



## AGENDA

## CABINET

**Thursday, 28th November, 2024, at 10.00 am** Ask for: **Georgina Little**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House, Telephone: Tel: 03000 414043**  
**County Hall, Maidstone** Email: **georgina.little@kent.gov.uk**

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 September 2024 (Pages 1 - 10)
4. Cabinet Member Updates
5. 24/00089 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - September 2024-25 (Pages 11 - 84)
6. 24/00094 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Environment Plan (Pages 85 - 136)
7. 24/00095 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028 (Pages 137 - 170)
8. Financial Hardship Programme (Pages 171 - 200)

### 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)*

General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Wednesday, 20 November 2024**

**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, 26 September 2024.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chairman), Mr N Baker, Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler, Mr D Jeffrey, Mr R C Love, OBE, Mr D Watkins, Mr R J Thomas, Mr J P McInroy and Mr H Rayner

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Hammond (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Mrs A Beer (Chief Executive), Mr S Jones (Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport), Mr R Smith (Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health) Mr D Whittle (*Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance*), Ms C Head (*Head of Finance Operations*), Mr J McKay (Acting Chief Accountant) and Mr B Watts (General Counsel)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS****62. Apologies**

(Item 1)

Apologies were received from Mr Oakford and Mr Murphy. Mr Rayner and Mr McInroy were present on their behalf.

**63. Declarations of Interest**

(Item )

There were no declarations of interest.

**64. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 July 2024**

(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting on 11 July 2024 were a correct record and that they be signed by the Chair

**65. Cabinet Member Updates**

(Item 4)

1. Mr Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, provided an update on the following:
  - (a) On Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September, Mr Watkins visited the Fusion Healthy Living Centre in Maidstone. The Centre offered information, advice and support to residents of Park Wood and the wider Maidstone community and provided targeted support to groups within the community which represented some of the most disadvantaged sectors in relation to health inequalities. The centre offered a broad range of activities to help local people keep healthy including

help and support to get people into employment. Mr Watkins thanked all those involved in the visit. .

- (b) The Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance visit was due to take place on the week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The CQC assessment framework provided an independent evaluation of how well local authorities in England met their duties under the Care Act 2014.
  - (c) The 10<sup>th</sup> September marked World Suicide Prevention Day. The Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention team had worked with the charity Living Words to produce a short film 'Living Warriors' which demonstrated the importance of changing the narrative on suicide and to 'start the conversation.' Free training and support was available. Mr Watkins thanked all those involved.
2. Mrs Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, provided an update on the following:
- (a) In 2023 the Department for Education (DfE) published an updated version of the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' initiative which removed the requirement for qualified Social Workers to work with Children in Need. This meant that alternatively qualified practitioners with the necessary skills and experience, including Social Work Assistants, Early Help Practitioners and Education and Health professionals could hold children in need case work. Implementation of the lead professional's role would be trialled across Integrated Children's Services, with experienced Social Work Assistants as the lead professional. The six-month pilot was due to launch in October 2024, following which an evaluation would be carried out by the practice development team.
  - (b) Staff from across the various teams within the Adolescent and Youth Justice service provided their views on the service redesign. These were carefully considered alongside those from quality assurance, service managers, HR advisors, business support managers and the communication team and balanced against findings from inspections, audits and other quality assurance activities. The findings had been condensed into several proposals which would be taken forward.
  - (c) Mrs Chandler expressed thanks to the staff within the Family Hubs for the support they offered to thousands of children during the school summer holidays which received positive feedback from both children and parents. A further schedule was forthcoming for the December 2024 school holiday period.
  - (d) From September 2024 Early Help workers would be based in Family Hubs to ensure that families only told their stories once and received timely, targeted support to ensure children reached their full potential and would be school-ready.
  - (e) Two further reception centres were due to open in September 2024 to help accommodate the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). The recent number of UASC referrals had proved to be a challenge, however, Mrs Chandler paid tribute to all staff within the service for their



continued hard work which enabled Kent County Council to continue to deliver its statutory duty.

3. Mr Love, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, provided an update on the following:

(a) The Minister for Children and Families had lifted Kent County Council's SEND statutory improvement notice as a result of the administration's evidenced ambition to drive change for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The letter from the Minister highlighted the strengthened capacity and strong governance arrangements, alongside a renewed commitment from senior leaders and improved partnership working across the local area which had increased the pace of change over the past 16 months. Mr Love was pleased to give the administration's collective commitment that the provision of SEND services remained a priority for all in the local area, with the pace of change and reforms set to continue.

(b) On 15<sup>th</sup> August 2024 Mr Love visited Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in Faversham for A-Level results day where he had the opportunity to meet with students, 2 of whom received confirmed places at Oxford; and had the opportunity to see the new sports hall and theatre, both of which had been a result of the school's own successful fund raising initiatives. Sarah Hamilton, Deputy Cabinet Member for Education and Skills also had an opportunity to visit Northfleet Technology College for GCSE results day, where she met with students and visited both the nature reserve and science garden, equipped with bee hives.

(c) On 13<sup>th</sup> August Mr Love visited one of Kent's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programmes at West Kent Primary School in Gravesend and was joined by Stephen Morgan, Under Secretary of State for Early Education, and Labour MP Lauren Sullivan. Mr Love paid tribute to Terri Wright, Director of T W Tutors who was commissioned to run the vast range of activities for the children. Mr Love expressed his eagerness to hear the Government's renewed commitment to the HAF programme in the autumn budget.

4. Mr Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, provided an update on the following:

(a) The processing and issuing of the Kent Travel Saver passes had gone well and the number of students that had applied had been similar to previous years despite the increased cost to the user.

(b) On 5<sup>th</sup> September Mr Baker attended a parliamentary reception organised by Julia Lopez, MP for Hornchurch and Upminster and Jim Dickson, MP for Dartford to promote the importance of the government making a decision on the Lower Thames Crossing. The Secretary of State was due to make a decision on the development Control Order (DSO) on 4<sup>th</sup> October. A number of public engagement sessions were underway across Dartford and Gravesham, organised by National Highways.

(c) On 11<sup>th</sup> September Mr Baker attended a site visit at Galley Hill Road, joined by Lilian Greenwood, Minister for Future Roads, to discuss the issues that had

been caused by the collapse of the road. Urgent government support was required to enable the road to be re-opened. The investigation work had concluded and a report identifying the cause of the collapse was forthcoming. A cost-option analysis was also due to be developed and a final report would be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) by the end of October 2024. Mr Baker also highlighted to the Minister the number of highway issues at the centre of town which had been caused by water removing the sub-surface of the roads.

- (d) The Public Consultation on the Local Transport Plan 5 was due to close on 8<sup>th</sup> October. Mr Baker encouraged the public to comment on the consultation document as it outlined Kent County Council's transport priorities and would shape how the Council engaged with the new Government to ensure that the essential schemes across the county could be funded and delivered. The Local Transport Plan 5 would be presented to Full Council in due course.
  - (e) An updated 5 Year Forward Works Programme had been produced covering planned work from 2024/2025 to 2028/2029. The programme was published on the [kent.gov website](https://www.kent.gov.uk). Mr Baker noted that the programme was subject to regular review and could be updated throughout the planned period.
  - (f) Kent County Council's Active Travel funding had been upgraded from 1 to 2 which meant that KCC was eligible for further funding going forward and reflected the amount of work that had been undertaken by the team.
  - (g) A number of engagement events had been held with staff as part of the Active Travel Interventions scheme, which offered bike training, bespoke route planning and Dr Bike for ad-hoc repairs. The Swale Recycle Project was used to provide refurbished bikes to staff, that had been restored by inmates from HMP Swaleside. Mr Baker hoped to roll the scheme out further across the county in the future.
  - (h) As of 3<sup>rd</sup> September, contractors had have delivered 208,849 square metres of patching and had filled 5,326 holes.
5. Mr Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment, provided an update on the following:
- (a) Mr Thomas highlighted to Members the work carried out by Kent County Council as the lead Local Flood Authority as the winter season approached. The Kent Local Flood Risk Management Strategy identified objectives to manage local flood risk to local communities and over the course of ten years aimed to prevent 100 houses from flooding. Work was underway with the Environment Agency, Southern Water and other agencies to manage flood defences and updates would be presented to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee.
  - (b) The Sevenoaks Waste Transfer Station opened on 4<sup>th</sup> September. The new site had been designed to have the infrastructure that would allow for waste to be disposed of sustainably well into the future. It also enabled the recycling of more waste by Sevenoaks District Council and accommodated the Government's requirements as part of the Simpler Recycling legislation.

- (c) Planning permission had been submitted for a new Waste Transfer Station at Folkestone and Hythe. The infrastructure was required to ensure sustainable waste disposal for both current and future developments and to support future legislative requirements.
- (d) The Trade Waste Service had been reintroduced at the Dover facility to meet the growing needs of the commercial sector in the locality. Extensive planning modifications were required at site. The accepted materials included bulky waste, green waste, paper, card and wood which was to be phased at later date.
- (e) The pop-up recycling shop at Allington was due to become permanent from 2025. Planning permission had been submitted and FCC was leading on the procurement to find a Kent charity to run the shop under a partnership agreement.
6. Mr McInroy, Deputy Cabinet Member for Growth and Economic Development, provided an update on the following:
- (a) Work was underway to take forward the action areas set out in the Kent and Medway Economic Framework that was published in March 2024. The five ambitions set out within the framework included:
- a submission of a bid to the Department for Transport (DfE) to run a series of skills boot camps to tackle employment needs
  - to establish of new strategic partnership for health and economy. The first meeting was scheduled to take place in October 2024.
  - making a case to the new Government regarding the ongoing impact on the county from the lack of international passenger rail services from Ebbsfleet and Ashford
  - the development of a place based innovative partnership; and
  - the development of a Work and Health strategy for Kent and Medway to tackle barriers that prevented peopled from gaining employment due to health issues
- (b) Since the relaunch of the Kent and Medway Business Fund (KMBF) in November 2023, 19 new business loans had been approved totalling £2.75m which was projected to achieve 128 full time equivalent jobs. Among the recipients were an Environmentally friendly dry cleaners in Medway, a child nursery in Swale, 2 life sciences in Sandwich and an arts and recreation business in Tonbridge and Malling.
- (c) The Annual Taste of Kent awards took place on 13<sup>th</sup> June celebrating winners and finalists from very best of Kent's food and drink sector across 27 categories.
- (d) The Kent Foundation which supported young entrepreneurs through mentoring had produced a new 6 part online course with various materials to help individuals with an idea to star their own business, moving from idea to income. This had been supported through KCC's Helping Hands Fund.

