at Emergency Incidents within 2 hours of notification has improved to 99% compared to a target of 98%. The Service received 647 reports of emergency incidents in this Quarter with the contractor, Amey, unable to attend just 6 of these within the 2-hour response time window, and several of these missed the target by just a few minutes. In most cases a Highway Steward, Inspector or Police Officer was on site awaiting a response crew thus minimizing the risk to road users. This represents some really good work from Amey to ensure response times are now back on target.

Routine faults responded to in 28 days is also back on target, at 90% in this quarter, with almost 14,000 requests from customers. Wet and warm weather led to a peak in grass cutting and tree enquiries as well as drainage enquiries which were some of the highest summer volumes seen for the past 5 years. The extra demand on the Highway Definition team with increased activity in the housing market has begun to reduce. The Service continues to work with contractors and their supply chain to ensure performance targets are achieved.

The total number of customer contacts regarding highway issues in the last quarter was just over 54,000 with 22,000 of these identified as faults requiring action by front line teams. The remaining contacts are handled at first point by Agilisys using information provided by the Highways Service and on the KCC website. At the end of September there were 6,824 open enquiries (work in progress), and this compares to 5,618 at the same time last year, reflecting the increase in overall demand and return to 'business as usual' for customers seeking highway services.

The demand from utility companies to access their infrastructure under Kent roads, as well as requests from developers and for KCC's own works, continues, with almost 76,000 streetwork permits issued this year so far, well above expected levels of around 66,000.

## Asset Management

KCC's new Highways Asset Management Plan was adopted in July, replacing six documents published over the last five years. The new document is forward-looking and consists of an action plan and investment strategy for the next five years. It recognises the increasingly challenging environment with deteriorating assets, increasing traffic volumes, uncertainty around future funding and, more recently, Coronavirus impacts. It also sets out a range of future actions to further improve KCC's approach to highways asset management, focussing on increasing asset lifespans, reducing lifecycle costs and improving future maintainability.

## Casualty Reduction

KCC's Vision Zero Strategy was launched at an event which took place on 15 September at Manston Airport, attended by HRH Prince Michael, and with Baroness Vere sending a video message and statement of support for this critical new initiative that aims for zero, or as close as possible, fatalities on Kent's roads every year by

2050. This was well covered by the media, featured on both BBC South-East and ITV Meridian News, as well as on local radio and industry magazines.

Kent's (not including Medway or National Highways in Kent) collision statistics for Quarter 2 shows a similar number of fatal collisions (17) and casualties (17) compared to 2020 (15 fatal collisions, 17 fatal casualties). However, Quarter 2 of 2020 was significantly higher than 2019 Quarter 2 figures of 12 fatal collisions and 12 casualties.

Provisional figures show a decrease in total collisions in Quarter 2 (786) compared with the same period in 2020 (882) and with the same period in 2019 (962), and a similar decrease for the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) with 181 in 2021 compared to 230 in 2020 and 194 in 2019. However, the full data for September has not yet been received from Kent Police.

The Kent & Medway Safety Camera Partnership report an approximate 40% decrease in the number of speeding offenses recorded in Kent in Quarter 2 compared to 2020. This might be partially explained by active camera locations and traffic returning to normal patterns this year. The increase in speeding offenses in Medway can be explained by there being extra active cameras in Medway during this period.

<b>Number of offences</b>	<b>Quarter 2, 2021</b>	<b>Quarter 2, 2020</b>
Kent	7,171	12,032
Medway	4,130	3,029
Total	11,301	15,061

A countrywide campaign was launched in September asking drivers to respect the School Crossing Patrols, to stop when requested and park appropriately. This was launched due to an increasing number of recorded incidents between drivers and Patrols. The focus of the campaign asks all road users to support their local patrols and help them to protect children, with the campaign running on social media and appearing in a number of local papers.

With the return of schools after the summer holiday, both cycle and pedestrian training schemes are back up and running.

### **Crash Remedial Measures & Local Transport Plan (LTP)**

Delivery of the 2020/21 Crash Remedial Measures (CRM) and Local Transport Plan (LTP) programme is complete with over 125 schemes successfully delivered in addition to the hundreds of 'smaller interventions' to improve safety.

There is now a focus on the detailed investigations of the latest 122 crash cluster sites across the County. Each will require detailed accident investigation to see if engineering interventions could help reduce crashes as well as working closely with the road safety team on behavioural change. Local Transport Plan schemes for 2021/22 are being programmed for delivery.

### **Local Growth Fund Transport Capital Projects**

Through SELEP, KCC is managing £128 million of Government funding from rounds 1 to 3 of the LGF. There are currently 2 'Red' schemes causing concern, Sturry Link Road and Maidstone Integrated Transport Project.

For the Sturry Link Road project, following the granting of permission for the scheme by KCC Planning Committee in September, the SELEP Accountability Board agreed that the total £5.9m LGF allocation should be retained against the project. It was also agreed that the remaining £4.656m LGF allocated to the project should be transferred to KCC on condition that the land acquisition is completed by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (this was extended to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023 at the November meeting). The next project update will be provided at the February 2022 Board meeting.

In regard to the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package Scheme it was agreed that the £8.9m LGF funding should remain allocated to the project. A further update was given at the November meeting which outlined the progress towards achieving the outstanding consents and on delivery of the project. A further update will be provided at the February Board meeting.

£1.6m has been awarded to support the M2 Junction 5 project now that planning permission has been agreed by the Secretary of State for Transport. The project consists of a major junction improvement of the A249 with the M2 (Junction 5).

Lastly, it was agreed that the £623,389 unspent LGF in relation to the Tunbridge Wells Junction and Cycle Improvements Package of works should be returned to SELEP, due to no viable plan being in place. Thankfully, it was also agreed that there was compelling justification for SELEP not to recover the £1.177m LGF spent on the Project to date.

### **Transport Strategy**

Work with Highways England (now National Highways) on the Lower Thames Crossing continued, as we responded to a further consultation which ran from July to September. Progress is also being made on agreeing a way forward for developing local road mitigations through a modification to the existing Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). Work with National Highways also continued on the options development for Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) pipeline schemes for Brenley Corner and A2 Lydden to Dover (public consultation expected next year), and the potential trunking of three major routes in Kent, with technical comments from KCC officers provided to Highways England.

Partnership working with Transport for the South East (TfSE) continued with their work on the South East Radial Study which falls almost exclusively within Kent and Medway. This is alongside the work of the Transport Strategy team in developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Kent, as reported to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee (ETCC) in September, with use of the countywide transport model commissioned to obtain baseline data.

Delivery of the Thanet Parkway railway station has progressed significantly with commencement of the station build during the late May Bank Holiday weekend. Since then, sheet piling on the embankment and screw piling for the platform foundations has been completed (although some issues were encountered with ground conditions). The archaeological excavation on the site also finished at the end of the period and has now entered the cleaning and recording stage. Platform steelworks were substantially underway during September as well as progress on the car park construction.



### **Journey Time Reliability/Congestion Strategy**

An electronic variable message sign installation on the A258 is one of the last elements of the Dover Tap scheme to be delivered, with funding from the Local Growth Fund (LGF). This will provide timely information to drivers, permitting informed journey choices and improved journey time reliability.

An expression of interest has been submitted to the DfT for Traffic Management Act Part 6 enforcement powers.

### **Public Transport**

As a result of the National Bus Strategy, which was published by Government in March, KCC submitted its own Bus Service Improvement Plan at the end of October. The plan has the potential to attract significant funding from Government which will be needed to protect service levels post pandemic and then drive improvement in key areas. Once the funding settlement is known then recommendations about the use of funds will be made to Members and taken to ETCC.

Patronage levels on bus services currently stand at about 60% and the continuation of current service levels is requiring significant levels of Government and KCC support. Current funding is secure until April 2022 and if patronage has not recovered and funding is not replaced through the National Bus Strategy mechanism or alternative, then there is a risk of significant service reductions and associate cost pressures on KCC.

Driver shortage is as much of a problem for the passenger transport industry as it is for the goods and services sector. KCC has needed to support a number of bus operators to mitigate the effects of this and there are now parts of the County where we cannot secure school transport. Additional costs are being incurred as demand outstrips supply. Attempts are being made to engage with schools who have their own vehicles to operate some services into their own schools, but interest is limited.

### **Waste Management**

The KPI target on diversion from landfill is now being met, with 99% of waste over the last 12 months being recycled, composted or used for energy generation. Recent months have seen landfill rates being as low as 0.15% of all waste disposed of, which is possibly as low as KCC can achieve. This figure includes asbestos, with landfill being the only approved way to dispose of this material. All other disposal routes have been reliable and working well through the recent challenges of driver shortages and fuel availability.

Kerbside volumes of collected waste continue to be high, with the current rate 15% higher than the norm.

Some Collection Authorities in the county struggled to maintain scheduled kerbside services due to reported driver shortages in Quarter 2. This was seen in Maidstone, Tunbridge Wells and Tonbridge & Malling where garden services were either postponed or sporadic. The HWRC booking system via the booking system has been able to provide an assured and reliable service that has managed demand from residents to use the HWRC service to dispose of garden waste across the eighteen sites. In September, just over 160,000 residents booked appointments with over 275,000 slots offered. There does not appear to be a pent-up demand for HWRC services.

## **Minerals and Waste Local Plan**

The statutory requirement every 5-years for a review of the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30 has been completed which identified policies and explanatory text that require updating to conform with national and local policy requirements.

## **Natural Environment and Coast**

Kent's Plan Bee hosted its second summit on 23rd November. This year the summit will focus on linear features and the role these have in helping provide habitat and forage for pollinators. The report for the pollinator public perception survey is now produced and will shortly be available from the Plan Bee pages of the KCC website.

A Tree Strategy Officer has recently been recruited to help take forward the county ambition of 1.5 million new trees. Plan Tree, the authority's tree establishment strategy, has been drafted and work is underway for a public consultation over this winter

The Environment Bill, which received Royal Assent in November, introduced a mandatory requirement on development to deliver a minimum gain for biodiversity of 10%. The commission, funded by KCC and Natural England, will assess an elevated 15% or 20% target on viability due to the exceptional pressures for the county and the scale of previous biodiversity losses. This work, being delivered with input from the districts, will inform whether an increased target is feasible for Kent's planning authorities.

## **Flood and Water Management**

KCC is one of 10 city partners in the EU North Seas Region Interreg project, BEGIN, Blue Green Infrastructure through Social Innovation. BEGIN has been nominated as one of 25 finalists for REGIOSTARS Awards, being nominated as one of 5 finalists within the category for GREEN Europe. The REGIOSTARS Awards are a highly prestigious annual competition, organised by the European Commission's Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy.

BEGIN has piloted the co-creation and delivery of blue and green infrastructure (BGI) in 10 EU cities through partnerships between authorities, residents and stakeholders. BEGIN implements state of the art BGI such as green corridors and sustainable urban drainage systems to tackle extreme weather effects whilst enhancing local biodiversity and community cohesion. Through BEGIN, KCC has worked with local communities to design, deliver and maintain Sustainable Drainage retrofit projects at Bell Road, Sittingbourne; George Park, Margate; and Snipeshill, Sittingbourne.

## **Sustainable Business and Communities**

This report covers the first quarter of monitoring towards the KCC Net Zero by 2030 target. The baseline has been reset and the method of calculating emissions has changed compared to the previous greenhouse gas KPI, using an internationally accepted standard and latest emissions factors published by UK Government. The changes were explained in a paper presented to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in September.

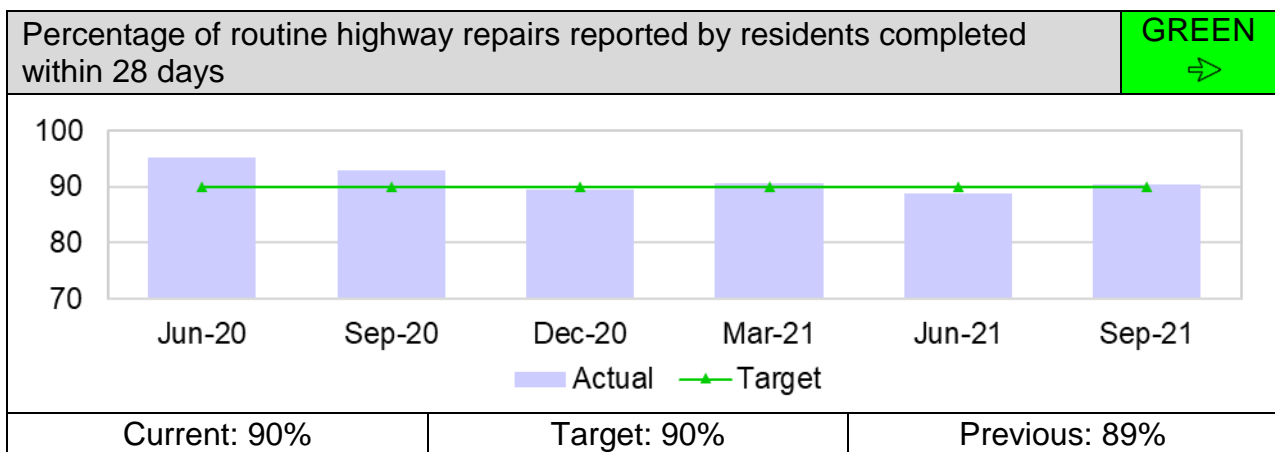
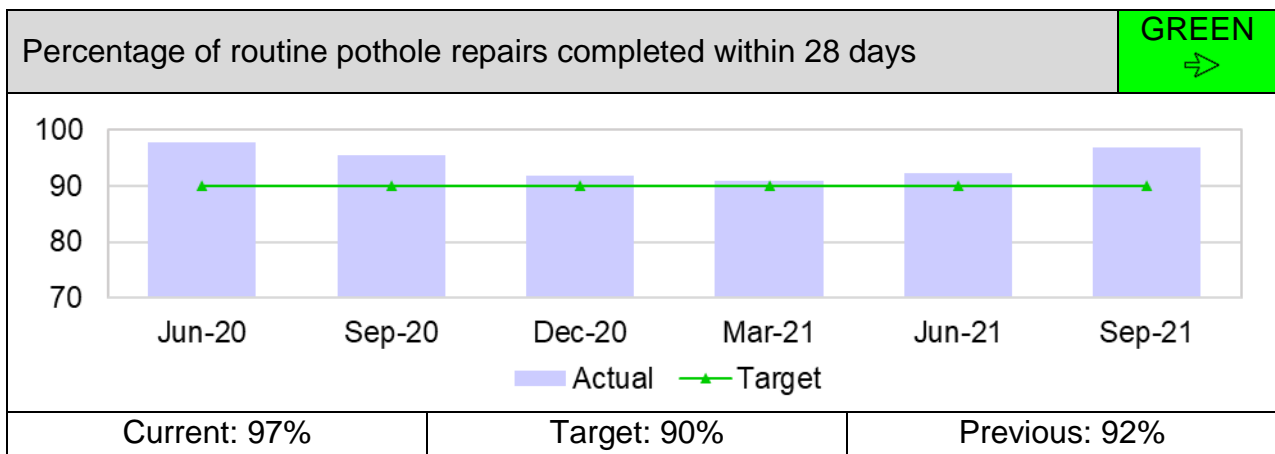
Energy projects continue to be delivered using Government grants of £20.6m for the KCC estate and £1.2m for the schools' estate, including a large solar park, low carbon heat pumps to replace aging boilers, rooftop solar and LED lighting. The Archbishop's School in Canterbury is the latest to benefit from LED lighting.

We continue to explore the potential for a solar for schools' programme, as well as signposting schools to new grant funding for low carbon heating like heat pumps.

The Solar Together Kent scheme has so far helped Kent residents install 1,949 panels on 170 homes, of which 110 include battery storage, reducing carbon emissions by 167 tonnes per annum.

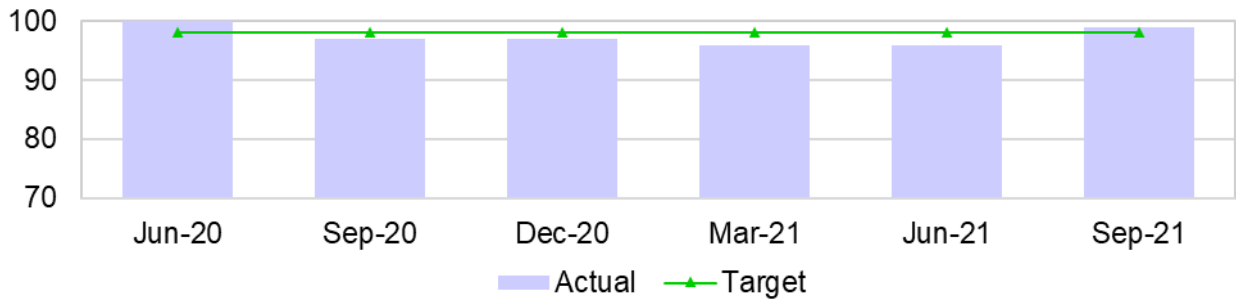
A further 63 SMEs have been supported with funding through The Low Carbon Across the South & East (LoCASE) programme, including the first five in our pan-LEP programme. Activity has been augmented by four partner launch events to raise awareness of opportunities. New projects South-East New Energy and C-Care have also grown the Low Carbon Kent project offering across the county. To date, 117 organisations have trialled a Kent REVS electric van for free, with over 50 more on the waiting list. New waste pilots to support Upcycle Your Waste and BLUEPRINT include a coffee cup recycling review in Canterbury and Repair Café concept in Swale.