- (e) The No Use Empty scheme had brought more than 8300 properties back into use since 2005. Since April there had been 15 empty home loans approved worth £1.7m and 7 new builds worth £4m which would achieve 34 new homes. A number of projects were nearing completion, including a former police station in Deal, along with the conversions of 6 new apartments and 6 new homes on the site of a former pub that had been empty for three years in Dover.
  - (f) The official opening of Asymchem at Discovery Park took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2024, attended by the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and the Leader of KCC along with the CEO of the Asymchem Group, Dr Hao Hong and the CEO of Discovery Park, Mayer Schreiber. Asymchem Laboratories utilised innovative technologies to enable smarter, greener, and cost-effective solutions to support manufacture of pharma services and supply.
7. Mrs Bell, Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services, provided an update on the following:
- (a) Over the course of the summer over 16,000 children took part in the annual library reading challenge, with this year's theme being Marvelous Makers. Libraries hosted a number of activities and events which supported children to read over the summer period and ensured they were prepared for the new school term. Mrs Bell joined the launch of the challenge in the Margate library and expressed her delight in seeing the high level of engagement from children with the coordinator.
  - (b) Mrs Bell attended the launch of the Hope Project: Weaving Communities Together. The free exhibition was held at the Kent History and Library Centre and was inspired by inclusive arts practitioner, Elaine Foster-Gandey. The exhibition showcased the work of local Nepalese artist Abitra Alley and highlighted the Nepalese and Gurkha communities, supported by items from the Kent archive collection and explored themes of journey, migration and settlement in Kent.
  - (c) The Local Vape Action (LVA) initiative was due to launch on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The scheme aimed to bring together key stakeholders from Kent Public Health, Kent Police, Kent Trading Standards, Tunbridge Wells Community Support Units and Independent British Vape Trade Association. The LVA project would allow all partners to come together to increase awareness of legal products and who to sell them to and was a positive additional step to the work already underway. The project would contribute to raising compliance, providing more robust support to retailers, reduce confusion and strengthen the safeguards to ensure children were not sold any device.

The Leader thanked the Cabinet Members for their updates.

**66. 24/00077 - Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report - June 2024-2025**  
(Item 5)

*John Betts ( Interim Corporate Director Finance) Cath Head (Head of Finance Operations) and Joe McKay (Acting Chief Accountant) were in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Rayner (Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services) introduced the report that set out the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at June 2024-25 (Quarter 1). The forecast revenue outturn position was an overspend of +£16.3m (excluding schools), which represented 1.1% of the revenue budget. Overspends were being reported in Adult Social Care & Health (+£16.5m), Children, Young People & Education (+£0.1m), Growth Environment & Transport (+£6.2m) and Corporately Held Budgets (+£2.3m). Underspends were being reported in Chief Executive's Department (-£0.9m), Deputy Chief Executive's Department (-£0.9m) and Non Attributable Costs (-£7.1m). The Schools' Delegated budgets were reporting an overspend of +£23.1m. From the savings target of £111.2m, the current forecasted position indicated a £93.3 in year saving to be delivered. The savings would continue to be monitored closely across teams within the organisation as non-delivery of savings would have a significant impact on the future years' budget. It was critical that the overspend be reduced to as near a balanced position as possible as any overspend would weaken the Council's future financial stability. The use of reserves for one off solutions would need to be replenished. The forecast outturn capital position indicated a real overspend of £7.7m and a rephasing variance of -£63.1m (a net underspend of £55.4m). Capital budget adjustments required Cabinet approval.

2. Further to comments and questions from Members it was noted:

- In relation to the financial pressures within the Growth, Environment and Transport directorate, it was highlighted that the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme passes issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) had placed a £3m pressure on KCC due to the change in the reimbursement calculation whereby local authorities were required to pay bus operators for carrying concessionary passholders. Furthermore, unplanned incidents such as those relating to the need to replace the jet fans in Chestfield tunnel created further budgetary pressures for the directorate. These demonstrated areas of financial pressure faced by the Council which were not foreseen and where further savings would need to be made to offset those spends.
- In regard to the Dedicated Schools Grant budget, work was underway to bring this back under control and onto a sustainable footing. Those changes would start to be seen in later iterations of financial reporting. The Council continued to spend more than it was funded for through the Government's national funding formula and this needed to end. The reforms which were being taken forward by the Council, which included the Special Schools Review and the locality model amongst others all aimed to improve the offer for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and provide long-term solutions which were also fair on the council tax-payer.
- The Adult Social Care budget was in a more positive position compared to the same period last year, however, whilst the forecast position indicated that the directorate was 3% off its targeted budget, this equated to £16.5m of savings that had to be achieved. For those projects where savings had

not yet been achieved, replacement savings would need to be found in-year. Reasons for delay included transformation programmes taking longer to deliver due to the scale of process and/or technology change, there was also a reliance on partnership organisations to help deliver savings, some of which did not move at the pace required which impacted on the ability to meet the in-year savings. Assurance was provided that work would continue at pace within the directorate to deliver the reforms.

3. The Leader commented on the improved position in terms of the projected overspend compared to the same period last year and recognition was paid to staff across the organisation in managing the increased cost and demand within services and the ability to still meet savings which was an important achievement. However, further improvement was required and the delivery of savings would only be achieved through the continued use of spending controls. The Leader paid recognition to the Children's, Young People and Education department for the work undertaken to bring it into budget.

4. RESOLVED to:

- a) Note the forecast revenue overspend of £16.3m (excluding Schools).
- b) Note the forecast overspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets of £23.1m.
- c) Note the forecast capital underspend of £55.4m.
- d) Note the progress on the delivery of savings.
- e) Agree the Revenue budget changes.
- f) Agree the Capital budget changes.
- g) Note the Reserves Monitoring
- h) Note the Prudential Indicators Monitoring

## **67. Quarterly Performance Report, Q1 2024-2025**

*(Item 6)*

*David Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance) was in attendance for this item.*

1. Mr Whittle outlined the report for Quarter 1 (Q1) which set out the performance data up to the end of June 2024. Mr Whittle said that out of the 40 KPIs contained within the Quarterly Performance Report (QPR), 17 achieved or exceeded target (rated Green), 14 achieved or exceeded the floor standard but did not meet the target (rated Amber), and 8 did not meet floor standard (rated Red). The direction of travel analysis indicated 11 with a positive trend (2 more than the previous Quarter); 21 were stable or with no clear trend (one more than the previous Quarter), and 7 were showing a negative trend (2 fewer than the previous Quarter). The data was significantly different from Q1 for 2023-2024 where only 4 indicators had a positive trend and 10 were showing a negative trend. In relation to improving KPIs. Mr Whittle addressed the KPIs assessed as Red, those indicating signs of improvement and those which continued to exceed target.
2. Further to comments and questions from Members it was noted:

- In response to the number of potholes repaired, performance continued to improve since the introduction of KCC Highways staff completing minor and urgent repairs, however, the level of demand continued to be high. The number of pothole repair requests had risen from 5,376 to 7,856 for the same period last year. Mr Baker paid tribute to all staff for their exceptional and continued hard work which kept the county moving.
  - In response to the statistics for the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) issued within 20 weeks, it was noted that the data was based on a rolling 12-month average and therefore the impact of the significant work that had been undertaken within the SEND service to improve delays would only come to fruition in the Q1 KPIs. It was anticipated that significant improvement would start to be seen in the like-for-like comparison to previous quarters going forward.
  - In response to Ofsted inspection data which highlighted Kent's schools as performing above the national average, it was noted that the data would be discontinued following Government's proposed reforms to Ofsted grading. It was noted that the removal of Ofsted ratings concealed information from parents that would help to shape their choices of school for their child's future.
  - Members commented on the improvements to the Strengthening Independence Service and the hard work of staff.
  - In response to the percentage of case-holding Social Worker posts held by permanent qualified Social Workers, it was noted that a number of initiatives had been rolled out to ensure increased retention and recruitment rates, which included joining the national front line charity initiative to increase recruitment capacity and training. The Government had also issued new guidelines for agency Social Workers which placed more restrictions on the ability of Social Workers to transfer to agency work, which as a result could hinder the Council's ability to retain them. The impact of those changes would not be seen until later quarters.
  - In regard to Care Leavers, it was noted that the percentage of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) Care Leavers was greater than Kent Care Leavers. However, the data pertaining to the percentage of unaccompanied young people not in education, employment or training remained high due to the timing of when they entered the country and therefore remained without status. Confirmation had been received from the Home Office that those young people without status would have their applications prioritised which would then help them to participate in employment, education or training.
  - It was noted that a number of deep dives had been initiated as a result of the KPI data to address what could be done to shift those which were RED rated onto a more positive trajectory; however, work would continue to look at areas for improvement, particularly in relation to the financial pressures.
3. RESOLVED to note the Quarter 1 Performance Report and the actions being taken to address areas where performance is not as targeted.





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

**To:** Cabinet, 28 November 2024

**Subject:** Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2024-25

**Decision number:** 24/00089

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The attached report sets out the revenue and capital budget monitoring position as at September 2024-25 (Quarter 2). The report also provides detail on the progress on the delivery savings in the 2024-25 revenue budget, capital cash limit changes made between July and September 2024, and monitoring updates for Treasury Management, Prudential Indicators and Reserves. This covering report also identifies the actions being taken to mitigate the overspend.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) NOTE the forecast revenue overspend of £26.8m (excluding Schools) and the actions being taken to mitigate the forecast overspend
- b) NOTE the forecast overspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets of £29.1m.
- c) NOTE the forecast capital underspend of £90.1m.
- d) NOTE the progress on the delivery of savings.
- e) AGREE the Capital budget changes.
- f) NOTE the Reserves, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators monitoring

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The September 2024-25 budget monitoring report being presented sets out the revenue and capital forecast position.

**2 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2024-25**

- 2.1 The attached report sets out the overall forecast position as at 30 June 2024-25, which is a revenue overspend of +£26.8m and a capital underspend of -£90.1m.
- 2.2 The forecast revenue outturn position is an overspend of +£26.8m (excluding schools), which represents 1.9% of the revenue budget. The forecast outturn position has increased by £10.5m compared with the forecast position in June 2024-25 (Quarter 1). The deterioration of the position is a concern for the authority and presents a serious risk to the Council's future financial sustainability.

2.3 Overspends are being reported in Adult Social Care & Health (+£32.5m), Growth Environment & Transport (+£5.3m) and Corporately Held Budgets (+£2.9m). Underspends are being reported in Children, Young People & Education Department (-£3.1m), Chief Executive's Department (-£1.3m), Deputy Chief Executive's Department (-£2.5m) and Non Attributable Costs (-£7.0m).

### 3. Mitigating the Forecast Overspend

3.1 There are a number of factors to consider in response to the forecast overspend:

- Understanding the drivers for the overspend, particularly in the Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) directorate
- Actions being taken this year to reduce the forecast in ASCH
- Actions being taken elsewhere in the Council to offset the overspend

3.2 The rest of this section takes these factors in turn.

3.3 The annual survey conducted by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) has indicated that 81% of councils are on course to overspend on their adult social care budget in the current financial year, with an average overspend of 3% of councils' adult social care net budgets. So, the financial challenges facing the Council are similar to many upper-tier local authorities. The ASCH directorate has a forecast net overspend of +£32.5m, of which £22.7m relates to savings which are unable to be delivered in 2024-25. £9.8m of the overspend relates to other service-related pressures. The driver of costs are not simply a matter of additional demand, reflected through an increased number of clients. The absolute increase in client numbers requiring support remains relatively modest. The increase in spending is largely driven by increases in the costs (both complexity and inflationary) to deliver social care placements from providers. The savings that are currently forecast not to be delivered in 2024/25 are largely due to be delivered in subsequent years.

3.4 However, this does not detract from the need to take action within the ASCH directorate to reduce the forecast overspend, as far as is possible. Panels remain in place to ensure that social care need is being met in the most cost effective manner and this is reviewed by senior management. There are three particular workstreams currently in train with external consultants working closely with ASCH front line staff to identify more effective working that will deliver cashable savings and reduce the forecast overspend trajectory. Firstly, there is work on the "front door" to explore changes to bolster multi-disciplinary decision-making and to maximise enabling and preventative interventions and driving through standardisation in processes, all designed to reduce cost through stemming demand and improving more cost effective practice. Secondly, there is a rapid review of current savings plans being undertaken, with a view to identifying where savings may be accelerated and where there may be opportunities for new savings to offset the overspend in this financial year. Thirdly, there is work being undertaken on reablement and therapies designed to test whether a short period of intensive support and intervention will lead to better outcomes and cashable savings, supporting clients to be more independent. All of these activities are consistent with the objective of delivering New Models of Care and Support within Framing Kent's Future.

3.5 As will be noted, the rest of the Council is generally underspending and so this partly offsets the overspend in ASCH. In GET, actions are being taken to reduce spend, but the overspend there is largely due to the national English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. Throughout the organisation spending controls remain in place. So, for example, specific levels of approval continue to be required for any recruitment activity. Requisitions are reviewed for appropriateness and compliance with spending

control requirements. Any manager wanting to hire agency for staff for more than three months, or to extend a current worker's assignment beyond three months, must submit a business case. This should all contribute towards reducing the overspend.

- 3.6 It is essential that all of these actions continue, to reduce the 2024-25 forecast outturn to as close to a balanced position as possible. This will help limit the need for drawdown from reserves at year end, which would further weaken the Council's financial resilience and increase the requirement to replenish reserves in future years. The impact on reserves can be seen in Section 7.

#### 4 Other Factors

- 4.1 Schools' Delegated budgets are reporting an overspend of +£23.1m. This reflects the impact of high demand for additional SEN support and greater demand for specialist provision. In 2022-23, the Council entered the DfE's Safety Valve Programme for those Councils with the highest deficits to support the development of a sustainable plan for recovery. This includes annual funding from the DfE, totalling £140m by 2027-28 to pay off part of the deficit but only if the Council can demonstrate and deliver a credible plan. Over the same period the Council is also expected to contribute towards the residual deficit estimated to total over £80m.
- 4.2 There is a savings target of £111.2m (excluding changes in grant income and the removal of one-off or undelivered savings in previous years). Currently, £84.8m of savings are forecast to be achieved.
- 4.3 The forecast outturn capital position is a real overspend of £14.5m and a rephasing variance of -£104.6m, so a net underspend of £90.1m.

#### 4. Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to:

- a) NOTE the forecast revenue overspend of £26.8m (excluding Schools).
- b) NOTE the forecast overspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets of £29.1m.
- c) NOTE the forecast capital underspend of £90.1m.
- d) NOTE the progress on the delivery of savings.
- e) AGREE the Capital budget changes.
- f) NOTE the Reserves, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Monitoring

#### 5. Contact details

Report Author

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Relevant Director

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

Cabinet

**DECISION NUMBER:**

24/00089

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

**Key decision: NO**

**Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report – September 2024-2025**

**Decision:**

The Cabinet agree to:

- a) note the forecast revenue overspend of £26.8m (excluding Schools' Delegated Budgets)
- b) Note the forecast overspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets of £29.1m
- c) Note the forecast capital underspend of £90.1m
- d) Note the progress on the delivery of savings
- e) Note and agree the Capital budget changes
- f) Note the Reserves, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Monitoring

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The September 2024-25 (Q2) position for the Council needs to be noted by Cabinet. The capital budget changes need to be agreed by Cabinet.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

A report will be presented to Cabinet on 28 November 2024.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

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

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signed

.....  
date

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# Finance Monitoring Report

As at September 2024-25 – Quarter 2



By Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, Peter Oakford  
Interim Corporate Director Finance, John Betts  
Corporate Directors

To Cabinet – 28 November 2024

Unrestricted

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# 1 | Introduction and Headlines

This report provides an update on the Council's revenue and capital financial position as at September 2024-25 (Quarter 2). The report also provides detail on the progress on the delivery savings in the 2024-25 revenue budget, capital cash limit changes made between July and September 2024, and monitoring updates for Treasury Management, Prudential Indicators and Reserves.

- The Council is forecasting a revenue overspend of £26.8m (excluding schools)
- The revenue overspend has increased by £10.5m compared with the position at Quarter 1
- Schools' Delegated Budgets are forecasting a £29.1m overspend
- The Council has a savings target of £111.2m (excluding changes in grant income and the removal of one-off or undelivered savings in previous years). Currently, £84.8m of savings are forecast to be achieved
- The Council is forecasting a real variance of £14.5m and a rephasing variance of -£104.6m on the capital programme, so a net underspend of £90.1m

The administration's draft revenue budget 2025-26 and high-level plans for 2026-27 and 2027-28 have been published for the Cabinet Committee scrutiny process during November. These plans were prepared before the recent Autumn Budget 2024 announcement and the draft budget is based on an assumed grant settlement and council tax referendum limits. The administration's draft budget for 2025-26 and MTFP over the three years are not yet completely balanced. The factors causing the plans to be unbalanced are principally due to undelivered savings within Adult Social Care and the timing of the £19.8m policy savings previously agreed to replace the use of one-offs to balance the 2024-25 budget. Other than these issues, the 2025-26 budget is broadly balanced within acceptable tolerances, given the number and range of forecasts within the plan at this stage. Other than adult social care, the MTFP is broadly balanced over the three years, but as yet not necessarily in each individual year.

Forecast spending growth continues to significantly exceed the forecast funding requiring savings and income to balance the budget. Spending growth includes base budget changes to reflect full year effect of forecast spending variances from previous 2024-25 monitoring, forecast increases in prices (including full year effect of current year price uplifts), forecast changes in demand and other non-inflationary factors affecting costs, and increases in pay. The savings represent a net figure including positive amounts for the removal of one-off savings and previously agreed savings which have now been confirmed as irrecoverable (savings that were previously included in budget plans which have now been rephased are effectively rolled forward into subsequent years), as well as negative amounts for the full year effect of previously agreed savings and new savings proposals.

A final draft will be published in January which will include resolution of outstanding balances, the outcome from the Chancellor's Autumn Budget 2024 and the 2025-26 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement, provisional tax base notification from collection authorities, most up to date budget monitoring, and any other updates from the original draft.

## 2 | Recommendations

2.1	Note the forecast revenue overspend of £26.8m (excluding Schools)	Please refer to Section 3
2.2	Note the forecast overspend on Schools' Delegated Budgets of £29.1m	Please refer to Section 3g
2.3	Note the forecast capital underspend of £90.1m	Please refer to Section 6
2.4	Consider and note the progress on the delivery of savings	Please refer to Section 4
2.5	Note and agree the Capital budget changes	Please refer to Section 7
2.6	Note the Reserves Monitoring, Treasury Management and Prudential Indicators Monitoring	Please refer to Section 7, 8, and Appendix 3

### 3 | Revenue Budget Forecast

The forecast revenue outturn position is an overspend of +£26.8m (excluding schools), which represents 1.9% of the revenue budget. The forecast outturn position has increased by £10.5m compared with the forecast position in June 2024-25 (Quarter 1). The deterioration of the position is a concern for the authority and presents a serious risk to the Council's future financial sustainability. It is essential that action is taken to reduce the 2024-25 forecast outturn to as close to a balanced position as possible to limit the need for drawdown from reserves at year end which would further weaken the Council's financial resilience and increase the requirement to replenish reserves in future years. The impact on reserves can be seen in Section 7.

Overspends are being reported in Adult Social Care & Health (+£32.5m), Growth Environment & Transport (+£5.3m) and Corporately Held Budgets (+£2.9m). Underspends are being reported in Children, Young People & Education Department (-£3.1m), Chief Executive's Department (-£1.3m), Deputy Chief Executive's Department (-£2.5m) and Non Attributable Costs (-£7.0m). The report details Key Service Line variances by Directorate. Schools' Delegated Budgets is currently forecasting an overspend of £29.1m.

Delivery of savings is a crucial component of the Council's forecast position for 2024-25 and the forecast currently indicates that savings of £84.8m will be delivered. The Strategic Reset Programme (SRP) Team is monitoring savings working alongside the Directorates, Finance Business Partners and performance and analytics. Non delivery of these savings will have a significant impact on future years' budgets.

Directorate	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	% Variance
Adult Social Care & Health	585.9	618.4	+32.5	+5.5%
Children, Young People & Education	430.6	427.6	-3.1	-0.7%
Growth, Environment & Transport	202.9	208.2	+5.3	+2.6%
Chief Executive's Department	30.5	29.1	-1.3	-4.4%
Deputy Chief Executive's Department	82.2	79.7	-2.5	-3.1%
Non Attributable Costs	102.6	95.6	-7.0	-6.8%
Corporately Held Budgets	-2.4	0.5	+2.9	-120.9%
<b>Directorates Position</b>	<b>1,432.3</b>	<b>1,459.1</b>	<b>+ 26.8</b>	<b>+1.9%</b>
Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	29.1	+29.1	
<b>Overall Position</b>	<b>1,432.3</b>	<b>1,488.2</b>	<b>+55.9</b>	

### 3a | Adult Social Care & Health including Public Health

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Adult Social Care & Health Operations	524.5	581.0	+56.5
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	39.2	14.1	-25.1
Strategic Commissioning (Integrated & Adults)	22.2	23.3	+1.1
Public Health	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>585.9</b>	<b>618.4</b>	<b>+32.5</b>

The Adult Social Care & Health directorate has a forecast net overspend of +£32.5m, of which £22.7m relates to savings which are unable to be delivered in 2024-25. £9.8m of the overspend relates to other service related pressures.

Details of the significant variances are shown on the following page. Savings monitoring for Adult Social Care & Health including Public Health is in Section 4a.