### Key Performance Indicators



Emergency highway incidents attended within 2 hours of notification

GREEN  
⇒



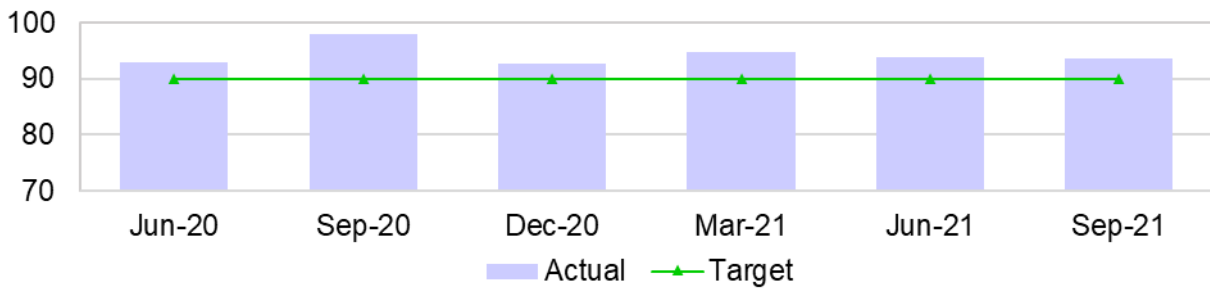
Current: 99%

Target: 98%

Previous: 96%

Percentage of satisfied callers for Kent Highways and Transportation, 100 call back survey

GREEN  
⇒



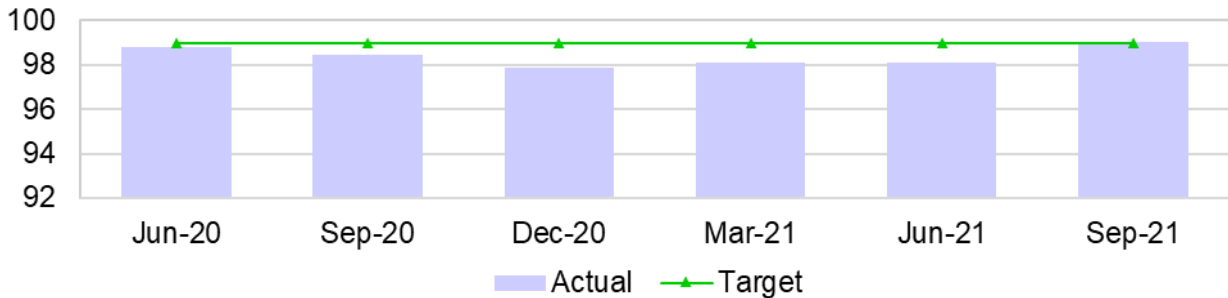
Current: 94%

Target: 85%

Previous: 94%

Percentage of municipal waste recycled or converted to energy and not taken to landfill – rolling 12 months

GREEN  
⇒



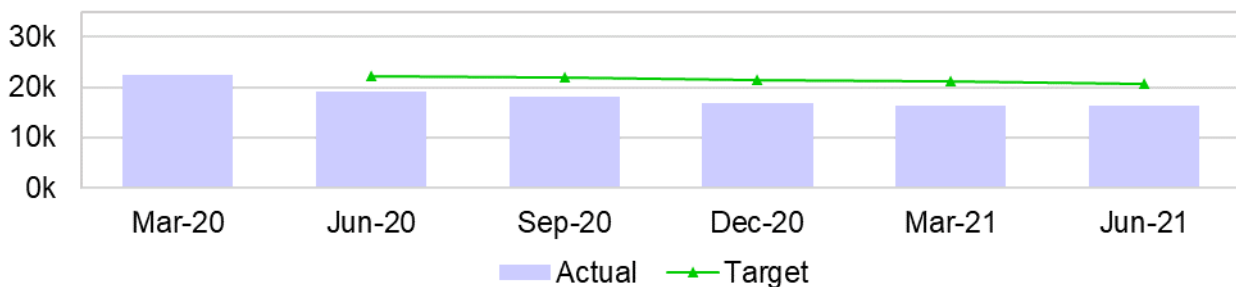
Current: 99.0%

Target: 99%

Previous: 98.1%

Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes – rolling 12 months

GREEN  
⇑



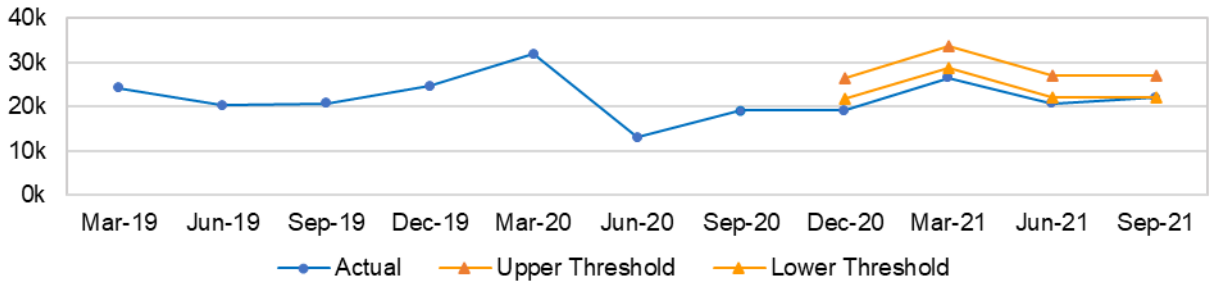
Current: 16,519

Target: 20,788

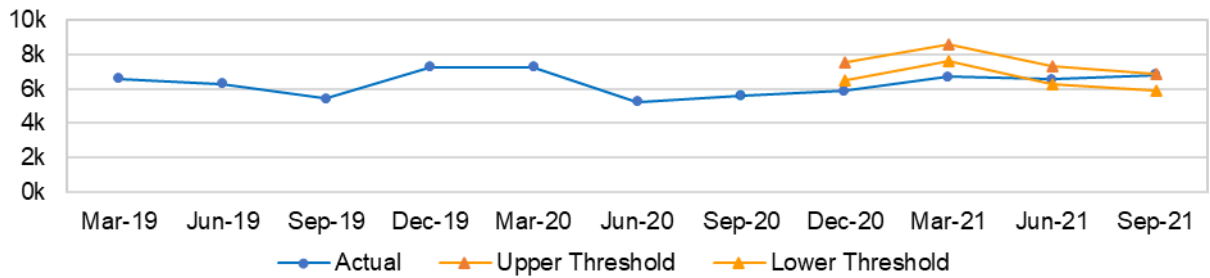
Previous: 16,251

## Activity indicators

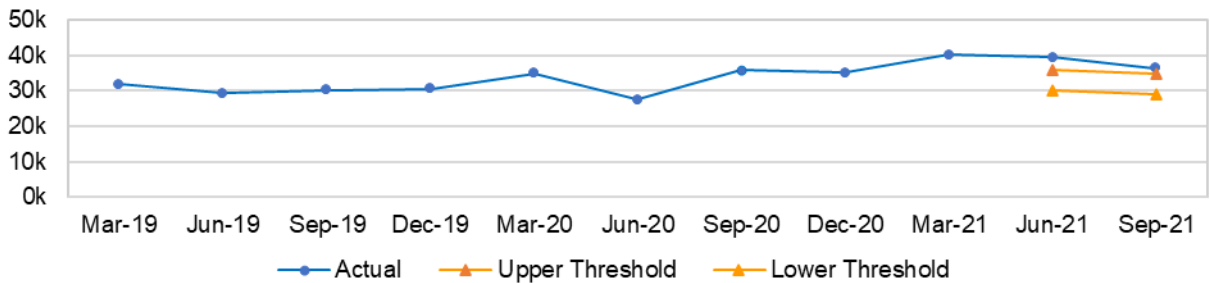
Number of Highways enquiries raised for action – by quarter



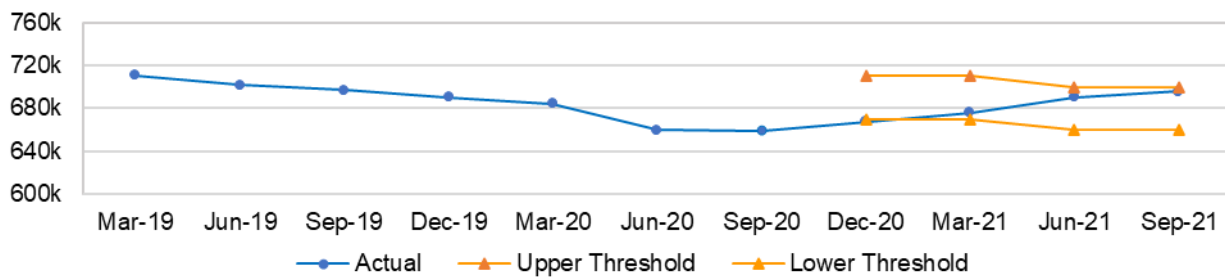
Highways Work in Progress (Routine and Programmed works)



Number of streetwork permits issued



Total municipal waste tonnage collected – rolling 12 months



Children, Young People and Education	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Shellina Prendergast, Sue Chandler
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Matt Dunkley

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	9	2	1	5	7	

## Schools

Attendance at primary and secondary schools as of 27<sup>th</sup> September was 90% based on 297 schools submitting their data to the Department for Education (DfE). All young people aged 16 and 17 years have been offered the coronavirus vaccine. This is being extended to children aged 12 to 15 years as part of the school-based COVID-19 vaccination programme. Vaccinating children should help to reduce the need for children to have time off school and should reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 within schools. The main purpose of the COVID-19 secondary schools vaccination programme is therefore to provide protection to the children who are vaccinated and to reduce the disruption to face to face education this winter.

For the second year there were no statutory tests and assessments for primary schools. Key Stage 4 (GCSE and equivalents) and Post-16 (A Level and equivalents) students were awarded grades based on teacher assessments.

Ofsted restarted their routine inspections in September 2021 for all school types and grades, having ceased their full programme of graded inspections in March 2020. Ofsted acknowledges *“Almost all pupils have missed considerable amounts of schooling since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. They may have missed learning important content or forgotten content that has not been used.”* Inspectors will consider whether school leaders are using strategies that are having a positive impact on pupils’ learning and how they identify, and then address, gaps in pupils’ knowledge. Based on the latest inspection data as at the end of August 2021, 92% of schools in Kent (531 of the 580) were Good or Outstanding, compared to the national figure of 86%. The percentage of Primary schools judged as Good or Outstanding at 93% compares favourably to the national figure of 88%. 87% of Secondary schools were judged to be Good or Outstanding compared to 76% nationally. The percentage for Special schools at 96% was six percentage points higher than the national position.

During the last quarter the overarching priority was to assist schools in mitigating the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting school leaders to benchmark provision against other schools and formulate plans for September. This has supported schools to be in a good position this term. Headteacher wellbeing has continued to be a significant issue with the service is supporting and monitoring as much as possible.

This Quarter, headteacher recruitment has taken place in both primary and secondary schools. School improvement visits have fully resumed on site. Improvement advisers attended five primary school inspections during this period (in addition to feedback) supporting headteachers to provide additional evidence and highlighting the interim guidance on curriculum and phonics to lead inspectors. Network meetings for secondary curriculum leaders of maths and English continued with the emphasis being on support for schools in the absence of examination information.

## **School Places and Admissions**

For primary schools admissions in September 2021, 97.7% of applicants were offered a place at one of their three named schools with 89.2% securing their first preference. 95.4% of Kent families were offered a place at one of the secondary schools they selected. As parents/carers selected their six secondary schools before knowing their child's Kent Test results, for some, their child did not end up being eligible for their first preference and as a result, the percentage of pupils offered a place at their first preference school at 69.7% of the Kent cohort was significantly lower than last year's 77.7%.

## **Early Years**

Unlike schools, all Early Years settings were advised to remain open during the last coronavirus lockdown. Ofsted has resumed inspections, and the latest inspection data for the percentage of Early Years settings rated Good or Outstanding at 98%, in line with the target, and one percentage point above National.

2,651 two-year olds have been funded through the Free for Two (FF2) scheme equating to a 52.8% take up. This is an increase of 15.5 percentage points compared to the same period last year. The increase is in part due to increasing the duration that the FF2 provider portal was open for claims.

Supply and demand have continued to be regularly monitored, with supply still steadily meeting demand. The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment for 2021/22 has now been completed and in general terms shows an ongoing strong supply of provision. During July, August and September, the Childcare Market in Kent continued to present as recovering and coping reasonably well, however longer-term financial viability and sustainability may yet present as issues and are still being closely observed. Early years and childcare group providers and eligible childminders have been invited to apply for COMF (Contain Outbreak Management Funding) to support, as far as possible, Covid preventative and safe environments and also restorative activities and support for children and their families. There have been the established regular communications with the Early Years and Childcare Sector as a whole, including the weekly 'Early Years and Childcare COVID-19 Blog', a monthly generic Early Years and Childcare Bulletin and ongoing contact with individual providers as appropriate and necessary. The Early Years and Childcare Service's Threads of Success training offer continues to be delivered largely on virtual platforms (although with the resumption of some face to face), including support for providers ahead of and in readiness for the new Early Years Foundation Stage which commenced in September, including Ofsted inspections being based on this from that point.

## **Skills and Employability**

The number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) is not reported for September because there are annual fluctuations in the NEET cohort. The number of NEETs rises over the summer months due to school and college leavers and increases significantly in September as new data is processed and young people find new learning and training placements. The three-month average for December to February, which the DfE uses as its performance measure, shows Kent to be 7.5%. compared to national figure 5.5% for the combined NEETS and not knowns measure.

A new suite of information pages which will sit in front of the KentChoices area prospectus/online application system was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> November which coincided with the start of open evenings/events in secondary schools. This academic year, as well as the usual college and 6<sup>th</sup> form applications, young people are now able to apply

for apprenticeships and training courses through these pages. The team have also prepared a wealth of resources and careers information for schools, young people and parents. These will complement school events and add value to the school improvement team's strategic priority for destinations.

Of the September Guarantee cohort, 93% has received a positive September Guarantee offer compared to 91.2% this time last year.

The impact of the NEET Deep Dive has been that £2m has been made available to Kent for training provision for NEET young people. Training providers can bid for the money, and there is a chance this may be increased to £3m.

There has been a further integration of the NEET Support Service, Young People's Participation Officers Team, and the Engagement Officers. There is now a more streamlined process for learners moving through the service; for those who are identified as NEET by the YPPO team and those who are identified as being at risk of NEET in school. The impact will be a rapid and improved learner journey through the service. The work carried out to prepare for the GCSE period was very successful. The service-wide planning was widely complimented by schools and parents.

The development and integration of the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) has continued in line with the Post-16 white paper. The CEC is integrating more closely with S&E service and the service is preparing for the transition into Careers Hubs in line with the national agenda. This is in line with careers and destinations being a focus point for Ofsted and a school improvement priority. The team supported the end of the current phase of the 16-19 review and the recommendations have been shared. The team will continue to work very closely with KCC to implement as necessary. The Education People (TEP) presented at the last meeting of The Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO) and some providers have already reached out to offer training provision to vulnerable young people.

The long-awaited government guidelines on flexi apprenticeships has now been published. The service is working to submit an application to deliver the flexi apprenticeship which supports the priority to make apprenticeships more attractive to small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This is particularly important for more vulnerable young people who are less likely to thrive in large organisations.

### **SEND (Special Educational Need and Disability)**

Based on the rolling 12-month average to September 2021, 40.2% of EHCPs were issued within 20 weeks excluding exceptions (1,168 out of 2,908) an increase of 3 percentage points on the previous quarter. In the single month of September, performance was 49.8% with 102 plans out of 205 being issued within timescale.

The service remains focused on clearing the backlog of assessments over 20 weeks. However, the backlog has increased slightly this quarter due to the Education Psychology (EP) service dealing with new assessments as a priority from September 2021, and the requests before that date adding to their backlog. This should be cleared by January 2022 by the EP service, and then passed to the SEN service to continue their work on these cases, meaning the full backlog should be completely cleared by June 2022.

Work continues to improve the quality of EHC plans issued. The SEND Service has launched and is embedding the use of a commercial online platform (Innovate Invision). This platform uses a quality assurance framework which uses a weighting system which enables faster and more complex analysis of areas of strength and areas requiring further improvement. In addition, the platform allows representatives from



SEN, health, parent groups and social care to QA plans remotely during an auditing cycle, with nominated 'auditors' given access to the system. We are now on our third round of auditing with regular moderation events planned.

The number of requests for Statutory Assessment (EHC needs assessment) remains high, though the monthly average for requests dropped to 285, down from a monthly average of 338 the previous quarter, mainly impacted by the school summer holidays. In the latest quarter, 68% of assessment requests came from parents. Work is taking place to better understand the reasons for such high levels of requests, which continue to put strain on the service.

### **Wider Early Help**

Fifteen pupils were permanently excluded for the rolling 12-month period to September 2021, three 'primary' phase and twelve 'secondary' phase pupils. The percentage of pupils excluded from school equates to 0.01%. 28 pupils were excluded in the previous 12 months. The reduction is related to the 'National Lockdown 3.0' school closures which resulted in 39 school days lost to all pupils with exception to 'key worker' and 'vulnerable' children from 5 January 2021 to 5 March 2021.

The number of first-time entrants (FTE) in Kent had previously been increasing but this is the second quarter where the rolling 12-month figure shows a decline, this time from 263 to 239.

While national data from Police National Computer remains unavailable, Kent's own systems provide an indicative number of First Time Entrants and illustrate, between July and September, the lowest numbers of FTEs for two years. We were hoping for this outcome based on an increase in our evidence based restorative justice approaches. We continue to collaborate with the Police to work towards operational implementation of Outcome 22, which should realise a sustained reduction in First Time Entrants.

We have been enhancing the reporting functionality from our Core+ system to provide detailed accurate caseload and demographic reports. This will enable the service to have better oversight of our assessed risk of harm, safeguarding and re-offending profiles of the cohort; gender; age; legal status (child in need; child protection and child in care) and ethnicity and engagement with education, training and employment (ETE). Ethnicity data will be used to continue our scrutiny of disproportionality within the justice system and support our future deep dive into the outcomes of BAME children, so we can identify any lessons to learn. Our ETE data will assist us to benchmark and monitor if the commissioning of engagement provision improves, or not, the ETE outcomes of children in the youth justice system.

## **Early Help**

At the end of September 2021, 2,589 families were open to Early Help units, providing support for 5,466 children and young people under the age of 18. This is a 14.6% decrease in the number of families supported compared to the end of the previous quarter (3,033 families).

The performance measure for 'Percentage of Early Help cases closed with outcomes achieved that come back to Early Help / Social Work teams within 3 months' was 13.2% for the rolling 12 months to September 2021, continuing to achieve the target of below 15.0%.

## **Children's Social Care - Staffing and Caseloads**

The number of open cases (including those for care leavers above the age of 18) was 11,405 as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, a reduction of 267 (2.3%) children and young people when compared to end of the previous quarter (11,672).

There were 4,501 referrals to children's social care services in the quarter, a decrease of 10.5% when compared to the previous quarter (5,027), and a decrease of 14.2% compared to July-September 2020 (5,244). The rate of re-referrals within 12 months for the 12 months to September 2021 was 24.1%, achieving the target of below 25.0%. This compares to the England average of 22.6% for 2019/20.

The percentage of case-holding social worker posts held by permanent qualified social workers has remained stable and above the target of 85.0%. Whilst the rate of 90.5% is a reduction from the 92.6% achieved in June 2021 this is likely to increase with the seasonal recruitment of Newly Qualified Social Workers. The proportion of case-holding social work posts filled by agency staff increased slightly in the quarter, from 13.5% at the end of June 2021 to 13.7% at the end of September 2021, which is an increase of 0.8 full time equivalent post. The average caseload for Social Workers in Children's Social Work Teams decreased by 0.4 cases in the quarter, from 21.2 cases in June 2021 to 20.8 cases in September 2021, remaining above the target of 18 cases.