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
Older People - Residential Care Services	97.5	120.0	+22.6	Pressure from slippage in savings programme	+£8.1m pressure on this service line relates to slippage in savings activity, and +£10.1m from pressures relating to client activity.  Other pressures on this service line include a +£1.6m increase in contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts, and +£2.8m from costs relating to the previous financial year due to additional backdated client activity above the level budgeted for.
Adult Mental Health - Community Based Services	21.2	30.1	+8.9	Activity and price pressures beyond budgeted levels, and slippage in savings programme.	+£4.1m pressure relates to more people receiving supported living care packages, including an increase in average hours provided per person to meet more complex needs.  Other pressures include +£4.5m from slippage in savings activity, +£0.3m from costs relating to the previous financial year.
Older People - Community Based Services	35.4	41.9	+6.5	Activity and price pressures beyond budgeted levels	+£3.8m pressure relates to homecare services where there has been an increase in the average number of hours of support provided due to increasing complexity  Other pressures include +£4.2m from savings which are no longer anticipated to be achieved this financial year, and a +£0.5m increase on contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.  The above pressures are offset by forecast underspends across other older people community based services of -£1.4m, and estimated benefit from unrealised creditors from the previous financial year - £0.5m.
Adult Physical Disability - Community Based Services	32.9	37.5	+4.7	Increases in Supported Living care packages	+£3.0m pressure relates to people receiving supported living services with higher cost packages due to increasing complexity, and +£0.2m overspend relates to pressures across other community services.  Other pressures include +£1.9m from savings which are no longer anticipated to be achieved this financial year, and a +£0.1m increase on contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
					Above pressures are partly offset by -£0.5m estimated benefit from unrealised creditors from the previous financial year.
Adult Learning Disability - Community Based Services & Support for Carers	127.1	129.3	+2.2	Increases in Supported Living care packages	<p>+£3.2m of the overspend relates to people receiving supported living services which is driven in the main by increased activity in terms of hours of support being provided.</p> <p>Other pressures include +£0.1m from savings which are no longer expected to be achieved this financial year, and +£0.1m from contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.</p> <p>The above pressures are offset by -£0.8m estimated benefit from unrealised creditors from the previous financial year, and an underspend of -£0.3m across other LD community based services.</p>
Adult Physical Disability - Residential Care Services	24.5	28.2	+3.7	Activity pressures beyond budgeted levels	<p>+£3.1m overspend relates to people accessing nursing and residential care services, with increases in activity exceeding budgeted levels.</p> <p>Other pressures include +£0.2m from savings no longer expected to be achieved this financial year, and +£0.4m from contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts</p>
Adult Mental Health - Residential Care Services	21.4	23.5	+2.1	Activity pressures beyond budgeted levels	<p>+£1.3m overspend relates to people accessing nursing and residential care services, with increases in activity exceeding budgeted levels.</p> <p>Other pressures include +£0.2m from savings no longer expected to be achieved this financial year, and +£0.7m from contributions to the provision for bad and doubtful debts.</p>
Older People - In House Provision	15.8	18.1	+2.3	Service pressures on In House Residential Units	+£2.5m relates to budget pressures across Gravesham Place, Broadmeadow, Westbrook, and Westview residential units due to staffing pressures arising from increasing staffing levels to maximise bed capacity and use of agency staff to provide additional capacity and cover for unplanned absences, alongside pressure on Westbrook and Westview from increasing energy costs.



All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
					Above pressures offset by -£0.2m forecast underspends across other Older Person In House Residential and Daycare services.
Community Based Preventative Services	7.5	9.1	+1.5	Pressure from slippage in savings programme	+£2.5m pressure from slippage in savings programme, offset by -£1m one-off contribution from Public Health towards mental health services delivered under the Live Well Kent contract.
Adult Case Management & Assessment Services	40.7	42.0	+1.3	Staffing pressures across front line services	Pressure across front line social work teams and referral services due to reducing vacancy rates and use of agency staff, alongside funding pressures related to retaining and attracting social work staff, costs associated with early retirements following a service reorganisation, and additional posts recruited to drive service improvement and organisational change.
Older People & Physical Disability Carer Support - Commissioned	1.7	2.3	+0.6	Activity pressures beyond budgeted levels	Increasing levels of activity and costs associated with carer respite.
Provision for Demographic Growth - Residential Based Services	12.5	2.2	-10.3	Release of centrally held funds	This is the release of centrally held funds to partly offset pressures across ASCH operations.
Provision for Demographic Growth - Community Based Services	15.8	2.7	-13.0	Release of centrally held funds	This is the release of centrally held funds to partly offset pressures across ASCH operations.

### 3b | Children, Young People & Education

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Education & Special Educational Needs	125.6	126.1	+0.5
Integrated Children's Services (Operations and County Wide)	300.8	297.0	-3.7
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	4.3	4.4	+0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>430.7</b>	<b>427.5</b>	<b>-3.1</b>

The Children, Young People & Education directorate is projected to be underspent by -£3.1m, this is formed from several significant variances. Integrated Children's Services (Operations and Countywide) is forecasting an initial net underspend of -£3.7m, mainly related to an underspend on community based services for young adults with disabilities. Education & Special Educational Needs are forecasting a net overspend of £0.5m which relates to pressures on services for schools and Community, Learning & Skills, mostly offset by an underspend on Home to School Transport.

Details of the significant variances are shown below:

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
Community Learning & Skills (CLS)	-0.1	0.8	+0.9	Reduction in fee income from September	Funding rule changes for the new academic year are forecast to result in a reduction in fee income expected from September onwards, where the service is reorganising to meet the requirements of the Governments priorities for adult education services. Mitigating actions are being explored to reduce the impact of this, both in-year and future years.
Other School Services	5.8	8.4	+2.6	Pressures arising from ensuring sufficient school places, higher number of school related redundancies and legal costs.	Delays in basic need projects have resulted in the continual use of more temporary accommodation to ensure sufficient school places are available (+£1.4m). In addition, a rise in the number of school reorganisations required to ensure schools remain financially sustainable is leading to an increase in requests for school based staff redundancy payments (+£0.5m). Other overspends include Legal costs, related to schools including capital projects & academisation, are forecast to remain at a higher level in 2024-25 where costs previously charged to capital must now be charged to revenue, along with a general rise in costs.
Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Community Based Services	46.7	43.6	-3.1	Underspends across most services	Forecasting underspends across most community services, but mainly Supported living (-£2.3m) and Direct Payments (-£0.2m) due to lower than anticipated costs.
Home to School & College Transport	96.3	92.9	-3.4	Lower cost of hired transport	Whilst the number of SEN children being transported is in line with the budget assumption the average cost has been lower, this is due to a combination of more children receiving a PTB and lower costs of hired transport (which has resulted from the retender of contracts relating to 2 special schools). A contingency has been added to reflect likely increases in pupil numbers and unit costs before the

					end of the financial year.
Adult Learning & Physical Disability pathway - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	46.7	43.6	-1.7	One-off extra CHC funding	Due to the high cost of the placements - a very small reduction in placements can lead to large under or overspends. Additional one-off Continuing Health Care funding received for a number of placements (-£0.9m)
Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care & Support	22.5	25.9	+3.3	Pressures on residential care and semi independent	The number of children placed in residential and semi-independent is continuing to grow, along with the average cost resulting in pressures on residential care (£1.7m) and semi-independent (£1.6m).
Looked After Children – Care & Support	101.8	102.5	+£0.7	Higher use of more costly external placements	The number of LAC has reduced since the start of year but the number of external placements has remained static – reflecting the ongoing challenge of a reducing number of in-house foster carers. The forecast also reflects the continual increase in the costs across all external placements beyond that assumed in the budget. This forecast also includes a one-off grant to support additional costs resulting from introduction of new requirements for 16 & 17 year old regulated accommodation (-£0.9m).
Children's Social Work Services – Assessment & Safeguarding Service	52.1	51.2	-£0.8	Vacancies	General vacancies across the children social work service where there are difficulties in recruitment in some areas of the county, along with general delays in recruitment. This includes vacancies across social work, linked management & business support. Total underspend is equivalent to 1.6% of the budget.
Care Leavers Service	5.6	4.8	-£0.8	Lower number & average cost of placements	The average cost of placements for young people has reduced where more are placed in more cost-effective placements under the new supported accommodation contract (rather than semi-independent). The number of young people requiring a placement is also lower than budgeted where alternative arrangements are secured.

### 3c | Growth, Environment & Transport

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Environment & Circular Economy	97.3	99.8	+2.5
Growth & Communities	31.3	30.3	-0.9
Highways & Transportation	72.9	76.8	+3.8
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets	1.4	1.4	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>202.9</b>	<b>208.2</b>	<b>+5.3</b>

The Growth, Environment & Transport Directorate is projected to be overspent by £5.3m. All services/budgets across the directorate will continue to review their staffing and spend levels to ensure only essential spend is incurred and income/activity levels will continue to be reviewed and reflected.

Details of the significant variances are shown on the following page:

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS)	13.0	15.9	+2.9	Update to DfT Re-imburement Calculator	<p>In November 2023, the DfT announced changes to the re-imburement calculator for the ENCTS scheme. The changes to the calculator were based on updating a number of key re-imburement factors/inflation factors, that had not updated since the launch of the scheme. The impact of these changes is to raise the re-imburement level for ENCTS acceptance by a bus operator.</p> <p>KCC follows the DfT re-imburement calculator for the payment of ENCTS re-imburement to bus operators and this has presented a £3m pressure. This is proposed to be realigned in the 2025/26 budget.</p>
Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres	38.8	40.7	+1.9	Paused HWRC saving, unachievable compost saving and reduced income	<p>Part of the projected overspend is due to the proposed consultation on the review of HWRC sites (Waste) being delayed (+£0.5m). The overspend is the non-delivery of the 2023-24 part-year effect of the planned 2-year £1.5m budget reduction. This is proposed to be realigned in the 2025/26 budget.</p> <p>In addition, there was a savings target from Reuse and Small Business trade waste. Some limited reuse activities have been delivered; however, meeting the full target is now unlikely due to protracted contract negotiations which have delayed the delivery of the reuse shop at Allington. Negotiations are now finalised and completion date for the construction is planned for March 2025. This has resulted in an overspend this year (+£0.2m). Small business trade waste is an ongoing project with active plans of work to develop small trade waste. Due to cost recovery, health and safety and operational issues, the project has deviated from delivering this service at the HWRCs to enhancing the services already delivered at the waste transfer stations, which have the existing infrastructure to ensure that cost recovery and income is delivered. Work to deliver a marketing plan to increase business is currently underway. An overspend has arisen this year as a result (+£0.2m).</p>

					A budgeted saving to renegotiate the rate of a green waste contract is no longer possible as the contractor was taken over and the new owner declined the offer to renegotiate the contract. The saving is no longer deliverable (+£0.6m).
Highway Assets Management	38.7	39.7	+1.1	Chestfield tunnel costs and other price/demand pressures partially offset by energy underspend and additional income	<p>The emergency works to repair and replace jet fans in the Chestfield tunnel have required a contraflow to be put in place and the expense of this and other associated costs have resulted in a significant overspend (+£0.9m). The service is submitting a bid for this unbudgeted cost to be funded from corporate reserves which if successful will remove this variance, but will impact the reserves position further.</p> <p>Pressures continue to be reported in Inspections and general maintenance across East/West Kent budgets with prices above budgeted inflation and increased works due to the condition of the network and necessary safety critical works (+£1.7m combined).</p> <p>These overspends are partially offset by an underspend on Streetlight and Tunnels energy, due to a one-off rebate following the reconciliation of winter 23/24 usage plus confirmation of a reduced summer price for electricity (-£0.5m), as well as additional income (-£1.4m).</p>
Residual Waste	52.6	53.0	+0.4	Increased tonnes offset by lower than budgeted price	An overspend primarily resulting from additional tonnes (+£1.5m) is offset by reduced prices primarily for Allington Waste to Energy plant, as the contractual uplift based on April RPI was lower than the budgeted estimate (-£0.8m).
Community Protection	12.0	11.8	-0.2	Increased income	Variance is mainly due to an increase in income for Trading Standards from the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) for Ports and Borders work (-£0.2m) as well as a high turnover of Coroners staff meaning there are always a number of vacancies and posts that cannot be filled quickly (-£0.2m).