## **Child Protection**

On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 there were 1,246 children subject to a child protection plan, an increase of 6 from the end of the previous quarter (1,240). The rate per 10,000 children (aged 0-17) was 36.3, which remains below the last published rate for England of 42.8, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The percentage of children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time reduced in the quarter, from 20.5% in June 2021 to 20.1% in September 2021, remaining within the target range of between 17.5% and 22.5%. This compares to an average for England of 21.9% (March 2020).

## Children in Care

The number of citizen children in care decreased by 5 in the quarter, to 1,379. The number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) in care decreased by 28 in the quarter to 350. The number of children in care placed in Kent by other local authorities (OLA) increased by 58 during the quarter, from 1,194 to 1,252.

Status	Dec 20	Mar 21	Jun 21	Sep 21
Citizen	1,370	1,373	1,384	1,379
UASC	411	277	378	350
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,781</b>	<b>1,650</b>	<b>1,762</b>	<b>1,729</b>
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	1,157	1,039	1,131	1,098
Female	624	611	631	629
Indeterminate				2
<b>Age Group</b>				
0 to 4	203	219	223	221
5 to 9	188	188	193	189
10 to 15	676	651	691	691
16 to 17	714	592	655	628
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
White	1,201	1,212	1,233	1,213
Mixed	102	90	87	96
Asian	88	66	84	72
Black	109	71	78	58
Other	281	211	280	290

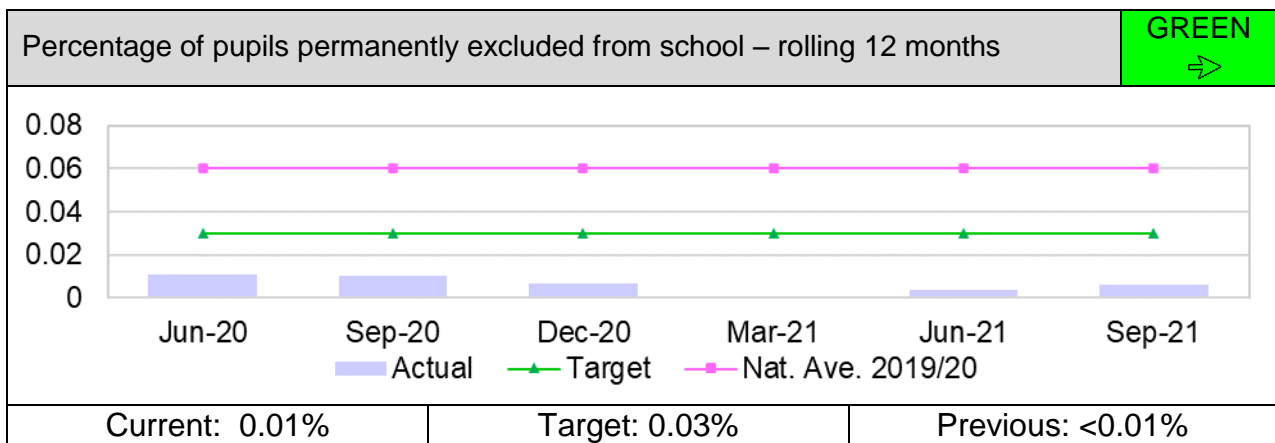
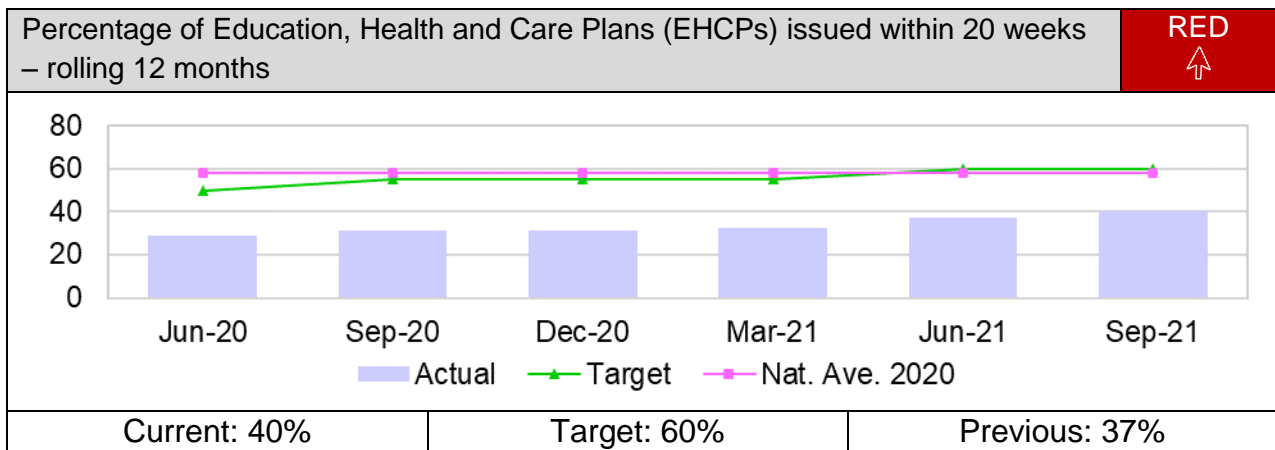
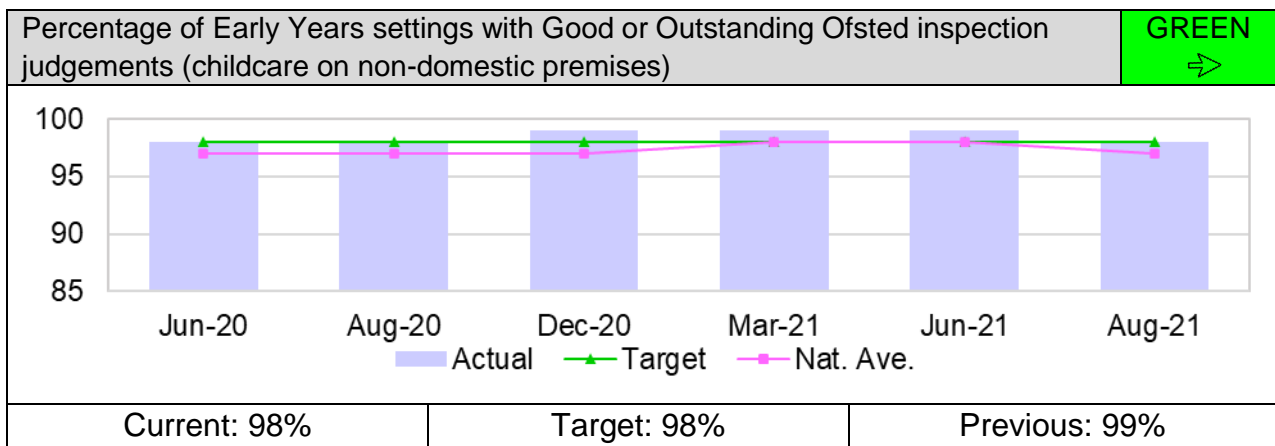
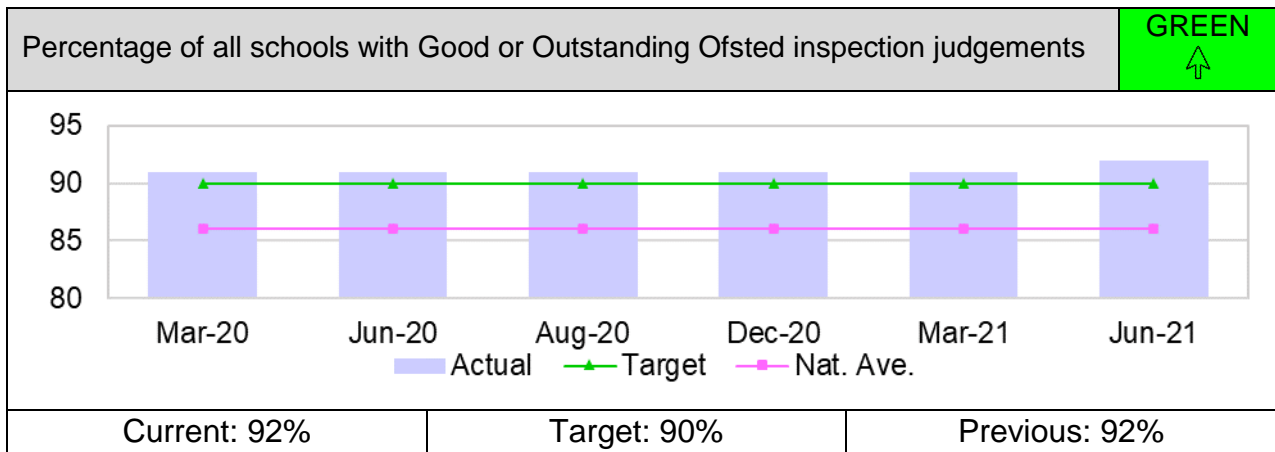
The percentage of Kent's children placed in KCC in-house foster care or with family/friends has remained stable, 79.6% for September 2021 compared to 79.4% at the end of the previous Quarter. This remains below the target of 85.0%.

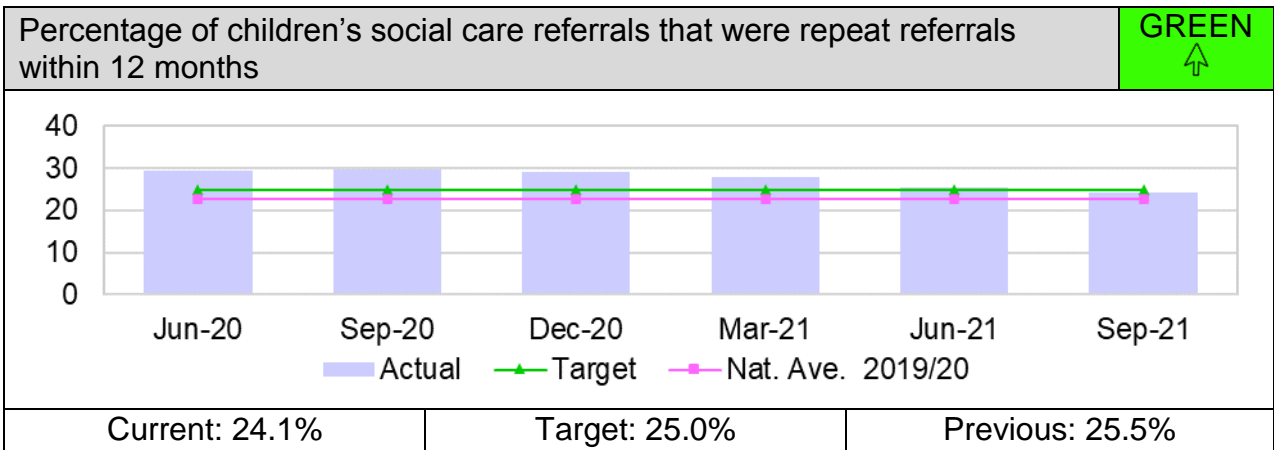
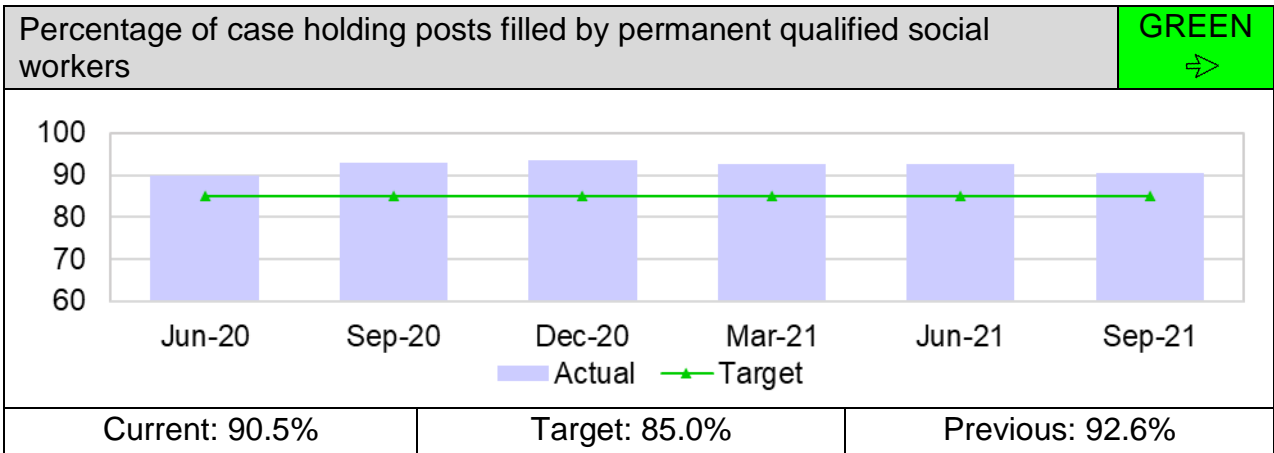
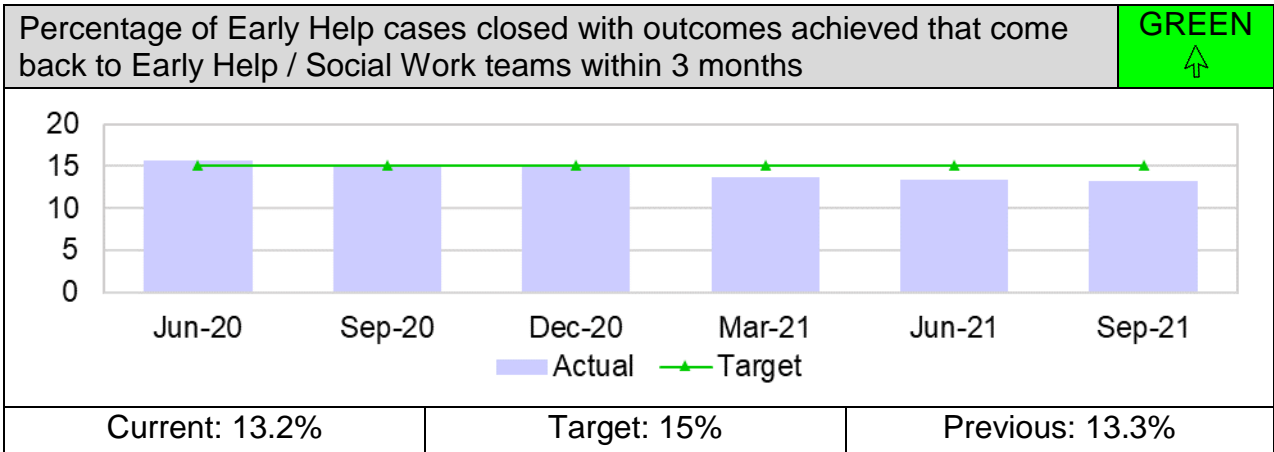
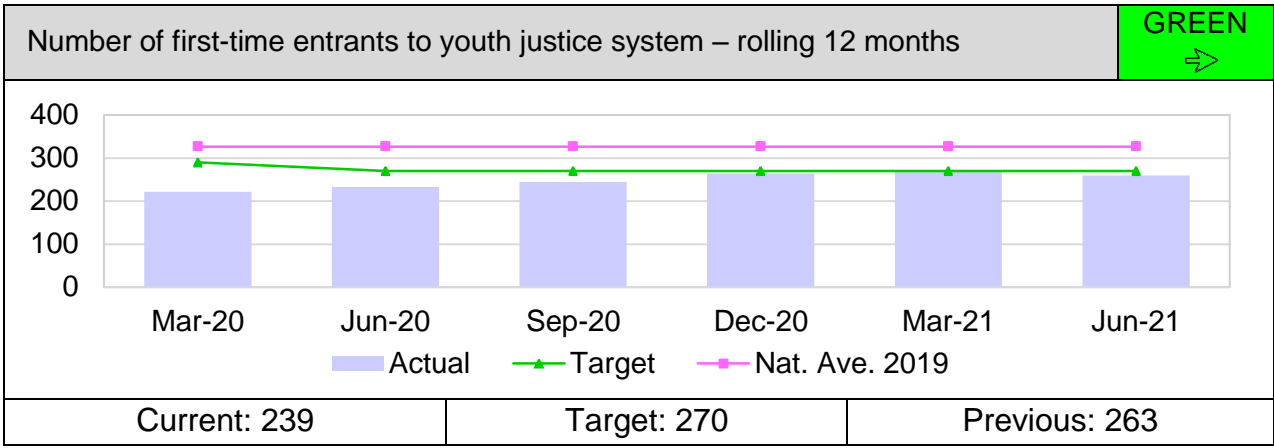
For children who were adopted in the last 12 months the average number of days between coming into care and moving in with their adoptive family continues to outperform the nationally set target of 426 days. The average number of days for Kent's children at the end of September 2021 was 317 days, which is an increase in the number of days when compared to June 2021 (269). The decrease in this timeliness measure is the result to delays in court hearings due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

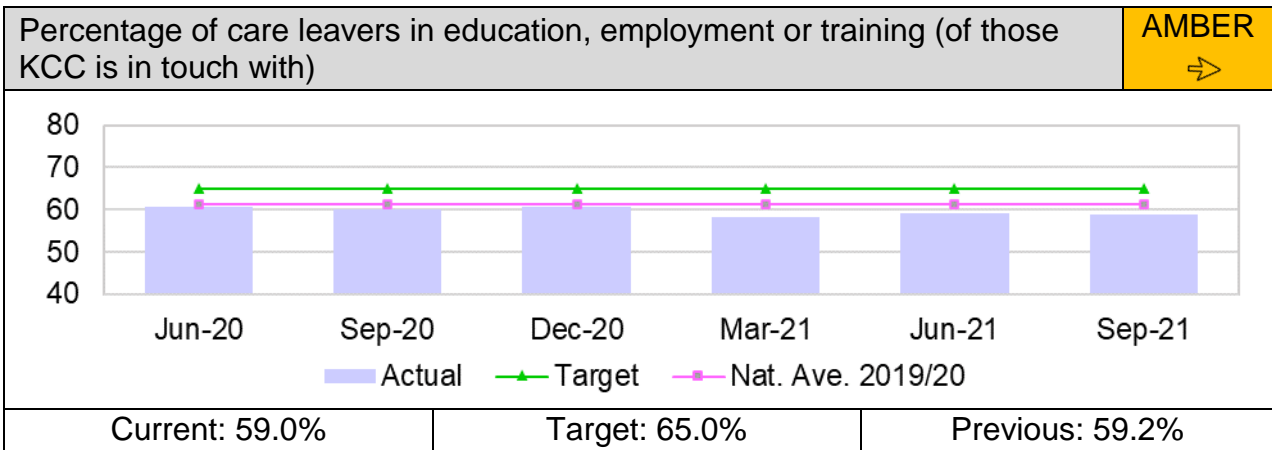
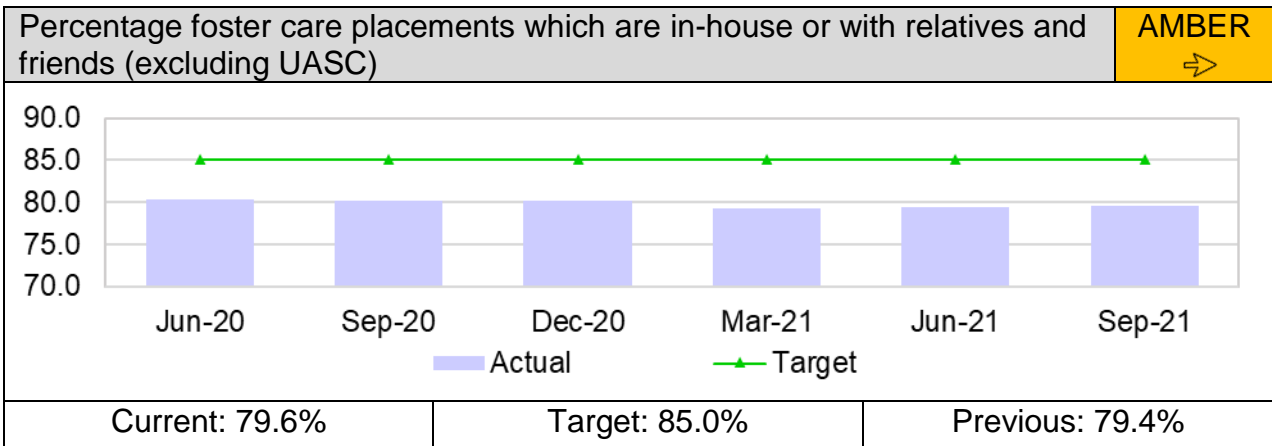
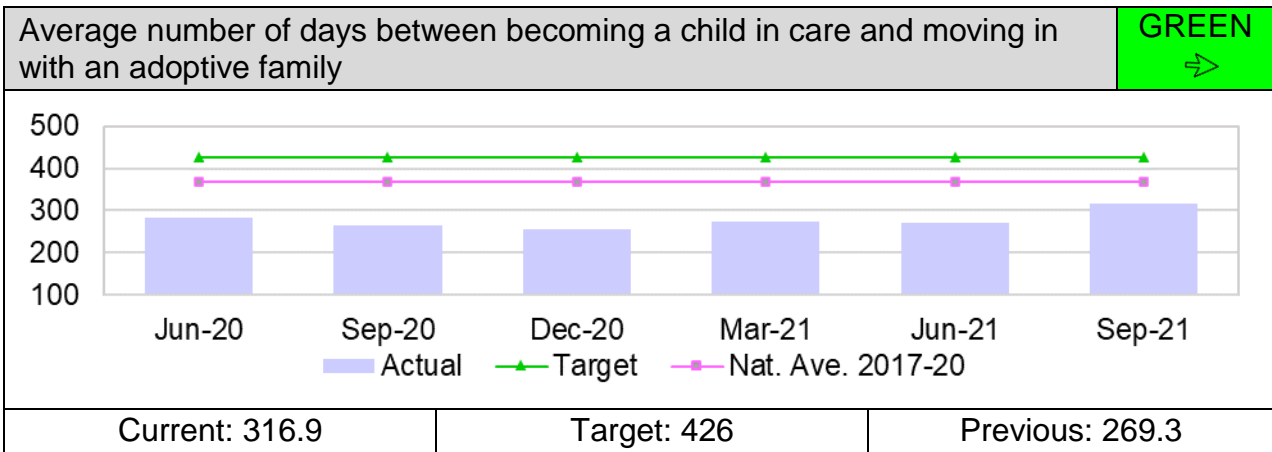
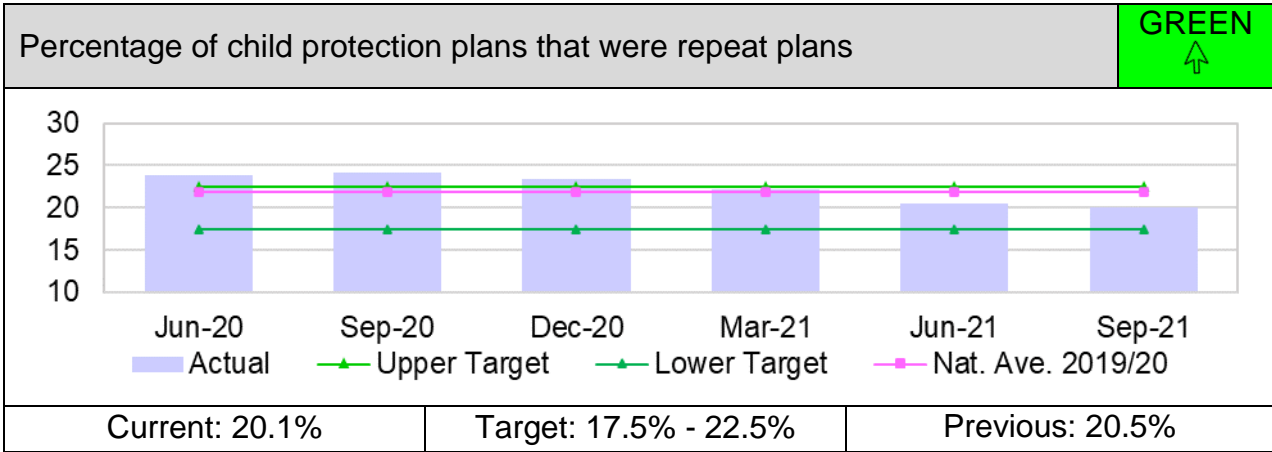
## Care Leavers

The number of care leavers at the end of September 2021 was 2,051 which is an increase of 10 from the previous quarter (2,041). Of the 2,051 Care leavers 976 (48%) were citizen care leavers and 1,075 (52%) were unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training remained stable in the Quarter, 59.2% in June 2021 to 59.0% in September 2021, remaining below the 65.0% target.

## Key Performance Indicators

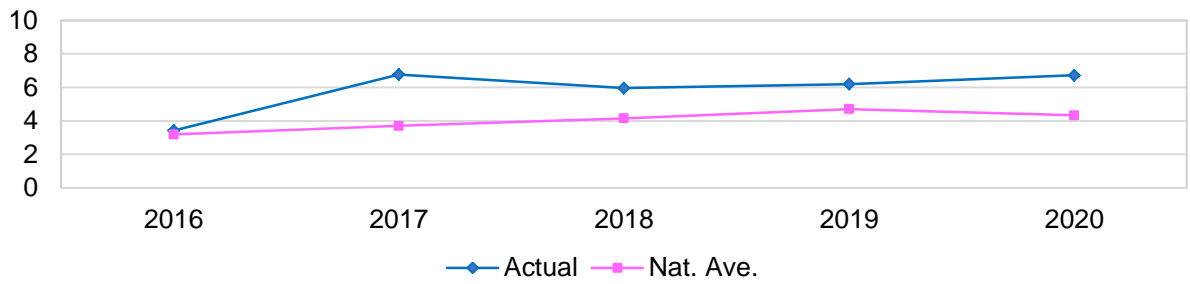




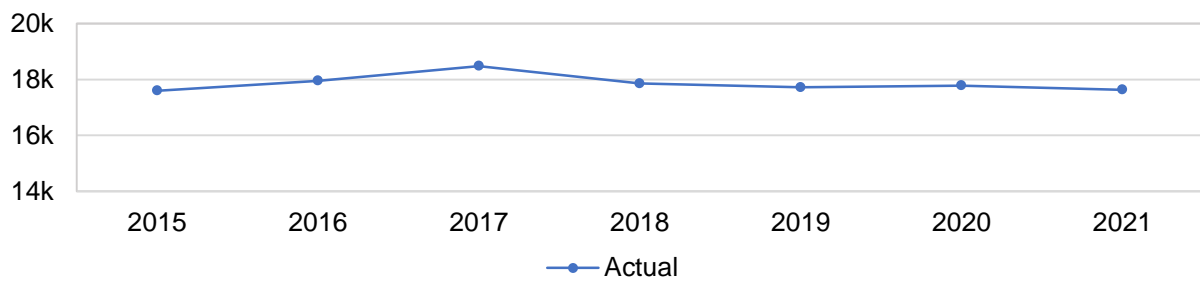


## Activity indicators

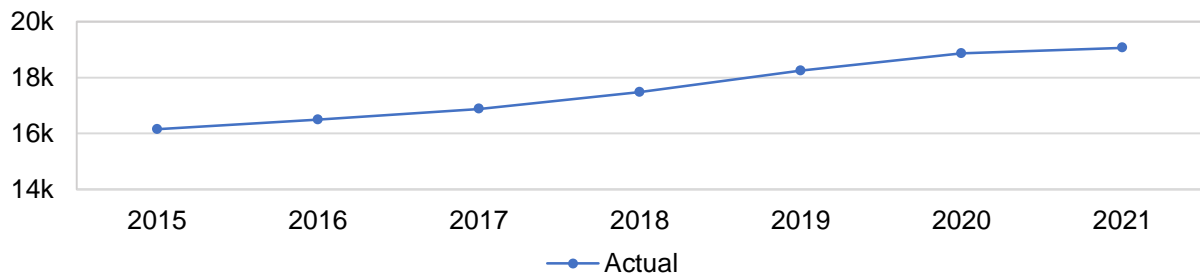
Number of initial requests for statutory assessment (for an EHC plan) per 1,000 population



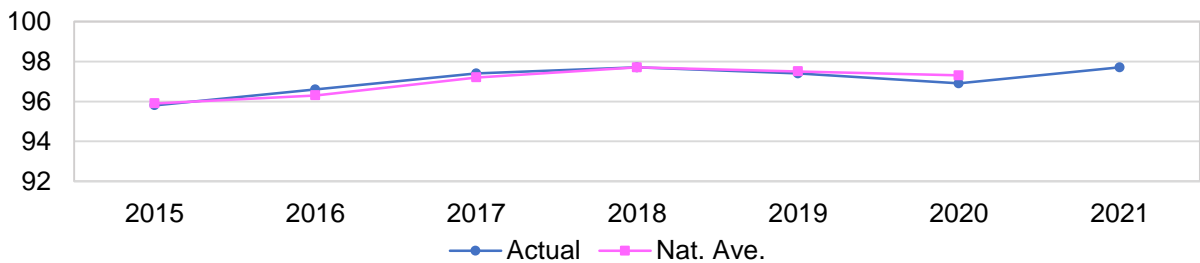
Number of pupils in Reception year (Kent state funded schools)



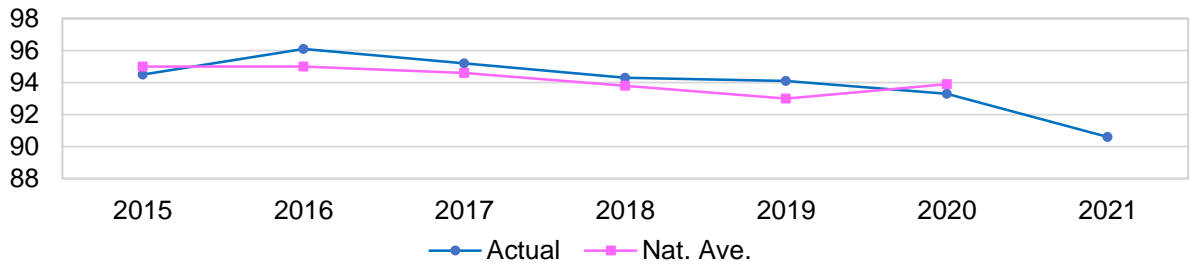
Number of pupils in Year 7 (Kent state funded schools)



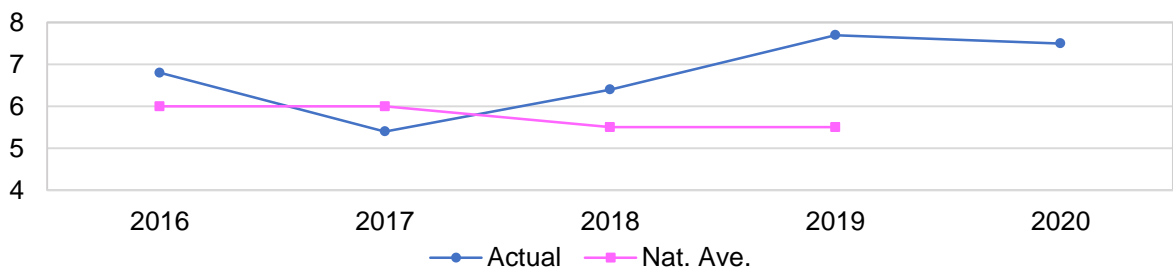
Percentage of Primary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



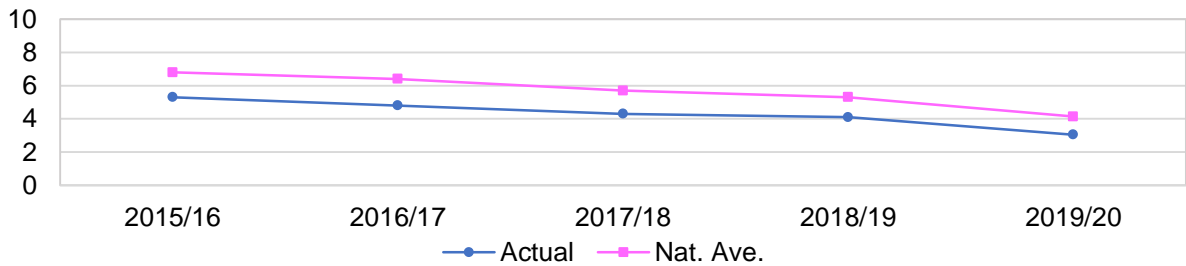
Percentage of Secondary school applicants offered one of top three preferences



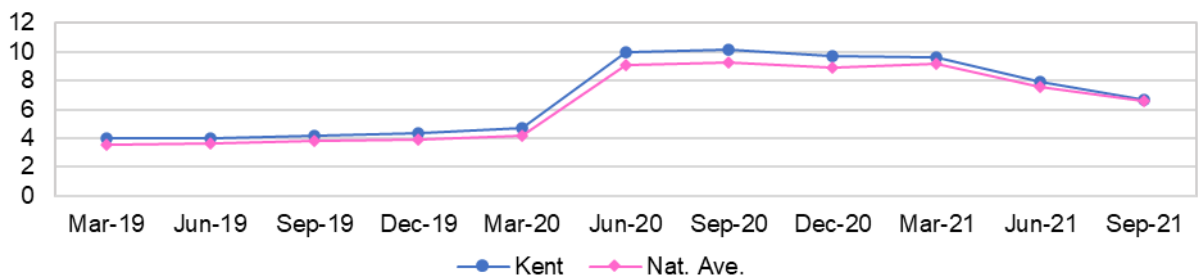
Percentage of 16-17 years olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs) or whose activity is Not Known



Percentage of 16-18 year olds who start an apprenticeship

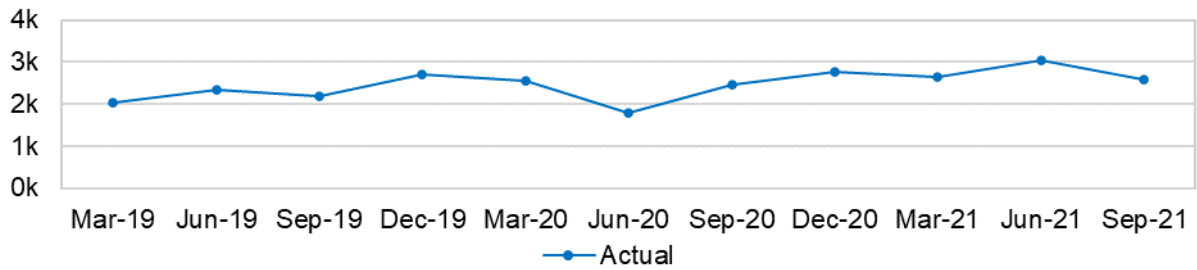


Percentage of 18-24 year olds claiming Universal Credit

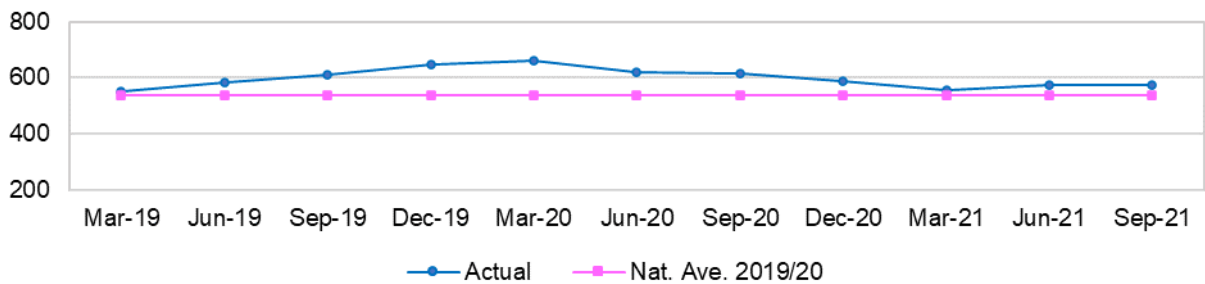




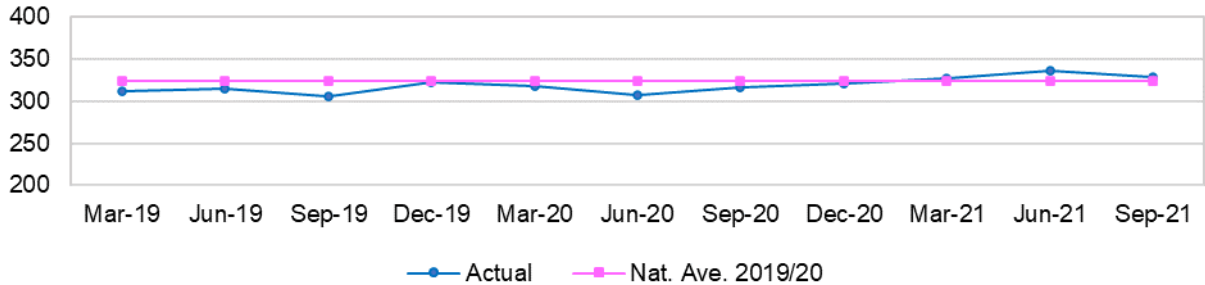
### Number of open Early Help cases managed by Units