### 3d | Chief Executive's Department

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Commercial & Procurement	3.1	2.9	-0.2
Finance	14.1	13.8	-0.3
Governance, Law & Democracy	8.4	7.9	-0.5
Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	5.6	5.6	0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets	-0.7	-1.1	-0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>-1.3</b>

The Chief Executive's Department is projected to underspend by -£1.3m.

Details of the significant variances are shown on the following page:



All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
Local Member Grants	1.0	0.5	-0.5	Currently uncommitted member grants	This underspend reflects current forecast activity. Members need to have committed spend by mid-November 2024 as this year precedes County Council elections in May 25.
Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets	-0.7	-1.1	-0.4	Additional internal overhead charge made to Public Health.	Revised internal overhead charge made to Public Health in line with policy and to align with Public Health forecast
Finance	10.3	10.0	-0.3	Vacancy management and additional expected recharge to the Pension Fund.	There are underspends in a number of finance teams due to staff vacancies. This is combined with additional income expected from the Pension Fund in early delivery of the 2025/26 MTFP.
Commercial & Procurement	3.1	2.9	-0.2	Vacancy management offset by reduced expected income	Majority of the underspend is due to management action to reduce spend by deferring appointments to new posts. This is offset by reduced expected income from Oxygen Finance which is now expected to be delivered in 2025-26.

### 3e | Deputy Chief Executive's Department

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Corporate Landlord	29.0	27.0	-1.9
Human Resources & Organisational Development	5.4	5.1	-0.3
Infrastructure	8.8	8.9	0.0
Marketing & Resident Experience	6.9	6.9	-0.1
Technology	26.1	26.1	0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets	5.9	5.7	-0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>-2.5</b>

The Deputy Chief Executive's Department is projected to underspend by -£2.5m of which £1.2m relates to early delivery of 2025/26 savings and £0.8m is as the result of one-off in-year refunds and back-dated rent receipts.

Details of the significant variances on the General Fund are shown on the following page:

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance	Summary	Detail
Corporate Landlord	29.0	27.0	-1.9	Utilities underspend due to reduced costs, in-year refunds and asset disposals.	Underspend due principally to early delivery of 2025-26 MTFP: change in asset base through disposals or change of use – together with in-year refunds for vacated sites and back-dated rent increases.
Strategic Management & Departmental Support	1.4	1.2	-0.2	Vacancy management	Majority of underspend due to holding vacancies pending decisions on timing of appointments to key posts.
Human Resources & Organisational Development	5.4	5.1	-0.3	Increased recharges of Kent Graduate Scheme salaries	Underspend from increased recharges for KGP salaries; increased take up of salary sacrifice schemes leading to NI rebates; staffing vacancies

### 3f | Non Attributable Costs including Corporately Held Budgets

All figures in £m

	Revenue Budget	Revenue Forecast	Revenue Variance
Non Attributable Costs	102.6	95.6	-7.0
Corporately Held Budgets	-2.4	0.5	+2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.2</b>	<b>96.1</b>	<b>-4.1</b>

The forecast underspend for Non Attributable Costs including Corporately Held Budgets is -£4.1m. Details of the significant variances are shown on the following page:

All figures in £m

Key Service	Revenue	Revenue	Revenue	Summary	Detail
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	e Budget	e Forecast	e Variance		
Non Attributable Costs	102.6	95.6	-7.0	Higher income from investments & additional income from business rate compensation grant and business rates levies	<p>-£1.5m high forecast return on investments, partially offset by higher interest payments to third parties. This also reflects a contribution to debt costs from the Home Office grant related to the new Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker reception centres. The underspend has reduced since Quarter 1 reflecting the reduction in the Bank of England base rate at the beginning of August, together with higher than forecast spend in July and August leading to lower cash balances and a consequential reduction in investment income. The Bank of England base rate reducing to 4.75% announced on 7 November will impact this forecast in Quarter 3.</p> <p>-2.2m additional business rate compensation grant for freeze of multiplier and temporary discounts and -2.6m additional share of retained business rates levies for 2022-23 and 2023-24 through business rates pool. Both of these figures are provisional and subject to the District Council audits.</p>
Corporately Held Budgets	-2.4	0.5	+2.9	Undeliverable Savings	<p>The 2024-25 budget included an estimated saving of £2.3m, held corporately, from further discretionary policy decisions and deep dive into contract renewals with consideration of reducing service levels. Any savings being achieved from contract renewals are/will be contained within the directorate forecasts and therefore to avoid any double counting this is being forecast as not being delivered in CHB.</p> <p>+0.75m - the planned savings from a reduction in the use of Agency staff are/will be reflected within the individual directorate forecasts and therefore to avoid any double counting this is being forecast as not being delivered in CHB. Delivery plans are still to be confirmed before this saving can be allocated to services for 2025-26 subject to HROD agreeing a methodology with CMT.</p>

### 3g | Schools' Delegated Budgets

The Schools' Budget reserves are initially forecast to end the financial year with a surplus of £57.7m on individual maintained school balances, and a deficit on the central schools' reserve of £96.6m. The total Dedicated Schools' Grant for 2024-25 is £1,769.6m and is forecast to overspend by £53.2m.

The balances of individual schools cannot be used to offset the overspend on the central schools' reserve and therefore should be viewed separately.

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. The tables below provide the overall position for the DSG in 2024-25 (table 1) and an overview of the movements on both the central schools' reserve and individual schools' reserves (table 2).

**Table 1 Dedicated Schools' Grant (DSG) 2024-25 Forecast Summary:**

All figures in £m			
<b>DSG Block</b>	<b>2024-25 Budget*</b>	<b>2024-25 Forecast</b>	<b>2024-25 Variance</b>
Schools' Block	1,260.5	1,260.5	0.0
High Needs Block	337.8	391.0	53.2
Early Years Block	154.2	154.2	0.0
Central Services to Schools' Block	12.2	12.2	0.0
<b>Total DSG 2024-25</b>	<b>1,764.7</b>	<b>1,817.9</b>	<b>53.2</b>

\*Before recoupment and other DFE adjustments including additional funding from the Safety Valve Programme. Budgets include the impact of moving £15.2m from the Schools' block to the High Needs Block as agreed by the Secretary of State.

**Table 2: Overall Forecast Position for the Schools' Budget Reserves:**

	<b>Individual Maintained School Reserves</b>	All figures in £m <b>Central Schools' (DSG) Reserve</b>
Reserve Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024*	58.6	-67.2
<i>Forecast contribution to/(from) reserves:</i>		
Academy Conversions	-1.0	
Change in School Reserve Balances	0.0	
Overspend on DSG 2024-25		-53.2
Safety Valve: Local Authority Contribution		15.1
Safety Valve: Payment from DfE		9.0
Reserve Balance as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025*	57.7	-96.6

\*Positive figure is a surplus balance & negative balance is a deficit balance

In accordance with the statutory override implemented by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and in line with the Department for Education (DfE) and external auditors advice that local authorities cannot repay deficits on the DSG from the General Fund: any in-year central schools' (DSG) surpluses continue to form part of the main council reserves, whilst any in-year deficit balances are held in a separate unusable reserve from the main council reserves (see appendix 3). DLUHC have confirmed this statutory override will be in place until March 2026 whilst Council's implement recovery plans

In 2022-23, the Council entered the DfE's Safety Valve Programme for those Councils with the highest deficits to support the development of a sustainable plan for recovery; this includes annual funding from the DfE, totalling £140m by 2027-28 (plus £2m of project costs), to pay off part of the deficit but only if the Council can demonstrate and deliver a credible plan. Over the same period the Council is also expected to contribute towards the residual deficit estimated to total over £80m. This has avoided having to identify £220m of savings across the SEN system. The DSG deficit is the Council's single biggest financial risk; therefore, the successful implementation of the Council's deficit recovery plan is critical. It is recognised, the Government's proposals to reform the SEND and alternative provision (AP) system to support a more sustainable high needs funding will not impact immediately and local actions are required.

In 2024-25, the Council is expecting to receive a further £9m from the DfE, the third tranche of the £140m safety valve commitment, with the Council required to contribute a further £14m from reserves. This additional funding, along with the extra funding from the DfE and the Council in previous years will have reduced the accumulated deficit from an estimated £220m to £89.3m as at 31st March 2025.

**Key Issues**                      **Details**

Individual Maintained Schools Reserves	<p>As at 31st March 2024, there were 294 maintained schools with a surplus reserve balance and 3 schools with a deficit reserve balance. Maintained Schools are required to submit a six &amp; nine-month monitoring return each financial year and these forecasts will be reported in future reports. The Council commissions The Education People to support Schools with their recovery plans.</p> <p>This forecast includes 3 schools converting to academy status during 2024-25. When a maintained school converts to an academy status, the council is no longer responsible for holding the schools' reserve and the school's remaining school balance is either transferred to the academy trust, or in the case of a deficit, may have to be retained and funded by the Council depending on the type of academy conversion.</p>
Schools' Block: No Variance	<p>The Schools' Block funds primary and secondary core schools' budgets including funding for additional school places to meet basic need or to support schools with significant falling rolls. There is no significant variances forecast at this stage in the year.</p>
Early Years Block: No Variance	<p>The Early Years Block is used to fund early years' providers the free entitlement for eligible two, three and four-year olds, including the newly expanded offer for working parents for children from 9 months, along with the funding of some council led services for early years.</p> <p>Each year, when setting the funding rate an estimate must be made as to likely hours that will be provided to ensure it is affordable within the grant provided. This can lead to under or overspends if activity is slightly lower or higher than expected. No significant variances are being reported at this stage in the year.</p>
High Needs Block: Higher demand and higher cost for high needs placements.	<p>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. Costs associated with the EHCP assessment and annual review process are met from the General Fund and are not included in this section of the report.</p>
Safety Valve Payment & Local Authority Contribution.	<p>The in-year funding shortfall for High Needs placements and support in 2024-25 is +£53m due to a combination of continual higher demand for additional SEN support and higher cost per child resulting from continual demand for more specialist provision. This forecast has been updated to reflect September 2024 education placements, and forecast for future growth in cost before the end of the financial year. The level of growth in spend is forecast to start slowing down during this year (in comparison to recent years, see table 3) as actions to support future financial sustainability are starting to be implemented. However, the impact of SEN transformation with greater proportion of children being supported in mainstream/post 16 settings, is being impeded by higher placements costs, driven by inflation and greater demand by schools for additional funding, along with delays in DfE lead special school builds.</p> <p>Many other councils are also reporting deficits on their high needs block, despite extra monies from the Government in recent years, resulting from significant increases in their numbers of EHCPs and demand for SEN services. However, the</p>



increases locally have been increasing at a significantly faster rate than other comparative councils and the council is placing a greater proportion of children in both special and independent schools compared to other councils, and a smaller proportion of children with SEND in mainstream schools. The impact of the is highlighted in national benchmarking data on the placement of children with SEN in Kent and our spend on High Needs Block. The tables below detail the trend in both spend and number of HNB funded places or additional support across the main placement types.

**Table 3: Total Spend on High Needs Block by main spend type**

	All figures in £m				
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Maintained Special School	106	123	137	151	163
Independent Schools	49	60	68	76	81
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP* **	46	54	61	65	75
Post 16 institutions***	17	19	21	24	24
Other SEN Support Services	49	43	48	49	48
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>391</b>
Rate of increase in spend	-	13%	10%	11%	7%

**Table 4: 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**

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Maintained Special School	5,118	5,591	6,019	6,382	6,645
Independent Schools	1,126	1,348	1,485	1,620	1,623
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP*	4,510	5,258	5,772	6,496	7,207
Post 16 institutions***	1,281	1,453	1,569	1,665	1,701
<b>Total Number of Pupils</b>	<b>12,035</b>	<b>13,650</b>	<b>14,845</b>	<b>16,163</b>	<b>17,176</b>

**Table 5: Average cost of pupils funded from the HNB and receiving individualised SEN Support or placement cost.**

	£s per pupil				
	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
Maintained Special School	£20,629	£21,648	£22,640	£23,587	£24,529

Independent Schools	£43,734	£44,799	£44,911	£46,894	£50,018
Mainstream Individual Support & SRP* **	£10,294	£10,245	£10,578	£10,051	£10,365
Post 16 institutions***	£13,309	£13,090	£12,927	£14,565	£14,183

\*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)

The Safety Valve agreement, sets out the key actions the Council intends to take to achieve a positive in-year balance on its central schools' DSG reserve by the end of 2027-28 and in each subsequent year. The actions are aligned with our strategy to support improvements across the SEN system in response to the SEN Improvement Notice through the delivery of the Accelerated Progress Plan. The impact of these actions will not be immediate and will take several years to be fully embedded.

## 4 | Revenue Budget Savings

The 2024-25 budget included the requirement to deliver savings and additional income of £81.9m. A further £17.4m of undelivered savings from the previous year are included in the 2024-25 Savings Target, increasing the total requirement to £99.3m.

This Savings section does not include changes to Grant Income of £7.2m or the removal of one-off or undelivered savings in previous years of £4.6m bringing the total savings target for 2024-25 to £111.2m.

The 2024-25 budget also had significant growth. Council Tax and other general funding in the approved budget went into adult social care, children's social care and home to school transport. Adults received their share of targeted grants and Council Tax plus a share of general Council Tax and grants. Home to school transport and all other services are funded from general Council Tax and grants with no targeted funding.

At Quarter 2, £84.8m of savings are forecast to be delivered including £4.6m of alternative savings and £5.3m has been identified as undeliverable. £31.0m of savings budgeting in 2024-25 are now to be achieved in future years. Variances over £0.5m are reported by Directorate in this section with commentary. Where alternative savings have been identified (totalling £4.6m per the table below), details have been provided. A breakdown of all of the savings by Directorate is available in Appendix 2.

All figures in £m

Directorate	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)	Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
Adult Social Care & Health	(66.9)	(41.9)	0.0	(2.3)	(44.2)	22.7	0.5	(28.1)
Children, Young People & Education	(16.7)	(14.8)	(0.3)	(1.0)	(16.0)	0.7	0.0	(1.9)
Growth, Environment & Transport	(8.7)	(6.4)	0.0	(0.5)	(6.9)	1.8	1.8	(0.5)
Chief Executive's Department	(0.4)	(0.3)	0.0	(0.1)	(0.4)	0.0	0.0	(0.1)
Deputy Chief Executive's Department	(1.0)	(0.5)	0.0	(0.4)	(1.0)	0.0	0.0	(0.4)
Non Attributable Costs	(14.5)	(16.3)	0.0	0.0	(16.3)	(1.8)	0.0	0.0
Corporately Held Budgets	(3.1)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.3	2.3	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>(111.2)</b>	<b>(80.2)</b>	<b>(0.3)</b>	<b>(4.3)</b>	<b>84.8</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>(31.0)</b>

## 4a | Adult Social Care & Health Savings

All figures in £000s

	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)	Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
Alternate Provision Brand New Starts (DP)	-3,041.1	-	-	-	-	3,041.1	-	-3,041.1
	The absence of a commissioned managed account and payroll service has hindered the planned expansion in use of direct payments to date. Alternative plans are being developed to create opportunities in this area.							
Efficiencies through Enablement	-3,500.0	-1,956.6	-	-	-1,956.6	1,543.4	-	-1,543.4
	Productivity has continued to improve when compared to last year's baseline (currently at 25% improvement). However, the anticipated target of 28% has not been achieved to date. The service is reaching maximum capacity and scope with transformation partner (PwC) is being agreed to complete capacity and demand modelling and to review productivity and opportunities for enablement services.							
Rehabilitation and Alternate Support for MH	-3,300.0	-	-	-	-	3,300.0	-	-3,300.0
	Savings were largely predicated on being able to utilise and refer into KMPT rehabilitation services in the first instance and savings unlikely to be realised this financial year due as there is not sufficient availability of NHS rehabilitation services in community. Other opportunities such as the repurposing of former care home to offer a step-down facility for MH discharge from hospital are still in the early phase of exploration, and tracking of cost avoidance of Homes From Hospitals staff in reducing levels of need for MH hospital discharges is taking place although estimated cost avoidance for the financial year does not yet indicate a financial benefit.							
Reduction in Residential and Nursing Placements	-2,900.0	-939.4	-	-	-939.4	1,960.6	-	-1,960.6
	Plans have been refined with the aim of reducing numbers of new Older People residential and nursing starts by 10% through maximising use of homecare services. Where residential and nursing placements are commissioned, there will be a greater emphasis on evidencing that best/most competitive rates have been achieved.							
Occupational Therapists	-2,500.0	-	-	-	-	2,500.0	-	-2,500.0
	Latest tracking and modelling no longer indicates that there will be any saving this financial year. The scope with transformation partner (PwC) is being agreed to widen and include a review of Occupational Therapy delivery model and baseline performance and identify opportunity to improve effectiveness of occupational therapy and reduce long term spend.							
Partnership Working (Section 117)	-2,200.0	-245.3	-	-	-245.3	1,954.7	-	-1,954.7
	Savings were predicated on 50:50 split which is unlikely to happen this financial year. Work is on-going with health colleagues to reconcile and agree S117 records to allow for costs to be agreed and shared equitably. A tracker has been introduced to monitor 'pushbacks' through Adult Social Care Connect, and work is on-going to develop awareness, knowledge, and expertise of S117 in the wider service.							

	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)	Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
Reviews: Ongoing Reviews	-1,200.0	-252.0	-	-	-252.0	948.0	-	-948.0
	Refined targets are now based on there being 0% increase in costs following an on-going review (historically we see a 2.5% increase post-review). Ongoing reviews present an ongoing challenge to ASCH as the financial consequence of those reviews is based on the changing needs and circumstances of people who draw on care and support, and the use of new models of care and support to replace established care and support arrangements. We know that unplanned reviews are statistically more likely to increase costs when compared to planned reviews, and significant challenges in the care home market has impacted the costs of meeting assessed needs and outcomes.							
Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of residential care	-8,000.0	-3,187.9	-	-	-3,187.9	4,812.1	-	-4,812.1
	<p>We have segmented provider by cost &amp; quality, and are making clear that those in the lowest band on these factors are unlikely to receive offers of placements.</p> <p>Fee Model and Pricing Mechanism: CareCubed to ensure cost effective placements providing price framework for ASPT to work to.</p> <p>Ongoing discussions with Medway/ICB Consideration of neighbouring LA prices.</p> <p>Increased provision of cost effective higher need placements (Bariatric, Complex Dementia): Scoping work as part of recommissioning with Medway to align spec and potential use of blocks to increase market provision.</p> <p>Former self funders and deferred payments/ TPTU: Task and Finish Group with key stakeholders to be set up, chaired by Operations, to review processes and policy. Conversations with Medway Council regarding their policy and approach.</p> <p>NHS Joint Bed Brokerage is forecasted to save approximately £700k this financial year, if they are able to implement their short term solution. Further savings could be achieved in 25/26 if the long-term solution can be implemented by Spring/Summer 2025.</p>							
Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of care and support in the home	-3,400.0	-2,500.0	-	-	-2,500.0	900.0	-	-900.0
	<p>Much of the repurchasing in North Kent is being carried out in conjunction with the CQC and UKV&amp;I work. Not all the repurchasing has made savings but this has been about due diligence as well.</p> <p>The new process for repurchasing care and support in the home is being finalised and they have formed a repurchasing group to support this process. This should make it easier to track savings from repurchasing non-framework to framework providers. We have also put in place additional controls over future potential off framework packages of care to as a cost avoidance measure to support the savings</p>							

	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)	Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
2022-23 Slipped Savings - review of all contracts	-4,388.5	-3,576.4	-	-	-3,576.4	812.2	-	-812.2

Joint action plan developed to align with the operational savings. The action plan includes identified touch points to provide clarity of where the work and responsibility is allocated.

Joint working document developed to work with finance to enable collaboration confirming identified savings.

Savings and clawbacks have been identified against specific providers who have under-delivered support hours.

A pilot is commencing with a Supported Living Provider and the TELS team to understand what level of support can be provided via tech rather than direct support (in relation to sleep night commissioned).

Locality Commissioners also visiting properties under the NHS campus re-provision where KCC fund the void liability, to understand accommodation type and why the unit is empty.

Complex and standard hourly rates - Analytical evaluation has been completed where there is a mix of standard and complex within a property that have been baselined by the Quality and Standards team.

Adult Social Care contracts with Voluntary Sector	-3,216.8	-	-	-2,304.2	-2,304.2	912.6	-	-3,216.8
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Cabinet Member agreement to postpone the decision to the next financial year 25/26, although one-off efficiencies across Vol Orgs contracts are expected for 24/25 which are offsetting the £3.2m pressure by -£965.0k.

Public Health are also to provide an additional £1m in 24/25 to fund priority mental health services delivered under the Live Well Kent contract, in line with the PH grant conditions. This additional £1m is one-off funding for 24/25 only.

Public Health to review towards the end of 24/25 the possibility of funding an additional £339.2k for community navigation services subject to Public Health's financial position (particularly in relation to its own transformation programme), other potential funding pressures and the expenditure meeting the PH grant conditions.

Redesign of In House Adult Social Care Services	-1,456.4	-34.9	-	-	-34.9	1,421.5	-	-1,421.5
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£34.9k to be achieved in 24/25 due to the closure of Blackburn Lodge.

Decision was taken for the remaining £1.4m to not be delivered through staffing within In-House Provider Services.