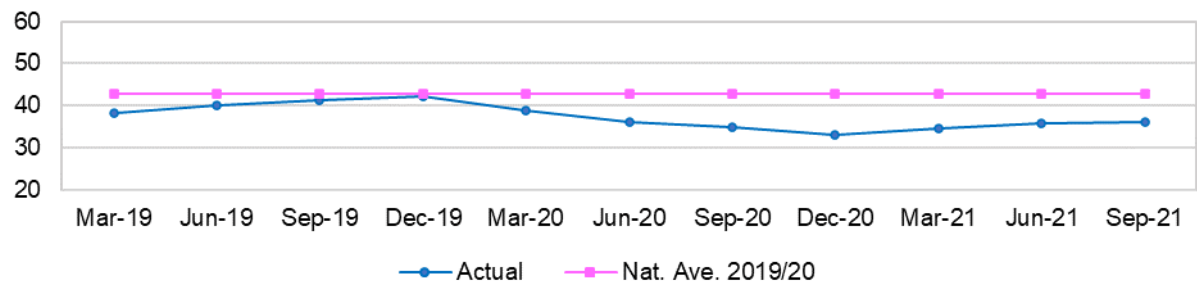
### Rate of CSW referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18 – rolling 12 months



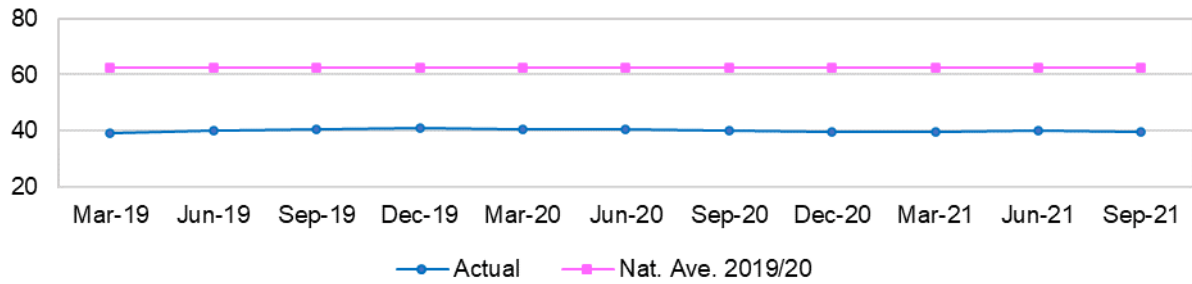
### CSW caseload per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



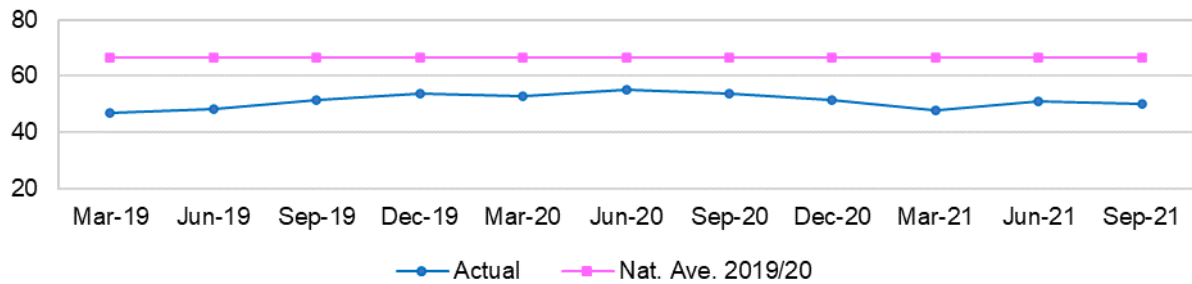
### Rate of children with Child Protection Plans per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



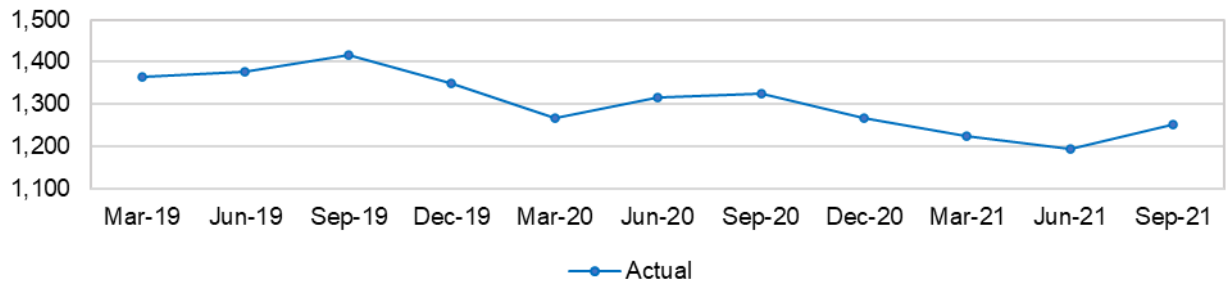
Rate of Children in Care (excluding UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



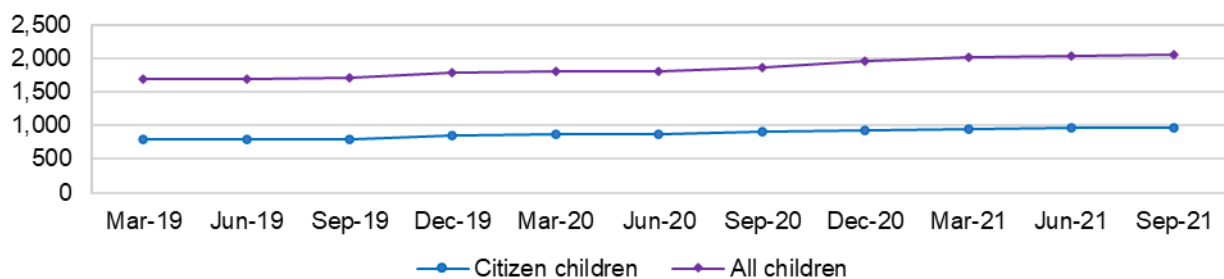
Rate of Children in Care (including UASC) per 10,000 child population – snapshot at quarter end



Number of other local authority children in care placed into Kent – snapshot at quarter end



Number of care leavers as at quarter end



<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Clair Bell
<b>Corporate Director</b>	Richard Smith

KPI Summary	<b>GREEN</b>	<b>AMBER</b>	<b>RED</b>	↑	⇒	↓
	4	1		2	2	1

Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) continues to monitor and manage the changes in demand and activity caused by the pandemic and the following easing of lockdown restrictions. Some of the significant changes seen during the pandemic, such as decreases in the provision of residential and nursing care, have now shown signs of change although the significant increase in demand for homecare seen throughout the pandemic has continued to remain high in this quarter. Whilst demand has fluctuated over 2021, it continues to increase overall, and ASCH and Commissioning continue to work with providers and the ASC market to ensure people receive the support they need.

There were waves of higher demand for short-term services during the Pandemic, particularly when hospitals discharged patients in order to increase capacity in preparation for anticipated increases in demand for beds. Although Quarter 2 has seen a decrease in demand for short term services, it is anticipated this will increase with the onset of winter pressures. ASCH are working closely with the NHS, CCGs and Providers to ensure plans are in place to deal with the increase with a system-wide response.

A key area that has seen significant growth is demand for mental health support. The increase accelerated during the pandemic and continues to grow with over 1,200 people receiving support in Quarter 2, the majority being supported through Supporting Independence Services and Supported Living. Not only has the number of people requiring assistance increased, but so has the amount of support per week required: on average 25.4 hours per week were provided compared with 18.4 for the same period last year.

Short term and enablement services continue to demonstrate good outcomes for those receiving them, In Quarter 2, 67% of people received lower levels or no ongoing support after finishing with our enablement teams, while 89% of people aged over 65 years old were still at home 92 days after being discharged from hospital and having received an enablement service in Quarter 1 (latest available data).

For those in short term services who did need further support, 88% received this via community-based support such as Care and Support in the Home (CSiH). The remaining 12% required long term support in residential or nursing homes.

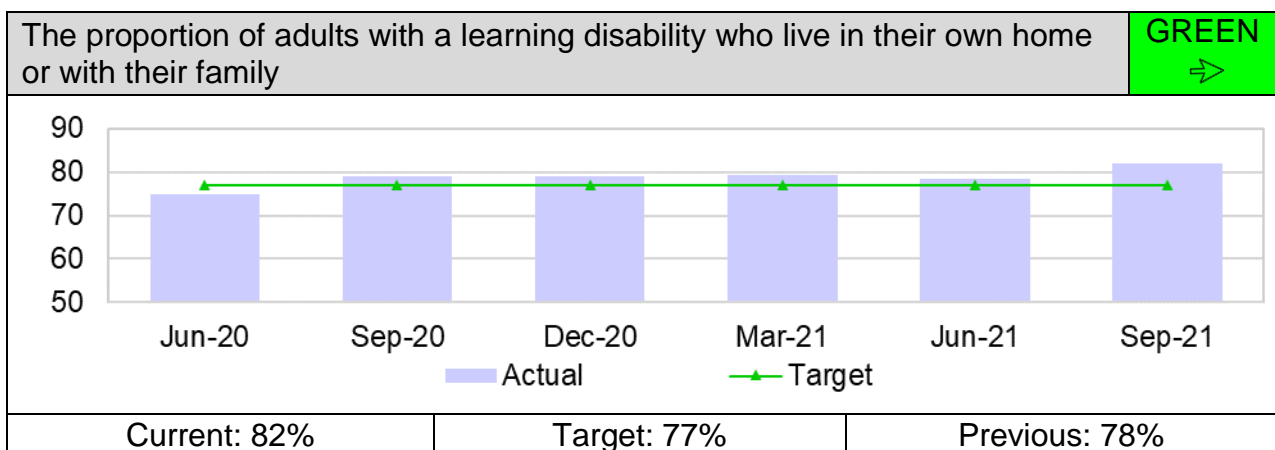
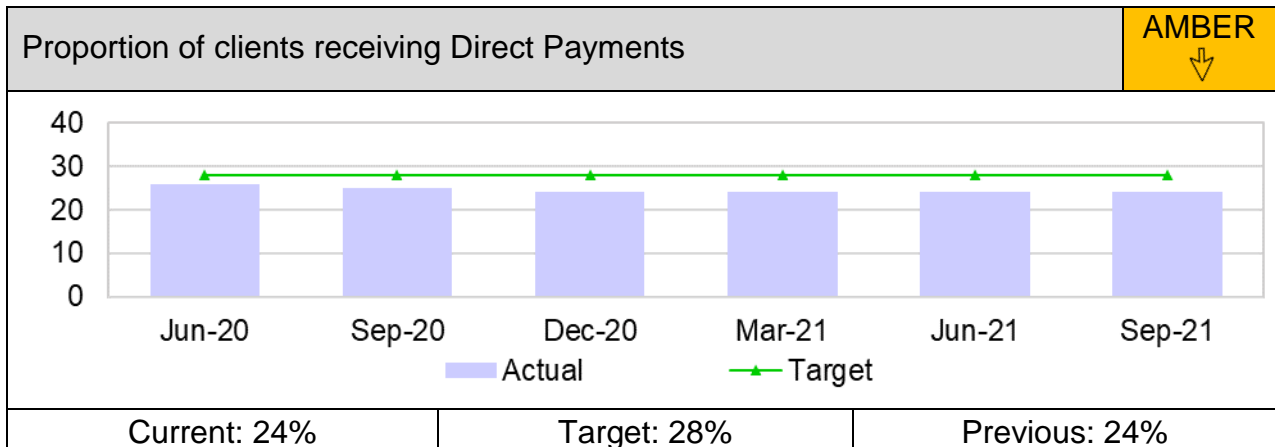
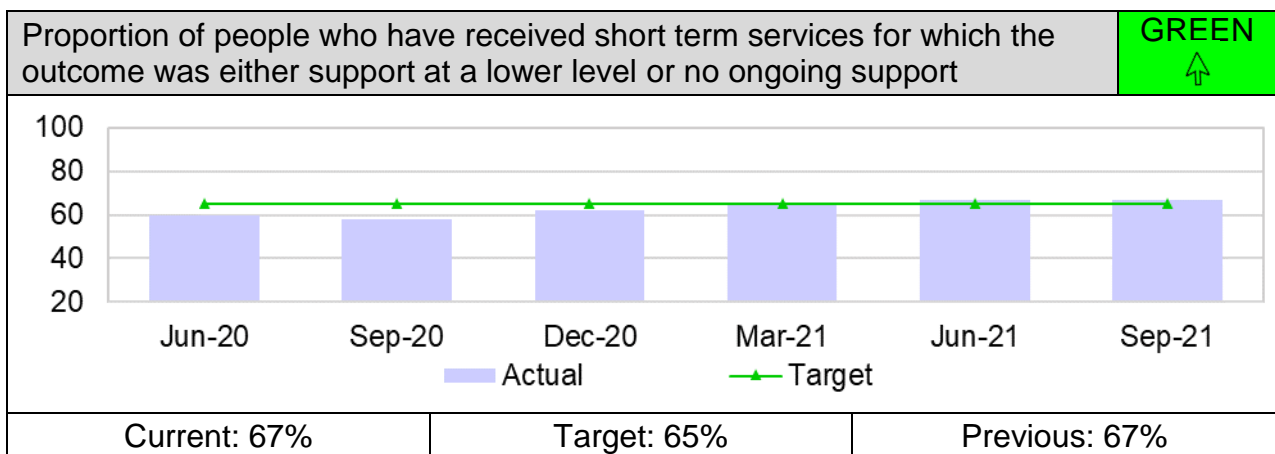
The proportion of people in receipt of a Direct Payment stayed stable into Quarter 2 at 24%. National benchmarking information for 2020/21 (which includes direct payment usage by younger adults (aged 18-24) shows that Kent is in a strong position, ranked 59<sup>th</sup> out of 150 nationally at 28.0% compared with the National proportion of 26.6%.

During Quarter 2, there was an increase in the proportion of people placed by ASCH in CQC Rated Good or Outstanding residential or nursing homes; there was a particular

decrease in the proportion of those in homes rated “Requires Improvement” which decreased from 19% to 15%.

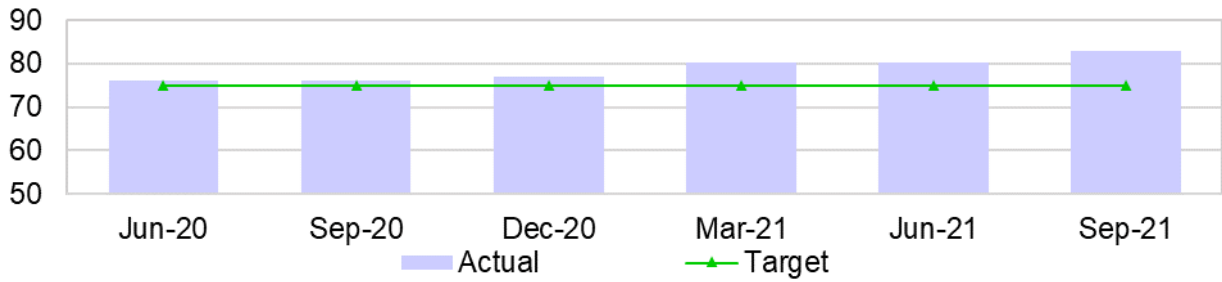
Work continues to be undertaken to increase the number of carers who are receiving a service but have not had a review in the last 12 months. This includes our commissioned carers organisations receiving refresher training on delivering and recording reviews while a programme of work to undertake reviews across our services is being implemented which will see the number of reviews undertaken increase. A new Carers Strategy will be consulted on and work currently in progress on the National Carers Survey will be used to inform the strategy as well as other work using feedback provided by Carers on their experiences over the last 12 months.

### Key Performance Indicators



Proportion of KCC clients in residential or nursing care where the CQC rating is Good or Outstanding

**GREEN**  
↑



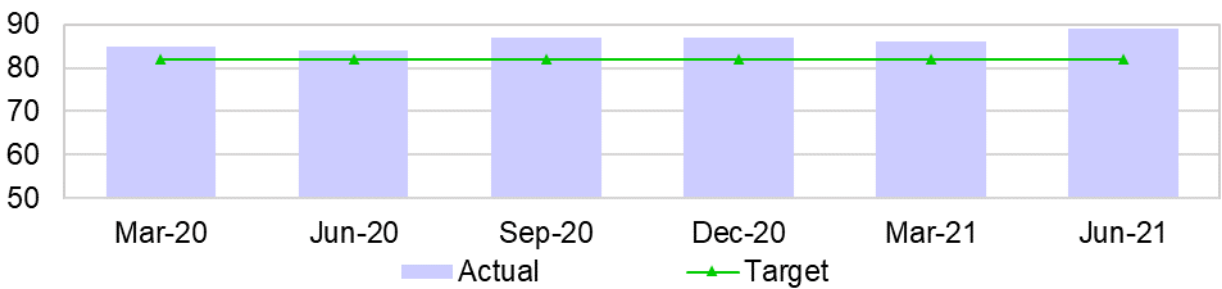
Current: 83%

Target: 75%

Previous: 80%

Proportion of older people (65+) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement / rehabilitation services