## 4b | Growth, Environment & Transport Savings

All figures in £000s

	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)	Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
Review of green waste contract, with market analysis indicating a reduction in gate fee	-621.0	-	-	-	-	621.0	621.0	-

## 4c | Corporately Held Budgets Savings

All figures in £000s



	<b>2024-25 Savings Target</b>	<b>Forecast against original saving</b>	<b>Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)</b>	<b>Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)</b>	<b>Total Forecast</b>	<b>Variance</b>	<b>Un-deliverable</b>	<b>To be achieved in future years</b>
The reduction in the volume and duration of agency staff	-750.0	-	-	-	-	750.0	750.0	-
	Year to date spend shows a reduction in spend on agency staff compared to the same period last year suggesting that this saving is being/has been delivered. However, these savings will already be contained within directorate forecasts and therefore allocating this Corporately Held saving to services would not reduce the overall forecast so cannot be presented as being delivered in CHB. Delivery plans are still to be confirmed before this saving can be allocated to services for 2025-26 subject to HROD agreeing a methodology with CMT.							
Part year impact of further discretionary policy decisions and deep dive into contract renewals with consideration of reducing service specifications	-2,300.0	-	-	-	-	2,300.0	2,300.0	-

It is assumed that savings being achieved from these contract reviews will be contained within directorate forecasts and therefore allocating this Corporately Held saving to services would not reduce the overall forecast so cannot be presented as being delivered in CHB. £2.3m has been added back to remove this saving from the base budget in the 2025-28 MTFP refresh proposals

## 4d | Alternative Savings

All figures in £000s

Directorate	Savings & Income Description	Ongoing Impact	One-off Impact	Total
ASCH	One-off additional funding contribution from Public Health towards priority mental health services of £1m and further potential funding towards community navigation services of £0.34m. In addition to the above, commissioning are anticipating -£692.9k in on-going and -£272.1k in one-off efficiencies across Voluntary Organisation contracts for 24-25	0.0	(2,304.2)	(2,304.2)
ASCH (PH)	Saving achieved through the agreement of a contract adjustment with our NHS provider	0.0	(9.2)	(9.2)
CYPE	Forecast underspend on school's compliance testing. It will be wrapped up as part of wider changes to services to schools that is being processed in the MTFP	0.0	(400.0)	(400.0)
CYPE	Covered from other underspends across Learning Disability and Physical Disability - community services	(250.0)	0.0	(250.0)
CYPE	Use of Early Help staff to meet Family Hubs prioritises has been agreed with the DfE, and staff costs are being met from the Family Hubs Grant	0.0	(560.0)	(560.0)
GET	Saving to be achieved by releasing a provision that was set up if there was an adverse impact on recycling rates if the IAA payments to four districts ceased	0.0	(500.0)	(500.0)
CED	Covered from underspend on the Empty Properties budget	0.0	(82.5)	(82.5)
CED	Covered from underspends within other Member service budgets	0.0	(20.0)	(20.0)
DCED	Shortfall on Office stream being off-set against over-recovery on Specialist and Community Asset workstreams. Future Assets should be viewed as a whole programme	0.0	(388.9)	(388.9)
DCED	Covered from underspend on staffing budget	0.0	(60.0)	(60.0)
<b>Total</b>		<b>(250.0)</b>	<b>(4,324.8)</b>	<b>(4,574.8)</b>

## 5 | Capital Budget Forecast

All figures in £m

Directorate	Capital Budget	Variance	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance
Adult Social Care & Health	1.226	-0.117	0.156	-0.273
Children, Young People & Education	138.221	-45.018	0.604	-45.622
Growth, Environment & Transport	232.120	-41.503	8.522	-50.025
Chief Executive's Department	0.205	0.024	0.00	0.024
Deputy Chief Executive's Department	54.840	-3.538	5.186	-8.724
<b>Directorates Position</b>	<b>426.612</b>	<b>-90.152</b>	<b>+14.468</b>	<b>-104.620</b>

The total approved General Fund capital programme including roll forwards for 2024-25 is £426.6m.

The current estimated capital programme spend for the year is forecast at £336.5m, which represents 79% of the approved budget. The spend to date is £123.3m, representing 28.9% of the total approved budget.

The directorates are projecting a £90.2m underspend against the budget, this is split between a +£14.4m real variance and -£104.6m rephasing variance. Of the rephasing, £41m is prudential borrowing funding (largely in the CYPE Directorate) and the remainder of the rephasing is grant or external funding.

The major in-year variances (real variances of >£0.1m and rephasing >£1m) are described below

## 5a | Adult Social Care & Health

There are no major variance to report

## 5b | Children, Young People & Education

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
Overall Basic Need Programmes	0.000	0.000	Across the next three years over all the Basic Need Programmes there is currently sufficient funding to cover the forecast spend, so there is no variance to report. There is a forecast gap in later years of £24.4m, but this will continue to be monitored and brought down wherever possible, by reviewing the timing and need for schemes, and by utilising all possible funding such as developer contributions that may not yet be part of the cash limit. Grant allocations for 2027-28 and 2028-29 are not yet known and are therefore not included in the cash limits. Any basic need grant received for these two years will go towards funding the forecast overspend.
Modernisation Programme	-0.087	-5.867	Rephasing variance is due to: -£1.2m Dover Grammar School for Girls – due to site constraints a two-storey block is now being built to replace mobiles. Discussions with the school and planning has meant rephasing of costs. There is rephasing on five other projects, all of which are under £1m.
Basic Need KCP 2017	-0.666		The real underspend is due to an underspend on Meopham School (-£0.462m), as there is a school contribution towards the hydrant and water tank costs, and Thamesview (-£0.126m) which completed with a small underspend.
Basic Need KCP 2019	+0.266	-15.174	The real variance is due to: -£0.250m Ashford Non Selective - project removed from the programme. +£0.516m Wrotham School - DfE School Rebuild Programme, increase to reflect KCC agreed contribution  The rephasing is due to: -£8.151m Cable Wharf Primary - replacement school for Rosherville which has been selected under the School Rebuild Programme for 1FE, KCC to add 1FE for a replacement 2FE school. Developer land transfer issues and planning conditions have led to rephasing. -£6.0m rephasing reflects unallocated budget rephased to future years. -£2.665m Highsted Grammar - school requesting additional funds for School Managed project which has caused a delay to the start of the project.
Basic Need KCP 21	-0.013	-2.500	Rephasing relates to:

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
(2022-26)			-£1.0m Sittingbourne non-selective, as a school has not yet been identified, and -£1.5m Cornwallis Academy – pending delivery of the expansion project at New Line Learning.
Basic Need KCP22 (2023-27)		-2.101	Rephasing relates to individual projects of which none are over £1m.
Basic Need KCP 23 (2024-28)		-5.108	The rephasing variance reflects unallocated budget rephased to future years.
High Needs Provision 22- 24	1.318	-10.921	The real variance is due to: +£1.174m increase budget to agree to the Record of Decision from available grant. Rephasing is due to: -£1.455m Nexus Satellite – school is not yet identified. -£2.000m New Special School Whitstable, which is a DfE managed project therefore KCC funding is dependant on DfE timescales. -£7.214m unallocated budget to be allocated to projects in future years.
Childcare Expansion (Early Years)	-0.250	-2.127	Real variance: It is expected that all grant relating to Early Years will be true capital spend. An estimated £0.25m for wrap around care will be charged to revenue and the capital grant transferred to fund those schemes.  Rephasing: Allocation of the grant funding is being managed by The Education People. Information has recently been received from the DfE on Early Years deficit numbers in each of the planning areas. Expressions of interest from providers will be reviewed in line with place numbers required. It is anticipated that Early Years funding will be spent by September 2025.

## 5c | Growth, Environment & Transport

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
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Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
<b>Highways &amp; Transportation</b>			
Highway Asset Management, Annual Maintenance and Urgent Safety Critical Works	6.774	-0.456	The real variance of £6.774m has increased from the Q1 position which was £4.218. This is due to an unfunded overspend on structures (£3.8m) and an unfunded overspend on inspectors (£2.8m), and additional grant (£0.176m) for trees.
Integrated Transport Schemes under £1m	0.746		The real variance is due to various smaller integrated transport schemes that will be funded from additional external funding, £0.0225m grant for Office Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) Phase 3 and £0.120m EDC grant.
A2 Off Slip Wincheap		-1.5	Project has been rephased due to ongoing discussions between the developer and the National Highways regarding the design of the A2 Off Slip, several issues still to be resolved have delayed the commencement of the works
A229 Bluebell Hill M2 & M20 Interchange Upgrades		-1.5	The rephasing is due to delays in the programme as a result of project uncertainties relating to the Lower Thames Crossing DCO decision and the unfunded transport projects review announced by Government in July 2024. Significant investigation works have been pushed into future years, which also has a knock on impact on other programme elements.
North Thanet Link (formerly A28 Birchington, Acol and Westgate on Sea Relief Road)		-7.872	Previously reported -£7.157m. The spend profile has been updated to reflect most recent cost estimate and programme which in turn reflects probable timing of approval of the Outline Business Case from the Department for Transport (DfT). Estimated spend for 24/25 is based on expected receipt of £1.9m funding from DfT in year and surplus S106 monies carried over from previous financial year. However this will be further reviewed in Q3 2024.
Green Corridors	-0.958	-4.065	Previously reported -£2.308m rephasing. Some spend for this project has been re-profiled into 2025/26 to reflect the updated construction timescales for the Green Corridors 3 programme.
Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	1.200	-0.916	An extension of time has been requested of Active Travel England for all schemes in phase 4. An additional £1.2m has been received for Aylesford Tow Path.
Thamesway	3.381		This project has been pulled out separately from the Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (STIPS) below, and a cash limit change is requested to move the budget accordingly.
Kent Strategic Thameside Programme (STIPS)		-2.383	The Thamesway project is on hold pending the outcome of the Northfleet Harbourside planning application and Ebbsfleet Central build out programme confirmation. This follows a decision by the Cabinet Member following Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee in January 2023, to amend the Thamesway project.

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
National Bus Strategy – Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)	1.105		Additional grant funding received, for which a cash limit change has been requested.
Urban Traffic Management Control	-1.201		There is an underspend on this scheme which is to be returned to STIPS.
Greener Buses – Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA)		-1.292	The purchase of the electric vehicle chargers for this project will now take place in 2024-25. The reprofiling is due to procurement/supply delays. It is now also expected that the buses relating to the Dover element of the project will be purchased early in 24/25.
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>			
Folkestone & Hythe Waste Transfer Station		-3.077	Rephasing is due to land purchase unlikely to take place in this financial year due to planning determination delays.
Local Authority Treescape Fund	0.141		Additional grant has been approved for phase 4.
<b>Growth &amp; Communities</b>			
Public Rights of Way	0.157	-0.594	The real variance is due to additional external funding expected in 2024-25.
Workspace Kent	-0.175		Due to the repayment timescales, finding a suitable project that can be completed is unrealistic, therefore these funds will not be allocated and will be returned to the GPF funding pot in line with the funding agreement.