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⇒



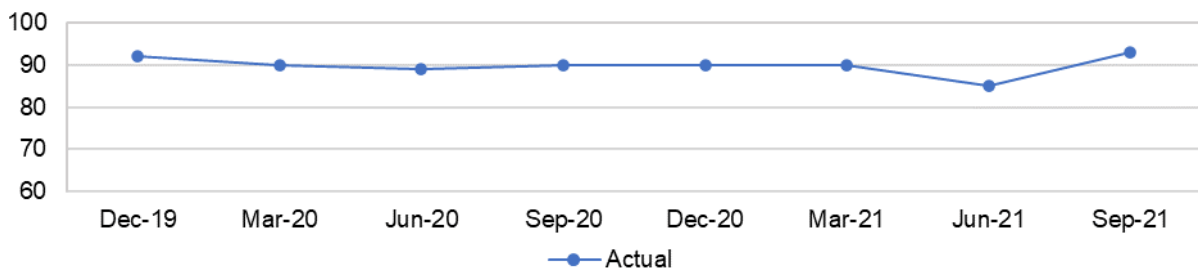
Current: 89%

Target: 82%

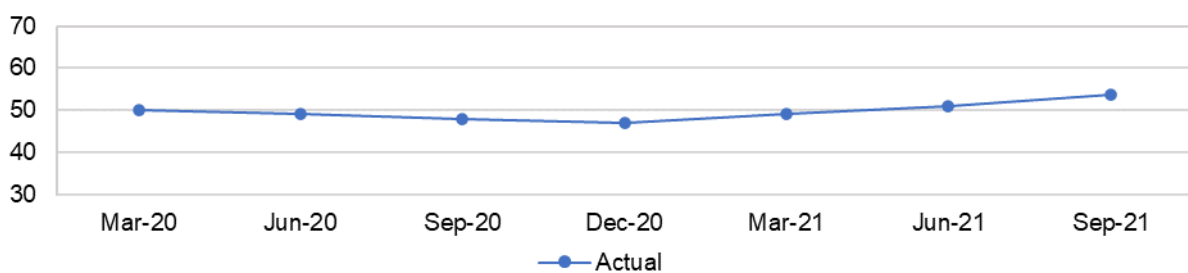
Previous: 86%

### Activity indicators

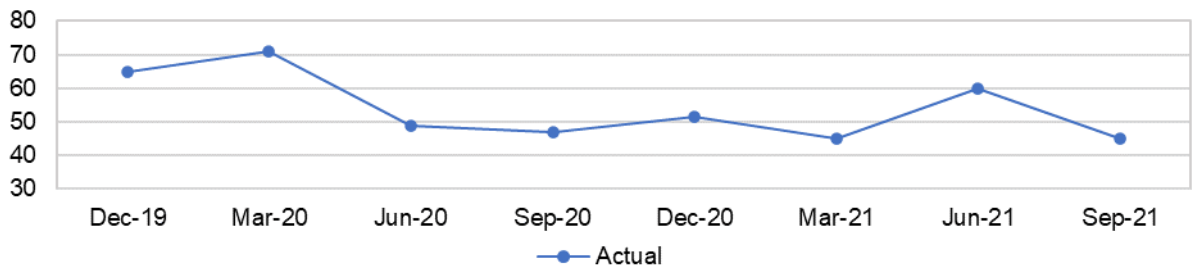
Percentage of Safeguarding enquires where a risk was identified, and the risk was either removed or reduced



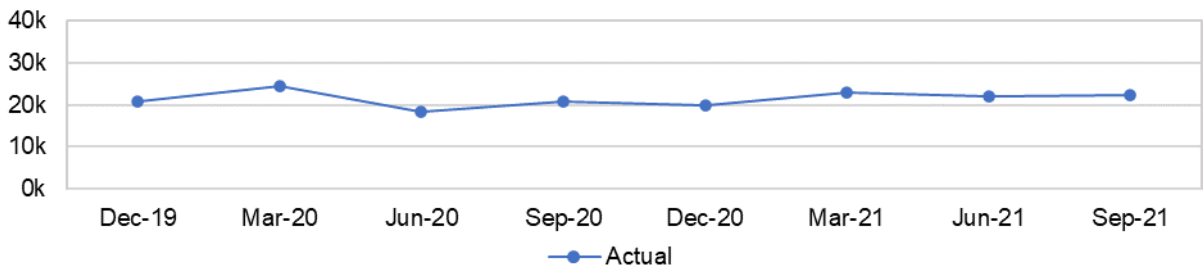
Percentage of carers who are receiving services, and who had an assessment or review during the year



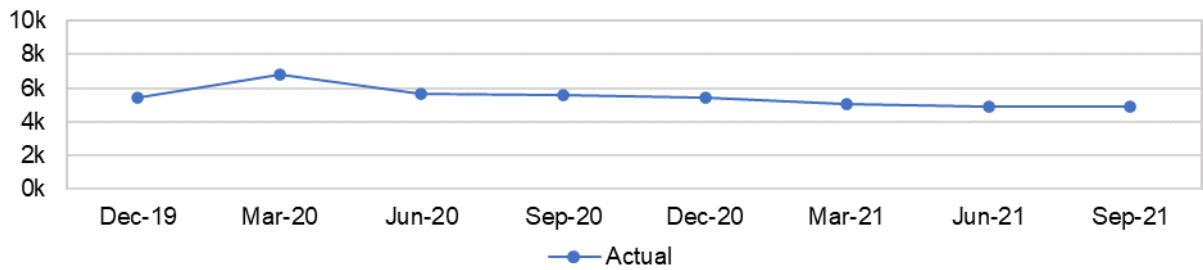
Percentage of complaints upheld (upheld and partially upheld)



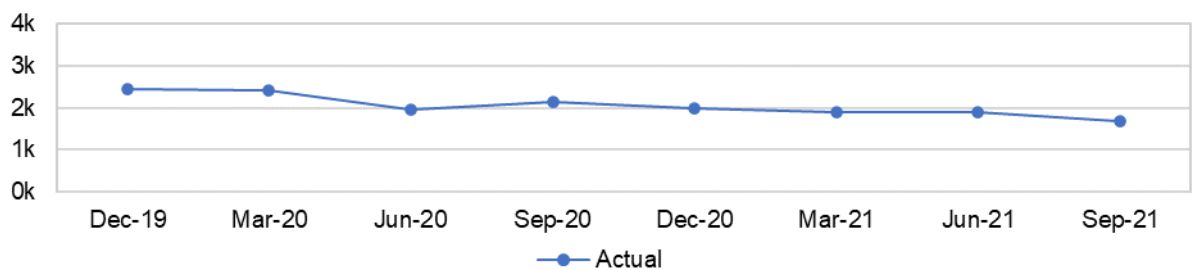
Number of people making contact with ASCH



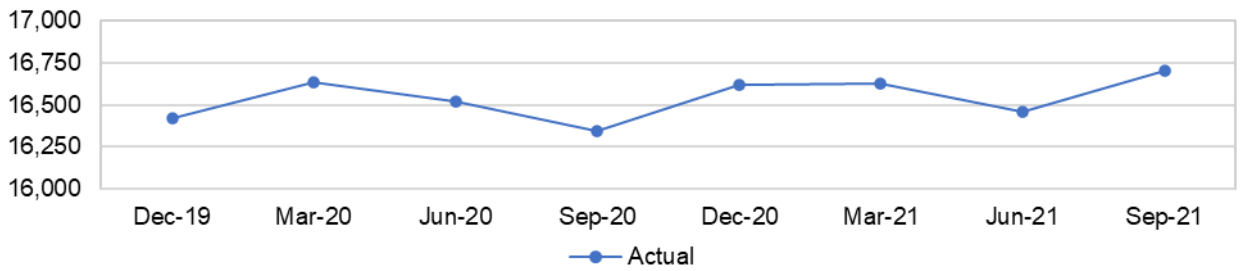
Number of assessments delivered (Care Needs Assessment)



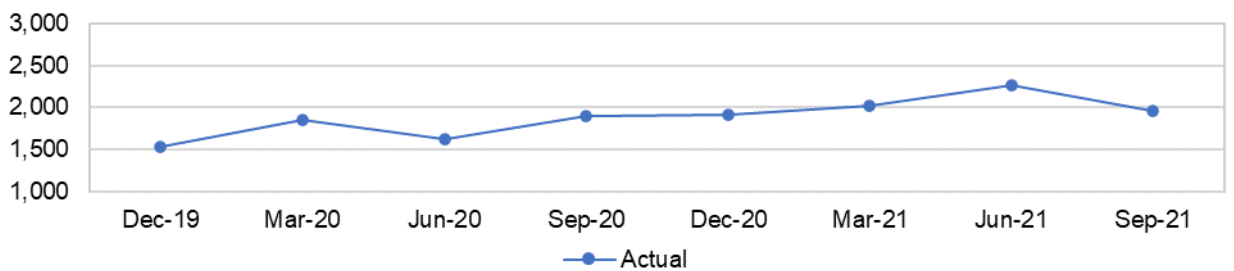
Number receiving enablement



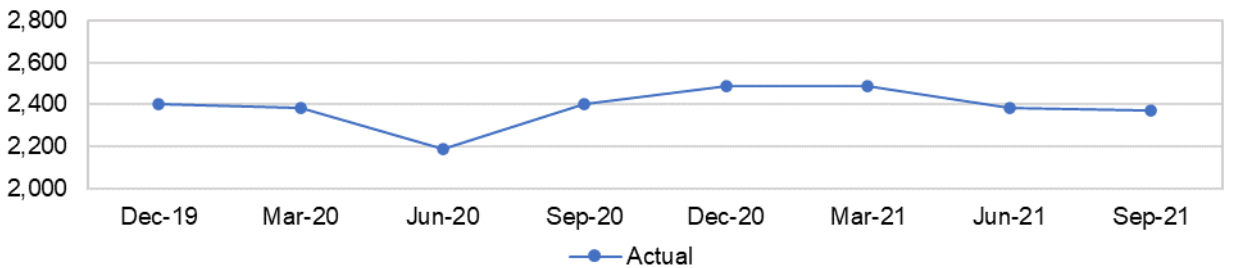
### Number receiving Long Term Services



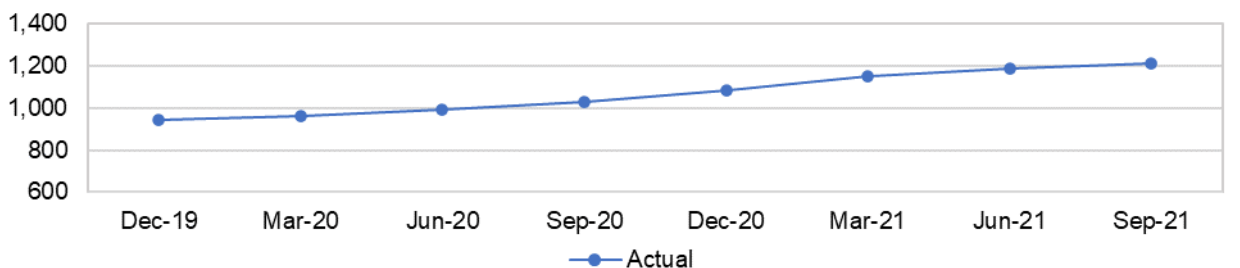
### Number of Deprivation of Liberty safeguards (DoLs) applications received



### Number of carers known to Adult Social Care



### Number of People accessing ASCH Services who have a Mental Health Need



Public Health	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Clair Bell
<b>Director</b>	Allison Duggal

KPI Summary	GREEN	AMBER	RED	↑	⇒	↓
	4	1		4	1	

The NHS Health Check programme continues to recover after the service resumed delivery in Quarter 2 2020/21, following a nationally mandated pause in March 2020 due to COVID-19. In Quarter 2 2021/22, 82 GPs actively participated in the programme which represents an increase from 63 in Quarter 1. There were 4,498 Health Checks carried out in the Quarter, which exceeds the target of a 20% quarterly increase and indicates that capacity is gradually increasing. The outreach team continue to establish and maintain relationships with key groups, employers, and organisations to engage with vulnerable and hard to reach communities. A risk stratified approach to NHS Health Checks is being implemented which targets those at highest risk of cardiovascular disease.

The Health Visiting Service delivered 19,314 mandated universal contacts in Quarter 2, an increase on Quarter 1. All five mandated contacts were on or above target. Face-to-face delivery has increased from 43.3% in Quarter 1 to 56.9% in Quarter 2. The number of healthy child clinic attendances has increased from 1,248 in Quarter 1 to 1,730 in Quarter 2. Calls to the duty line (11,777 in Quarter 2) and specialist infant feeding service referrals remain high.

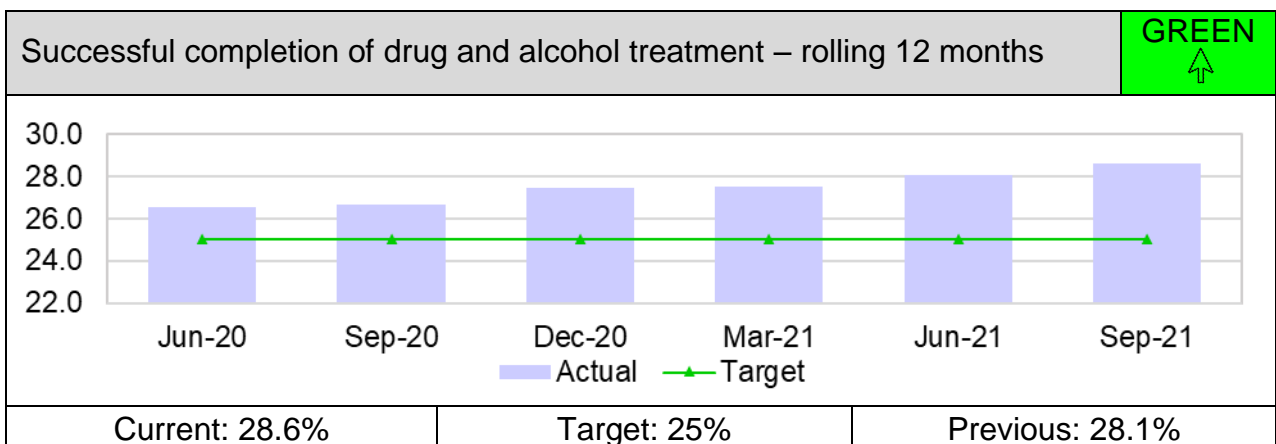
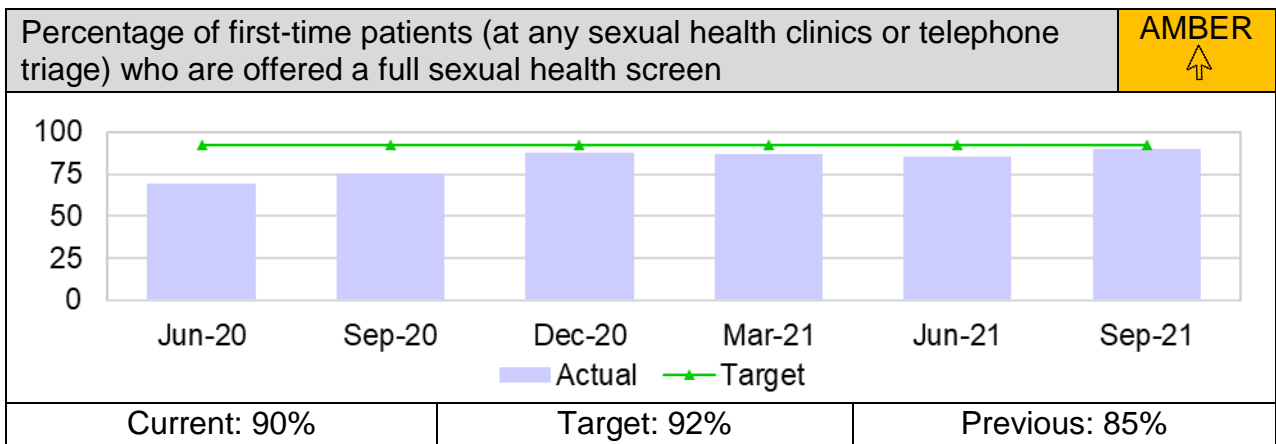
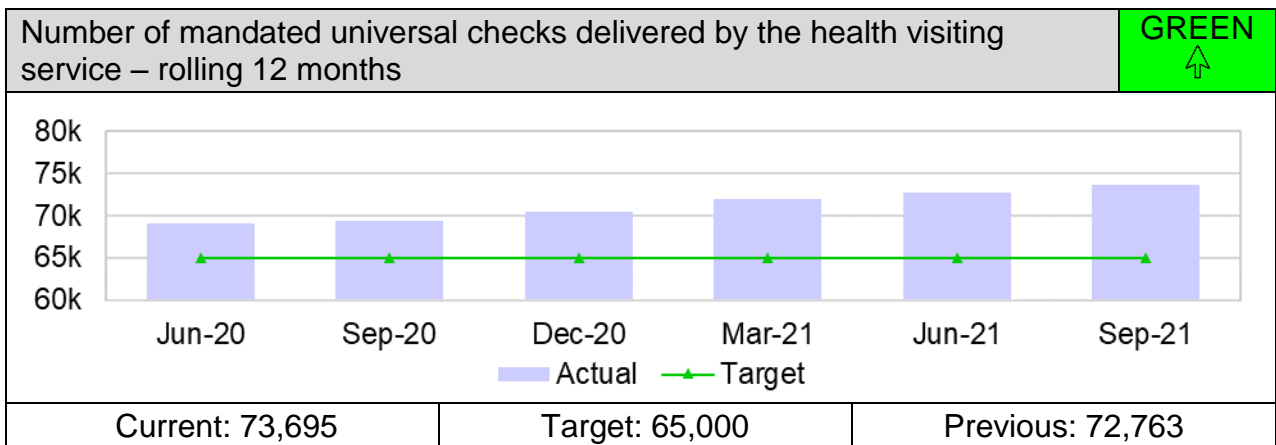
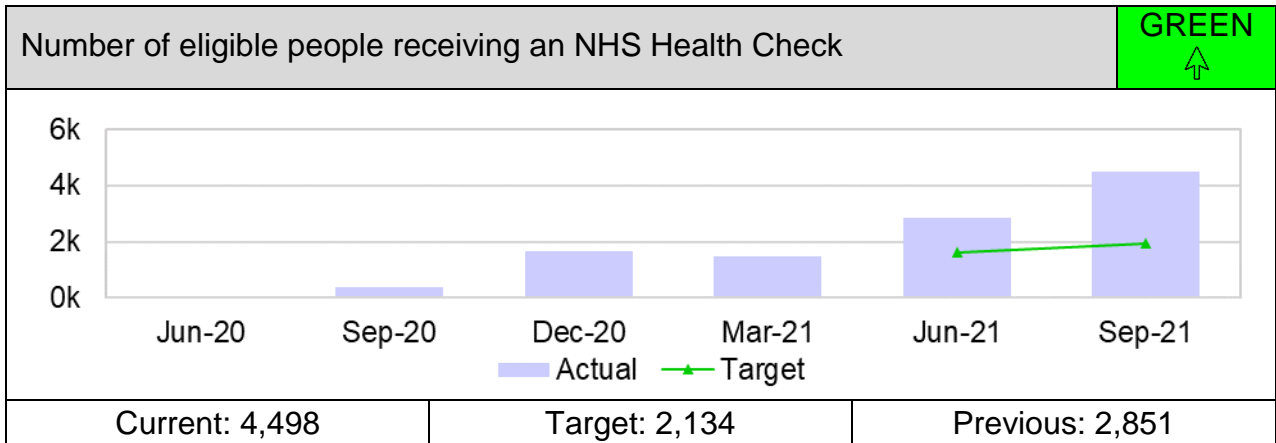
Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, specialist integrated sexual health providers have adopted an altered service delivery model which utilises digital services and operates clinics through pre-booked appointments to manage client numbers. Service providers and commissioners are working together to improve the proportion of new attendees to the service that are being offered a full sexual health screen by ensuring all staff are offering a screen across all types of appointment. A full sexual health screen can be completed through the home testing service or at a clinic. In Quarter 2 the indicator recorded 90% being offered a full sexual health screen. This is an improvement on Quarter 1 but is still below the target of 92%.

The community drug and alcohol data for Quarter 2 showed continued above target performance and positive direction of travel. The Services are increasing face-to-face interventions and a virtual offer is still available to those that find this more suitable, subject to risk. All clinical aspects of service delivery including Clinical Appointments, Community Detoxification and Blood Borne Virus testing are face-to-face now. Plans to resume group work in a COVID safe manner are being scoped at present.

In Quarter 2, referrals to the Live Well Kent service have returned to levels seen prior to the pandemic. The service has successfully transitioned to a blended offer of digital and face-to-face, offering more choice, and is based on the needs of clients and availability of safe and suitable venues. Client satisfaction rates remain above target. There has been an increase in the number of younger people and students accessing the service up to the age of 19 and those aged between 26 and 35, with interventions designed and aimed at these younger age groups. The service is working with Public Health to promote and support smoking cessation for clients through a 9-month pilot in partnership with the smoke free service in Kent.

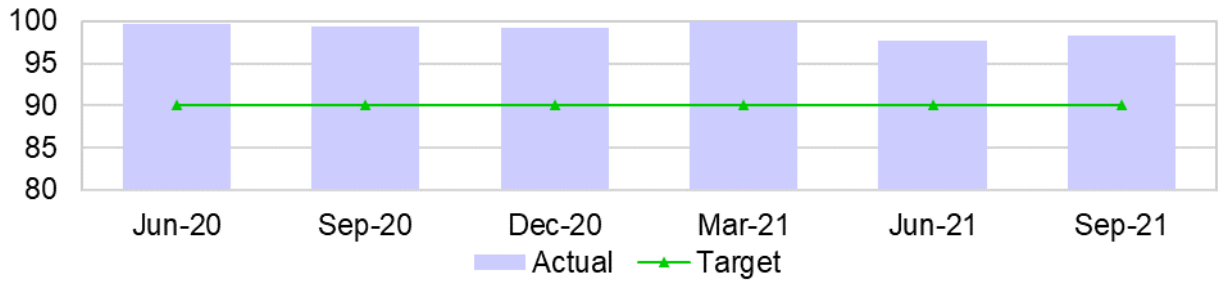


## Performance Indicators



Percentage of Live Well clients who would recommend the service to family, friends, or someone in a similar situation

**GREEN**  
➔



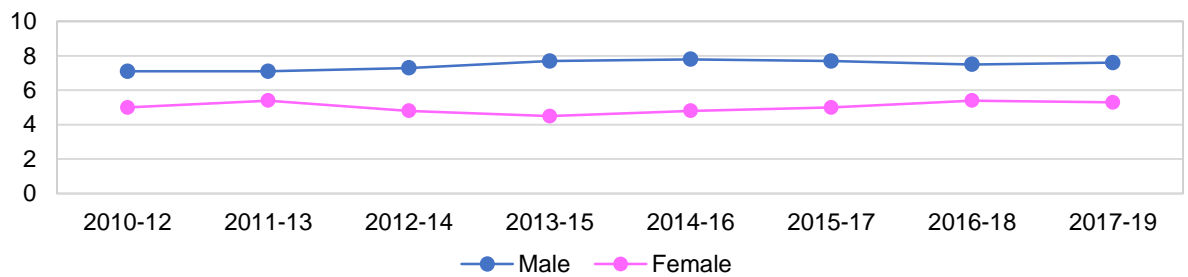
Current: 98.3%

Target: 90%

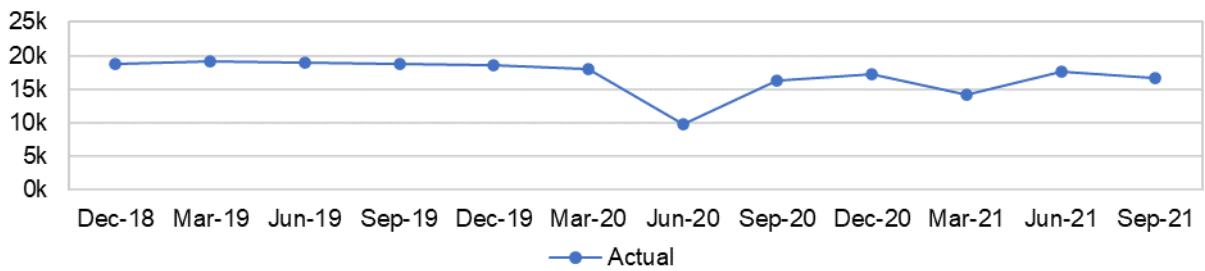
Previous: 97.7%

### Activity indicators

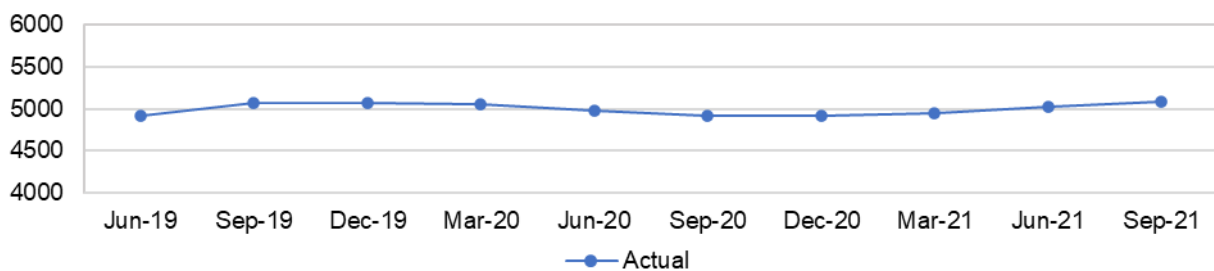
Life expectancy gap in years between least and most deprived areas



Number of attendances at KCC commissioned Sexual Health Clinics



Number of adults accessing structured Substance Misuse Treatment Services



## Corporate Risk Register – Overview

The Authority continues to balance ongoing recovery from the Covid-19 emergency with delivery of more “business as usual” type activities, while also leading on the development of new ways of working and delivery of services. It remains clear that the pandemic, as well as introducing new risks, has compounded existing challenges.

The table below shows the number of corporate risks in each risk level (based on the risk score) in November 2021, compared with August 2021.

	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
<b>Current risk level August 2021</b>	0	2	19
<b>Current risk level November 2021*</b>	0	2	19

**\*to be updated pending outcome of Corporate Risk Register refresh.**

### CHANGES DURING LAST QUARTER

During the autumn of 2021, the Corporate Risk Register has undergone its more formal annual refresh process, with input sought from the Corporate Management Team and Cabinet Members in particular.

Changes to the register will reflect latest developments in the risk landscape, such as workforce and material shortages, inflationary pressures and uncertainties over the details of some of the latest Government reforms. The Government’s Spending Review took place on 27<sup>th</sup> October and the local government finance settlement will confirm the Council’s financial allocation in December 2021, from which several corporate risks can be reassessed.

A revised version of the register is being presented to Cabinet on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2021 and Governance and Audit Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

### MITIGATING ACTIONS

The Corporate Risk Register mitigations are regularly reviewed for their continued relevance and urgency, and new mitigations introduced as required.

Updates have been provided for 12 actions to mitigate elements of Corporate Risks that were due for completion or review up to the end of November 2021. These are summarised below.

<b>Due Date for Completion</b>	<b>Actions Completed/ Closed</b>	<b>Actions Outstanding or Partially complete</b>	<b>Regular Review</b>
Up to and including November 2021	2	7	3

**CRR0004: Simultaneous Emergency Response. Recovery and Resilience:**Complete

Dungeness emergency plan is up to date but will continue to change as it is entering its decommissioning stage. The risk will continue to reduce over the next 6-10 years.

**CRR0009: Future Financial and Operating Environment:**Partially Complete

Awaiting confirmation of local governance finance settlement. Expected at the end of 2021.

Regular Review:

We continue to make representations to central Government in relation to 'High Needs' funding concerns.

**CRR0015 – Managing and working within the social care market:**Partially Complete

The Market Position Statements (MPS) have been paused to allow for focus on immediate winter pressures. Initial conversations being held to develop a Commissioning Strategy which will inform market position statements.

An initial assessment of the Plan for Health and Social Care in England and the implications for Kent was presented to County Council on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. The report also included an update on 'Making a Difference Every Day' and the implementation of the delivery plans that support it.

**CRR0014: Cyber-threats and their implications:**Partially complete

Further Microsoft security enhancements continue to be rolled out with revised completion date of January 2022, reliant on provider technical resource.

Implementation of further enhancement actions from independent cyber security review are to be delivered as part of a Consolidated Security Action Plan. Review in April 2022.

Business case for a cloud-native security information and event manager being taken to Strategic Technology Board December 2022.

**CRR0039 – Information Governance**Partially Complete

Further Microsoft security enhancements continue to be rolled out with revised completion date of January 2022, reliant on provider technical resource.

Partially Complete

Detailed action plan is being prepared for changes to the recording of data breaches and identification by March 2022

**CRR0045 – Maintaining effective governance and decision making in a challenging financial and operating environment.**

Partially complete

- Amendments to KCC's Constitution

Any further amendments to KCC's governance will be set out in a 5-year plan to be presented to County Council in December 2021.

**CRR0051: Maintaining or Improving workforce health, wellbeing and productivity throughout Coronavirus response and recovery.**

Complete

The current People Strategy has been accelerated/completed with an evaluation presentation made to the Strategic Reset Programme Board / Corporate Management Team on the 21st October.

The development of a new People Strategy for 2022-2027 is underway and is expected to be effective from April 2022.

**CRR0048: Maintenance and modernisation of the KCC estate**

Partially Complete

A Future Assets strategic outline case was approved by Strategic Reset Programme Board in October 2021. Outline business cases are to be developed for each of the three workstreams.

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From: **Simon Jones**  
**Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport**

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **30 November 2021**

Subject: **Border Readiness**

**Summary:**

This report highlights how Kent County Council as part of the Kent Resilience Forum has responded to and remains prepared for delay and disruption through the Short Straits.

It notes the immediate threats and risks and highlights the recent changes that have been, or plan to be adopted at the borders.

It seeks to set out an agenda for longer-term action, highlighting the strategic importance of the Short Straits for the country whilst recognising the potential opportunities for Kent communities and businesses.

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is asked to:

- a. Note the importance of the Short Straits and the impact delays and disruption at the borders has within Kent;
- b. Note the current freight holding capacity and the need for alternative arrangements outside of Kent alongside a national communication strategy with escalation of messaging at a government level;
- c. Note the various border changes and events anticipated during 2022;
- d. Lobby and press government to formally commit to a long-term investment plan to maximise the potential of the Short Straits and to establish future ready and future proofed smart borders in Kent.
- e. Lobby and press government to provide funding to address new burdens encountered by Kent's Trading Standards service;
- f. Lobby and press government to formally commit and fund highway capacity improvements on the northern (A2) approach to Dover and similarly commit to improvements to M2 Junction 7 (Brenley Corner);
- f. Lobby and press government to formally commit and fund highway improvements to support the IBF and BCP facilities in Dover; and
- g. Lobby and press government to provide additional local highway funding to recognise the traffic volumes and asset management impact of Kents highway network in keeping the gateway to Europe open and available.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 As a leading partner of the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF), Kent County Council (KCC) works closely with colleagues from the Government's Border and Protocol Delivery Group (BPDG), Cabinet Office, Department for Transport (DfT), Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), to both plan for and react to various short and long-term issues arising at and from Kent's borders with Europe.
- 1.2 In recent history, KCC and the KRF has been at the forefront of responding to delays and disruption caused by EU Exit, the end of the EU Exit Transition period and the introduction of Covid-19 restrictions.
- 1.3 A chronology and brief history of the operational responses to traffic disruption through the Short Straits is provided within Appendix A.
- 1.4 From Appendix A it can be determined that the current accepted approach to delay at Kent's borders with Europe remains reactive and suboptimal. It results in a reduction in the effectiveness of Kent's highway network and requires Kent to hold and queue nationally significant freight and passenger traffic within its borders.
- 1.5 As the various operational interventions are deployed there is an increasing and ever wider impact upon the public. At all stages, this has a severe and unsustainable impact upon Kent's communities and businesses, particularly in areas most in need within east of the county.
- 1.6 Changes are needed, supported through government investment, to maximise the effectiveness and potential of Kent's continental borders. A strategic and intelligent method to easily enter and exit the county and country is required to maximise border fluidity.
- 1.7 An infrastructure first approach will be needed to build resilient borders. This investment will provide significant value to the nation and act as a catalyst for regeneration in the east of Kent, unlocking housing, employment, skills development, and inward investment.
- 1.8 The time is now to unlock the full potential of the unique position and economic value of the Short Straits. Put simply, levelling up in Kent will deliver value far beyond its borders and across numerous nationally critical industries. To fail to do so is a missed opportunity on a national scale.

## **2. Approach to managing border delay and disruption**

- 2.1 KCC and the KRF has had to respond to, amongst others, potential blockades of the ports, industrial action, migrant travellers, delays in customs processing times, severe weather events, Covid-19 restrictions, and the subsequent travel relaxations.



- 2.2 This is in addition to historically high-volume passenger traffic events such as summer, half-term, and Christmas getaways and alongside the cyclical patterns of freight movements which ensures that Kent's borders remain continually in high demand.
- 2.3 Currently, this is further complicated by the fragility of the prevailing UK/EU economic and diplomatic relationship. This can result in erratic border attendance by EU officials and unpredictable events which could materially affect the operation through the borders. The instant nature of such action can prevent the early deployment of operational plans leaving Kent further exposed. Most recently the French fishing community has posed the most significant threat in this regard and the situation has required enhanced attention and close monitoring by the KRF.
- 2.4 That said, the Short Straits is the crossing of choice for the UK/EU freight haulage industry and for vehicle borne passenger traffic travelling to Europe.
- 2.5 This is due to its very close proximity to the continent allowing cost effective and quicker transit when compared to other UK locations. It accounts for 59% of UK trade with the EU, with this gateway valued at circa £250bn per annum.
- 2.6 Whilst any disruption, delay or loss of fluidity will have a negative impact to the nation the opportunity to full exploit the Short Straits remains. Investing to improve resilience, to expand capacity and to maximise throughput will deliver both value for money and long-term economic benefit on a national scale that would far outweigh the initial cost of investment.
- 2.7 In order to exploit the Short Straits it will be vital that the current short term and reactive approach to managing transit through Kent needs to be replaced, modernised, and made fit for the future.

### **3. Immediate threats**

- 3.1 During 2020, and supported fully by both government and local partners, improvements to analysing and capturing manifest data about vehicle and passenger movements over the Short Straits was undertaken. This has provided greater intelligence of the potential risks and threats at the border, but this remains limited in its forecast range and only considers the operational responses currently available.
- 3.2 As a result the KRF continues to meet on a regular basis to review and assess both threats and risks to the Short Straits with the focus drawn to immediate issues. This ongoing and routine activity is needed to ensure sufficient time is available to deploy the reactive responses and to provide sufficient time for partner organisations to stand up operational resources in anticipation of any escalating or immediate issue.
- 3.3 The absence of regular, timely and accurate information to support early decision making remains a critical obstacle and threat to the effectiveness of the KRF.

- 3.3 This causes inherent disruption for the agencies involved and the ongoing operational cost remains significant. It would be economically advantageous to move away from the repetitive reactive response and invest in autonomous systems and infrastructure that can flex, absorb, and provide operational resilience in all circumstances.
- 3.4 At the date of this paper, Kent is routinely seeing circa 6,300 freight each busy weekday. This equates to approximately 5,300 HGVs and 1,000 LGVs (eg. Freight vehicles under 7.5t)
- 3.5 Including both on and off-road vehicle holding capability but excluding any potential space at Sevington Inland Border Facility (IBF), Kent has the capacity to queue circa 4,800 HGVs, of this number only 3,500 remains at the discretion of the KRF to directly deploy.
- 3.6 This assumes full use of both EuroTunnel and Port of Dover buffer zones/approach lanes and as a result Kent has **less overall capacity** compared to that available at the start of 2020. This is predominately due to government decommissioning Manston Airport and TAP256 to hold queued vehicles.
- 3.7 Kent HGV holding capacity is as follows:
- |                            |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|
| Operation Brock QMB        | 3,000        |
| TAP 20                     | 500          |
| PoD Buffer Zone            | 220          |
| PoD Approach Lanes         | 800          |
| EuroTunnel Buffer/Terminal | 250          |
| Sevington IBF              | TBD          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>4,770</b> |
- 3.8 In order to contain the volume of HGVs accumulated over a 24-hour period Sevington IBF would need to accommodate a minimum of 500 HGVs without affecting its critical customs processing capability.
- 3.9 This does not consider the impact of LGVs which account for circa 1,000 extra vehicles, nor any Europe bound passenger traffic.
- 3.10 Whilst TAP20 is a useful tool to regulate HGV flows into the port, it is important to note that TAP20 is being deployed at least 2-3 times per week. The continued use of operational tools such as TAP 20 highlights the lack of overall resilience in the current plans and reinforces the severe fragility of the current infrastructure.
- 3.11 It is therefore imperative in the short term that additional capacity outside of Kent is identified, secured, and confirmed by government. This needs to be coupled with legislation to direct vehicles to secure locations and a national communications campaign to warn and inform drivers not to travel to Kent unless authorised.

3.12 For reference, Appendix B provides additional explanation and detail of the various tools currently available to the KRF to manage border disruption.

#### **4. Medium and Longer-Term Threat and Risks**

4.1 The most significant medium-term threat to the Short Straits will be the introduction of EES (Entry Exit System) and ETIAS (European Travel Information and Authorisation System).

4.2 The EES and ETIAS are measures being implemented by the EU that will register the entry, exit and any refused entries of eligible third-country citizens crossing into Europe through the external Schengen borders. It requires 100% checks on all passengers.

4.3 This presents a challenge at both Port of Dover and EuroTunnel where passengers could be required to exit vehicles to achieve authorisation. This would significantly increase the time needed to process vehicles and as the infrastructure and processes currently stand this **will lead to long queues** onto Kent's highway network and into local communities.

4.4 Whilst digital solutions for both EES and ETIAS are being developed in the EU, the planned for launch of these schemes is scheduled for late 2022. This poses a significant risk to Kent, especially due to the Kent based juxtaposed locations of EU passport control.

#### **5. Planning for the future**

5.1 The KRF Planning Group, chaired by KCC, is seeking to establish long term changes on how Short Straits disruption is addressed. Bold new measures will be needed to avoid the reactive and inherently disruptive methods now deployed. As has been acknowledged by government, this is a national issue and the levers and interventions required are beyond the scope of the KRF and KCC. What is required is a long-term national improvement programme of infrastructure, technology and legislation applied throughout Kent and beyond.

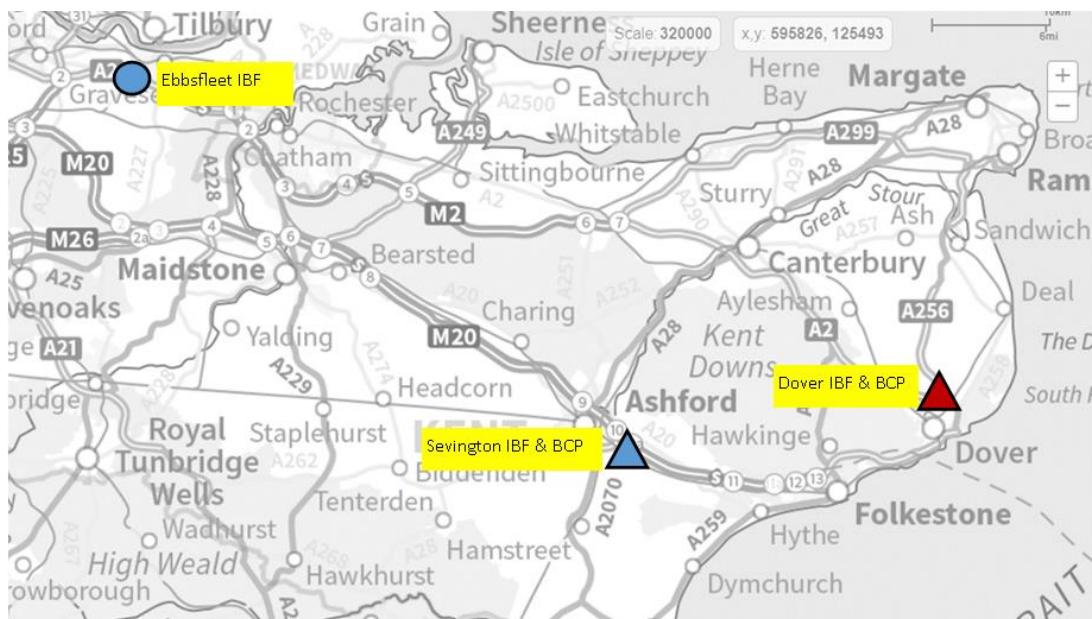
5.2 Work has started to define a Kent proposal to government citing the various challenges, opportunities, and potential changes that will be needed to provide resilient borders that maximises the unique potential of Kent and the Short Straits.

5.3 This is not limited to addressing Kent's highway network. It will highlight the need to improve border infrastructure and facilities, promote opportunities for community regeneration, employment and skills alongside digitisation and innovation to create future proof, and future ready smart borders working in tandem through a daisy chain of well served, safe and secure nationally distributed freight hubs.

5.4 DfT Maritime 2050 Smart Ports vision cites "*UK ports will act as part of an advanced supply chain. Digitised, integrated with the wider end-to-end supply chain, and efficient...*". It is imperative that this national vision is fully deployed in Kent; what is needed now is a strong commitment and desire to make real this bold but overdue vision.

## 6. Public Protection

- 6.1 Sevington (Ashford) IBF has been operational since January 2021 with HMRC carrying out some limited checks.
- 6.2 From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 there will be increased HMRC checks, and from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 Defra will be operating a Border Control Post (BCP) alongside Ashford Borough Council as the Port Health Authority.
- 6.3 HGV flows will increase for both inbound and outbound freight for both portals to Sevington.
- 6.4 Similar facilities are being constructed at Whitfield, just off the A2 heading into Dover. The BCP at Dover is due for completion for operation 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 whilst the IBF is unlikely to be completed before 2023.



- 6.5 Both Dover sites are situated on the KCC road network, so it is essential that adequate signing and road enhancement and improvement is undertaken prior to the sites opening. We remain in dialogue with government on how to provide a capable freight corridor to and from these facilities.
- 6.6 From January 2022 additional document and physical checks on goods travelling over the Short Straits will become necessary and both HMRC and Defra are ensuring that these new facilities are suitably resourced and able to handle these new burdens.
- 6.7 Kent Trading Standards are required to carry out checks on imports of consumer goods into the UK. This is already being undertaken by the ports team, which was established in 2019, in response to additional demands arising from EU exit. This team consists of 1 Supervisor and 5 Officers.
- 6.8 Further additional checks in Kent will be required following the introduction of new inland BCPs in Kent allowing feed (which has a high risk of

contamination) and organic feed to be imported through Kent. This will require additional qualified staff to enforce animal health provisions which includes dealing with issues of animals, feed and veterinary medicines delayed in transit affecting health and welfare. As the Feed Authority for Kent, Trading Standards will also be required to enforce imported feed requirements.

- 6.9 The Ports Team, which currently covers Dover, Eurotunnel, and the Fast Parcel Hub at Dartford, will need to be expanded to cover the new work generated at the additional IBFs and at Sheerness Port.
- 6.10 This will place new operational and financial burdens upon KCC and a request for additional funding has been made to government in the order of £1.1m. At the date of this paper, this request remains outstanding.

## **7. Kent Highways**

- 7.1 In 2019, and in anticipation of EU Exit, KCC undertook a range of highway strengthening activities and provided on behalf of DfT works at Manston airfield to support holding a significant number of queued HGVs.
- 7.2 These works helped mitigate disruption and reduce the impact upon the local road network arising from the high volume of HGV traffic seen since that time. Whilst Manston airfield has now formally stood down, much of Kent's highway network continues to be used by high volumes of free moving freight on route through the Short Straits.
- 7.3 Many of these routes are now showing signs of accelerated deterioration predominately due to the increased size, weight, and volume of traffic. DfT highway funding does not consider this impact and the burden to ensure that these key local roads remain available, safe, and serviceable falls to KCC as the highway authority.
- 7.4 There is merit in Kent Highways receiving additional government funding due to the special nature and strategic importance of this part of the local road network. We have raised this issue during recent correspondence with DfT.
- 7.5 *Need for future road improvement*  
National Highways have identified potential improvements to M2 Junction 7 (Brenley Corner) and to the northern access to Dover (A2). It is unlikely that the benefit of these plans, if supported, would be seen until well after 2030. It is therefore imperative that these nationally and locally critical projects are formally confirmed and committed by National Highways as soon as possible and that early enabling projects are commenced immediately to provide capacity and unlock critical pinch points on these key arterial routes to the Port of Dover.
- 7.6 In the first instance improving the link from the Port of Dover through Whitfield and beyond is vital and would recognise the increased freight traffic volume due to the IBF and BCP locations. Protecting the access through the Whitfield retail and business park will be critical alongside congestion relieving and capacity improvements to the Duke of York and Whitfield Roundabouts.

7.7 Work is ongoing with Dover District Council and other partners to present to government viable solutions that support, enable, and fill the gap until the National Highways major schemes are delivered.

## 8. Summary of anticipated 2022 border disruption

8.1	December 2021	Christmas getaway, increased passenger, and freight transport, disruption risk exists.
	January 2022	Full customs declarations and controls will be introduced although safety and security declarations will now not be required until July 2022. The requirements for pre-notification of Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) goods
	Feb/April 2022	Half Term and Easter get away, increased passenger traffic.
	July 2022	Safety and Security declarations on imports.
	July 2022	Export Health Certificates
	July 2022	Phytosanitary Certificates and physical checks on SPS goods at Border Control Posts. Certification and physical and identity checks will be introduced for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>All remaining regulated animal by-products.</i></li><li>• <i>All remaining regulated plants and plant products.</i></li><li>• <i>All meat and meat products</i></li><li>• <i>All remaining high-risk food not of animal origin.</i></li><li>• <i>High-priority plants and plant products checks will transfer from place of destination to designated BCPs and control points</i></li></ul>
	July 2022	Summer Getaway, passenger traffic increase
	August/September	Summer return.
	September 2022	Certification and physical checks will be introduced for all dairy products.
	October 2022	Half Term Getaway, passenger traffic
	November 2022	Certification and physical checks will be introduced for all remaining regulated products of animal origin, including composite products and fish products.  Live animal checks will also transfer incrementally from point of destination to designated border control posts from July 2022 as facilities are ready and designated.

Late 2022            EES launched

Late 2022            ETIAS launched

December 2022      Christmas getaway, passenger and freight increased

**9. Financial Implications**

- 9.1 KCC and KRF are currently stood up with operational resources remaining deployed and active, this will continue over 2022.
- 9.2 New Burdens are being pursued through government for Trading Standards in the order of £1.1m. In the absence of government funding this statutory burden will fall upon KCC.

**10. Conclusion**

- 10.1 KCC and the KRF remains engaged, informed, and prepared to react to delay and disruption through the Short Straits.
- 10.2 Changing customs processes along with complex UK/EU diplomatic relations continue to pose a significant risk to Kent. If realised this risk could result in severe local disruption alongside national significant economic and supply chain consequences.
- 10.3 Freight holding capacity within Kent remains suboptimal and there remains a real and urgent need for additional and out of Kent freight holding facilities alongside a national messaging campaign.
- 10.4 Further government funding is required to address new border burdens and to address the long-term impact of road freight across Kents local road network.
- 10.5 KCC is focussed on modernising, enhancing and future proofing the Short Straits. Investment is required provide smart frictionless borders that utilise both digital and physical infrastructure. It is of national importance to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of Kent’s economic gateway to Europe.

**7. Recommendations:**

**Recommendations:**

Cabinet is asked to:

- a. Note the importance of the Short Straits and the impact delays and disruption at the borders has within Kent;
- b. Note the current freight holding capacity and the need for alternative arrangements outside of Kent;
- c. Note the various border changes and events anticipated during 2022;

- d. Lobby and press government to formally commit to a long-term investment plan to maximise the potential of the Short Straits and to establish future ready and future proofed smart borders in Kent.
- e. Lobby and press government to provide funding to address new burdens encountered by Kent's Trading Standards service;
- f. Lobby and press government to formally commit and fund highway capacity improvements on the northern (A2) approach to Dover and similarly commit to improvements to M2 Junction 7 (Brenley Corner);
- f. Lobby and press government to formally commit and fund highway improvements to support the IBF and BCP facilities in Dover; and
- g. Lobby and press government to provide additional local highway funding to recognise the traffic volumes and asset management impact of Kents highway network in keeping the gateway to Europe open and available.

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## Appendix A: A Brief History of Border Disruption

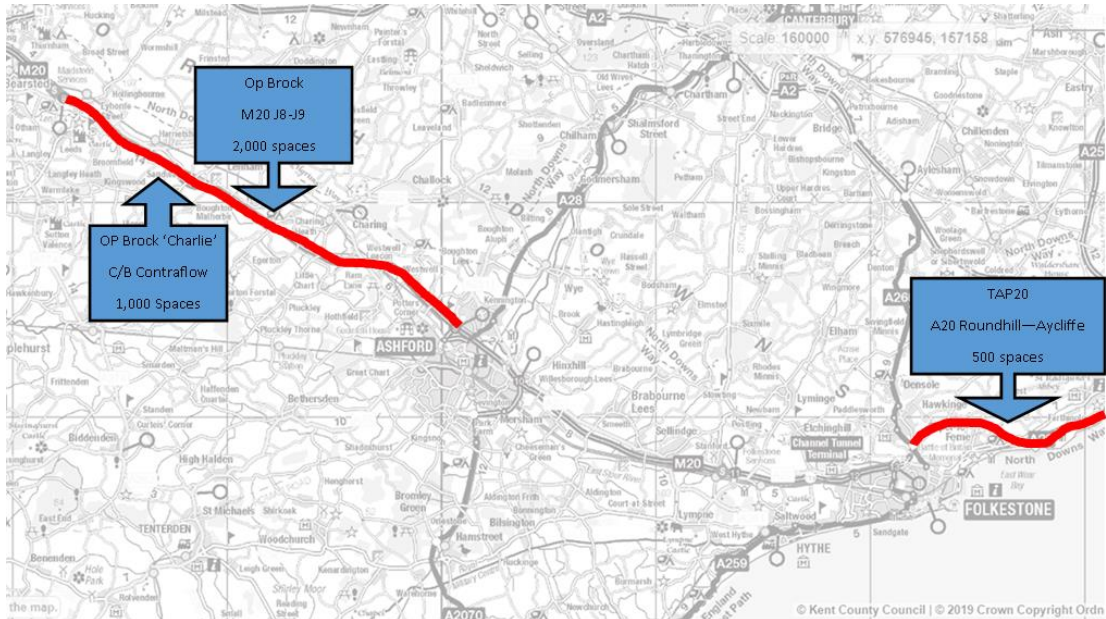
- A.1 Historically, disruption to Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) traffic across the Short Straits was mitigated using Operation Stack. This allowed for up to 8,000 HGVs to be queued on the M20 and A20 after capacity at the Port of Dover and/or EuroTunnel had been exhausted. When deployed, severe congestion was seen across Kent's road network adversely affecting many communities and businesses. The economic impact of Operation Stack was significant both locally and nationally.
- A.2 Over time Operation Fennel, of which Operation Stack was part, has been modified. In 2015 Manston Airport was included as an additional HGV holding location, and during 2019, this facility was enhanced and became capable of safely catering for up to 4,000 HGVs plus drivers and associated passengers.
- A.3 To safely control the transfer of HGVs from Manston Airport to the Port of Dover a Traffic Access Protocol (TAP) was provided on the A256. This saw traffic management (cones, marshals) and traffic lights installed to queue circa 500 HGVs on the outskirts of Dover to enable an organised draw down of vehicles into the Port.
- A.4 TAP256 was the second TAP deployed around Dover; in early 2015 a similar (and now permanent) area to control and marshal HGVs was installed on the main southern approach to the town. This covers the A20 from the Roundhill Tunnel through to the Western Height Roundabout, Aycliffe. This has the capability of queuing circa 500 HGVs
- A.5 Following significant disruption during summer 2015, DfT and National Highways sought to find alternatives to Operation Stack. Work was undertaken to develop an off-road lorry holding area near to Junction 11A of the M20.
- A.6 After failing to proceed with this scheme, attention shifted to providing an on-road system utilising the M20 between Junction 8 and 9. The result has been the installation of a contraflow that allows HGVs to be queued on the coastbound motorway whilst maintaining two-way traffic flow on the remaining London bound carriageway.
- A.7 This has been achieved using a Quick Moveable Barrier (QMB) and the installation of defined motorway cross over points. This sees an automated process of lifting a chain of concrete blocking into the road to divide the London bound carriageway. This alternative to Operation Stack is known as Operation Brock and is embedded into Kent's approved response to border disruption, known as Operation Fennel.
- A.8 December 2020 saw Kent preparing for the end of EU Transition, but before new controls (QMB) could be pre-deployed the borders were closed due to Covid 19 restrictions being implemented by French Authorities. This resulted in the well documented disruption seen across the county and in particular

Dover was overwhelmed by both passenger and freight vehicles during the Christmas getaway.

- A.9 During this time and the months that followed, numerous additional operational tools were used to manage traffic. For freight this included the use of a Kent Access Permit, traffic regulation orders mandating specific routes and HGV parking enforcement.
- A.10 The QMB was deployed for a significant period, reducing speed, and increasing disruption and journey times across Kents road network.
- A.11 Whilst the borders conditionally reopened in December 2020 many operational restrictions remained in place in Kent until June 2021.

## **Appendix B: Summary of Operational Responses to Disruption at the Borders**

- B.1 Operation Fennel remains Kent's operational response to managing traffic. Contained within are other plans to address specific issues arising during period of disruption. This includes Operation Brock, the Driver Welfare Plan, and Operation Merlon which seeks to keep Dover clear from HGV congestion.
- B.2 *Operation Brock*  
Operation Brock is made up of different phases and options and is activated after Port of Dover and/or EuroTunnel vehicle buffer zones are overwhelmed and certain trigger points on the approaching road network have been reached.
- B.3 The early stages of Operation Brock use the M20 and A20 (outside of Dover) to hold HGVs, whilst the latter stages used Manston Airport and TAP256. Discounting the various buffer zones the holding capacity in Kent was previously deemed to be circa 8,000 HGVs. However, since July 2021, DfT decommissioned Manston and this is no longer available to the KRF. Consequently, TAP256 is no longer required.



B.5 As at the date of this report, Operation Brock provides the following operational options:

*Brock Zero* is used in an emergency where the QMB cannot be installed prior to queues forming. It requires HGVs to be held on the M20 coastbound carriageway between junctions 8 and 9. There will be no contraflow and coast bound other traffic is diverted along the local road network (A20).

*Brock Inactive* enables HGVs bound for the portals to use the M20 coastbound carriageway between junctions 8 and 9, whilst the QMB creates a contraflow for all other traffic on the London bound carriageway.

*Brock Active with control* is as above; however there is a traffic light control prior to junction 9 to hold HGVs until it is safe to release.

B.6 Whilst National Highways are responsible for the implementation of Operation Brock, they have no powers to enforce. When Operation Brock was deployed during early 2021, KCC (on behalf of DfT) employed operatives with special powers to enforce within Brock.

B.8 During 2021, Sevington Inland Border Facility opened and supported the customs and Covid checking processes necessary to leave the UK. The site has some capability to hold and secure HGVs. This remains a key border operational site and whilst some capability to hold HGV could exist this has not been factored into any traffic management plans at this time. It is necessary to understand how this can be achieved without disrupting the critical service it provides in clearing HGVs for UK exit.

B.9 *Keep Dover Clear/Op Merlon*

Lessons learnt following the border closure in 2020 included plans to 'Keep Dover Clear'. Works planned include improvements to parts of National Highways network (A2) and associated roundabouts. This will also provide additional signing, and road restrictions to discourage HGVs from using unsuitable routes through the town.

- B.10 Whilst at the time of writing the plan Kent Police had at its disposal circa 150 mutual aid officers available from other forces to deploy to Dover. These officers are no longer available, and in the event of another border closure Kent Police primary focus will be to preserve life and address crime. An alternative approach to Operation Merlon will be needed.
- B.11 *Driver Welfare Plan*  
When HGVs were delayed due to the border closure at the end of 2020, one of the concerns was provision of welfare to queued drivers and specifically those in passenger vehicles. Whilst HGVs can be managed within Operation Brock, this is not possible for tourist traffic.
- B.12 The operational response is to warn, inform and highlight those locations where respite can be found. During December 2020, many drivers ignored this advice, and found themselves in need of welfare and support as many shops and facilities remained closed due to Covid 19 restrictions. This resulted in military resources and charitable organisations being used to provide widescale driver welfare.
- B.13 Work is ongoing with government to seek methods to improve to this plan. The objective is to ensure a consistent and safe driver welfare service is provided to those vehicles that are queued in locations where they are unable to self-serve.