## Previously reported variances

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
<b>Highways &amp;</b>			

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
<b>Transportation</b>			
A228 and B2160 Junction Improvements with Badsell Road		-2.757	Previously reported -£2.926. Flood Risk modelling has identified issues with the current scheme design. Therefore, further design and drainage modelling needs to be carried out and alternative options explored. This is currently affecting the overall programme for the project and causing rephasing of the S106 contributions which are funding the delivery of this scheme
A28 Chart Road, Ashford		-2.371	Previously reported -£2.236m. The current profile is based on the most recent project estimate of £29.7m which assumes start of construction in March 2025 for a period of 2 years. However, there is still no certainty on the provision of the security bond from the developer, so the construction period is likely to slip further and project costs increase in line with inflation.
Bearsted Road		-6.174	Offline works have continued to construct the new Harvestore access roads. Reductions in scope and value engineering opportunities are still being explored to meet the increased risk and contingency budget required on this project. An award of the full construction contract is still outstanding which requires further sign off and has caused delays.
Fastrack Full Network – Bean Road Tunnels		-6.127	Previously reported -£6.295m. Following the project being paused due to a funding gap, the availability of BSIP 2 funding has allowed work to start again to resubmit the planning application and to review the existing design and tender documents. This has led to a rephasing of available funds which are currently being reviewed through updated legal agreements.
Swale Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)		-3.451	Previously reported -£3.101m. The rephasing variance is due to delays in the commencement of the works contract whilst awaiting the sign off from National Highways, poor weather and road space clashes on the surrounding network (particularly M2 J5). The project is externally funded by the HIF fund from Homes England and a deed of variation has been agreed with Homes England to cover the programme delays where they have exceeded the original funding deadline.
Kent Active Travel Fund (KATF) Phase 2	-0.239		A change control has been requested from Active Travel England to transfer some unused budget to Sevenoaks Cycle Facility under KATF3. If agreed, a cash limit adjustment will be done.
Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3	+0.239	-0.239	A change control has been requested from Active Travel England to transfer some unused budget to Sevenoaks Cycle Facility from KATF2. This is forecast to be spent in 2025-26. If agreed, a cash limit adjustment will be done.
M20 Junction 7	+0.123		Previously reported +£0.144m. This is a new project to increase capacity and reduce congestions at junction 7 of the M20. To be funded from developer contributions.
Market Square, Dover	-0.307		Previously reported -£0.330m. This project is being funded fully by Dover District Council (DDC) and KCC are drawing down funding directly from DDC. The project is nearing the end and is expected to come in at less than originally forecast. The cash limit will be reduced accordingly.



Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
Moving Traffic Enforcement Service	+0.199		This is to be funded from Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding as it is funding for cameras on the fast track routes.
Folkestone – A Brighter Future		-6.123	Previously reported -£5.066m. Delays with the detailed design pushed back the tender timescales, construction is now expected to commence in November 24 and spend has been re-profiled to reflect the updated programme
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>			
Energy and Water Efficiency Investment Fund - External	-0.175		The scheme is coming to an end and repayments will be made to Salix over the coming years to repay the 50% - a total of £0.34m.
Kings Hill Solar Farm	-0.141		There is a forecast underspend on this project, however there is the possibility that drainage works will need to be done which would negate the underspend. This will only be known 24 months after practical completion.
<b>Growth &amp; Communities</b>			
Public Rights of Way	+0.151	-0.043	The real variance is due to additional developer contributions, for which cash limit change is requested.

## 5d | Chief Executive's Department

There are no major variances to report

## 5e | Deputy Chief Executive's Department

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
Strategic Reset Programme		-2.5	Rephasing is due to delays in agreement of the specification of the Kent Communities Programme co-location sites which has pushed delivery programmes into the next financial year.

Previously reported variances

Project	Real Variance	Rephasing Variance	Detail
Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) Additional Accommodation Requirements	+4.819		Previously reported +£4.047m. The real variance is due to this project continually evolving and the full extent was not known and budgeted at the start of the year. The project is expected to be fully funded from Central Government, so this variance could disappear, but it is prudent to record it as a potential overspend until the funding is received
Strategic Estate Programme		-5.596	Previously reported -£5.012m. This has been rephased as the decision to commence capital works will not be presented to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee until November, resulting in the need to rephase the spend.

## 6 | Capital Budget Changes

Cabinet is asked to approve the following changes to the Capital Budget:

Project	Year	Amount (£m)	Reason
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>			
Financial Hardship Programme	24-25	+0.080	Revenue contribution for the purchase of software licences.
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>			
Basic Need KCP 22 (23-27)	24-25	+0.012	Additional developer contributions
	27-28	+0.068	
Basic Need KCP 23 (24-28)	25-26	+1.000	Decrease in developer contributions relating to Herne Bay High School as the project has been removed from the Programme.
	26-27	+5.780	
	27-28	+0.677	
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>			
Highway Asset Management, Annual Maintenance and Urgent Safety Critical Works	24-25	+0.011	Additional grant received
	25-26	+0.176	
Integrated Transport Schemes	24-25	+0.023	Additional OZEV grant received.
		+0.120	Additional EDC grant received
Dover Inter Border Facility	24-25	-0.253	Reduction in cash limit due to works costing less than anticipated. Excess grant will need to be repaid to Department for Transport.
Green Corridors	24-25	-0.851	Reduction in grant.
Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	24-25	+0.284	Additional grant received for Aylesford Tow Path.
	25-26	+0.916	
Kent Thameside Integrated Door to Door Service	24-25	-0.017	Underspend being returned to STIPs budget – grant funding.
Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (STIPs)	24-25	-1.193	Transfer of budget (grant) to Thames Way Project.
		-2.187	Transfer of developer contributions to Thames Way Project.
		+1.201	Grant returned from Urban Traffic Management Control
		+0.017	Underspend from Kent Thameside Integrated Door to Door Service being returned.
Thames Way	24-25	+1.193	Transfer of budget (grant) from Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (STIPs).

Project	Year	Amount (£m)	Reason
		+2.187	Transfer of budget (grant) from Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (STIPS).
Urban Traffic Management Control	24-25	-1.201	Underspend being transferred back to Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme.
National Bus Strategy – Bus Service Improvement Plan	24-25	+1.105	Additional grant received
	25-26	+1.100	
Energy & Water Efficiency Investment Fund	24-25	-0.175	Reductions in cash limits to reflect repayments to Salix.
	25-26	-0.018	
	26-27	-0.018	
Kent Empty Property No Use Empty	24-25	+0.060	Additional external funding

## 7 | Reserves Monitoring

All figures in £m

Reserve	Opening Balance 01/04/24	Forecast Contribution / Drawdown	Projected Balance 31/03/25	Details of key movements
<b>General Fund</b> (including Commercial Services General Fund)	-43.0	10.6	-32.4	<p>£5.1m contribution to reserves towards achieving a reserve balance of between 5% and 10% of net revenue budget, which is considered an acceptable level.</p> <p>£11.1m contribution to repay the drawdown required in 2022-23 to fund the overspend (£11.1m also required in 2025-26)</p> <p>£26.8m drawdown to fund forecast 2024-25 overspend (the £16.3m forecast overspend at Q1 was shown against Departmental Over/Underspends)</p>
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>				
Vehicle, Plant & Equipment	-22.6	1.5	-21.1	Drawdowns and contributions to manage purchasing assets with a life of more than one financial year. There are planned drawdowns of £2.4m to replace assets that have come to the end of their useful life and £0.9m contributions to fund renewing assets in future years
Smoothing	-148.7	12.0	-136.7	Includes the £9.1m budgeted drawdown to support the 2024-25 budget
Major Projects	-41.0	10.4	-30.7	Reflects the latest estimated phasing of projects including risks around the Oracle Cloud Programme
Partnerships	-51.5	-5.4	-56.9	Includes £4.3m budgeted repayment of reserves used to support the 2023-24 budget
Grant / External Funds	-16.2	5.9	-10.2	Drawdowns and contributions to manage fluctuations in spend funded externally or by grant. Significant net drawdowns include Helping Hands (£2.5m), Family Hubs and Start for Life grant (£1.1m) and the Urgent & Emergency Care Fund (£0.8m).
Departmental Over/Underspends	-2.8	2.8	0.0	£2.8m drawdown to fund roll forwards from 2023-24
Insurance	-12.4	-1.1	-13.5	Contribution to reserves of the forecast in-year underspend against the Insurance Fund in line with usual policy
Public Health	-17.0	1.9	-15.1	Drawdown of Public Health reserve to fund one-off costs and to balance the 2024-25 budget plans

All figures in £m

Reserve	Opening Balance 01/04/24	Forecast Contribution / Drawdown	Projected Balance 31/03/25	Details of key movements
Trading	-1.7	0.0	-1.7	
Special Funds	-0.8	0.1	-0.8	
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>-314.6</b>	<b>28.0</b>	<b>-286.6</b>	
<b>Total General Fund &amp; Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>-357.6</b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>-319.0</b>	
<b>Schools</b>	<b>-58.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>-57.6</b>	Drawdown to fund Academy Conversions
DSG Adjustment Account	<b>103.4</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>132.5</b>	The DSG Adjustment Account deficit has increased due to pressures in Schools Funding. More details can be found in Section 3g

## 8 | Treasury Management Monitoring

Treasury management relates to the management of the Council's debt portfolio (accumulated borrowing to fund previous and current capital infrastructure investments) and investment 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.

8.1	Total external debt outstanding in September was £746.75m down by £25.14m since 31st March 2024	KCC debt includes £432.40m 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 15.11 years at an average interest rate of 4.33%.  Outstanding loans from banks amount to £216.10m. This is also at fixed term rates with average length to maturity of 37.73 years at an average interest rate of 4.54%.  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 39.38 years at an average interest rate of 4.15%.  The balance of debt relates to loans for the LED streetlighting programme. The outstanding balance is £8.25m with an average of 15.84 years to maturity at an average rate of 2.85%.  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.
8.2	Majority is long term debt with only 5.50% due to mature within 5 years	Maturity 0 to 5 years £41.08m (5.50%) Maturity 5 to 10 years £49.00m (6.56%) Maturity 10 to 20 years £265,77m (35.59%) Maturity over 20 years £390.90m (52.35%)
8.3	Total cash balance at end of September was £502.61m, up by £49.26m from the end of March 2024	Cash balances accrue from the council's reserves and timing differences between the receipt of grants and other income and expenditure.
8.4	Cash balances are invested in a range of	Investments are made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy agreed

short-term, medium term and long-term deposits

by full Council alongside the revenue and capital budgets. The treasury management 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 £138.96m (27.65% of cash balances). Short-term deposits enable the Council to manage liquidity. Bank accounts and money market funds are currently earning an average rate of return of 4.97%.

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 the end of September, the Council had £50.72m in UK treasury bills and other deposits with the UK government. These deposits represent 10.09% of cash investments with an average rate of return of 5.02%.

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 covered bond portfolio. As at the end of September, the Council had £117.87m invested in covered bonds earning an average rate of return of 4.54%.

The Council has outstanding loans of £16.75m through the No Use Empty Loans programme which achieves a return of 4.25% that is available to fund general services. This total includes £2.91m of loans made (£2.15m received) since March 2024.

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 £177.00m invested in pooled funds (35.22% of cash balances) as at 31 March 2024.

8.5 Treasury Management Advice

The Council secures external specialist treasury management advice from Link Group. They advise on the overall strategy as well as borrowing options and investment opportunities. Link Group provide regular performance monitoring reports.



8.6 Quarterly and statutory reports The Governance and Audit Committee receives detailed statutory on a regular bi-annual basis (the Treasury Strategy Mid-Year Update, and the Annual Treasury Outturn report), which are subsequently reported to County Council. Quarterly reports are reviewed by the Treasury Management Group (TMG). The TMG also reviews the three annual statutory reports

**Treasury Management Indicators**

8.7 The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators:

8.8 **Security:** The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its internally managed investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Actual 30/09/2024	Target
Portfolio average credit rating	AA+	AA-

8.9 Liquidity: The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing

Liquidity risk indicator	Actual 30/09/2024	Minimum
Total cash available within 3 months	£215.80m	£100m

8.10 **Interest rate exposures:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on the one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates was:

Interest rate risk indicator	Actual 30/09/2024	Limit
One-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	£3.08m	£10m
One-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	-£3.08m	-£10m

8.11 **Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing were:

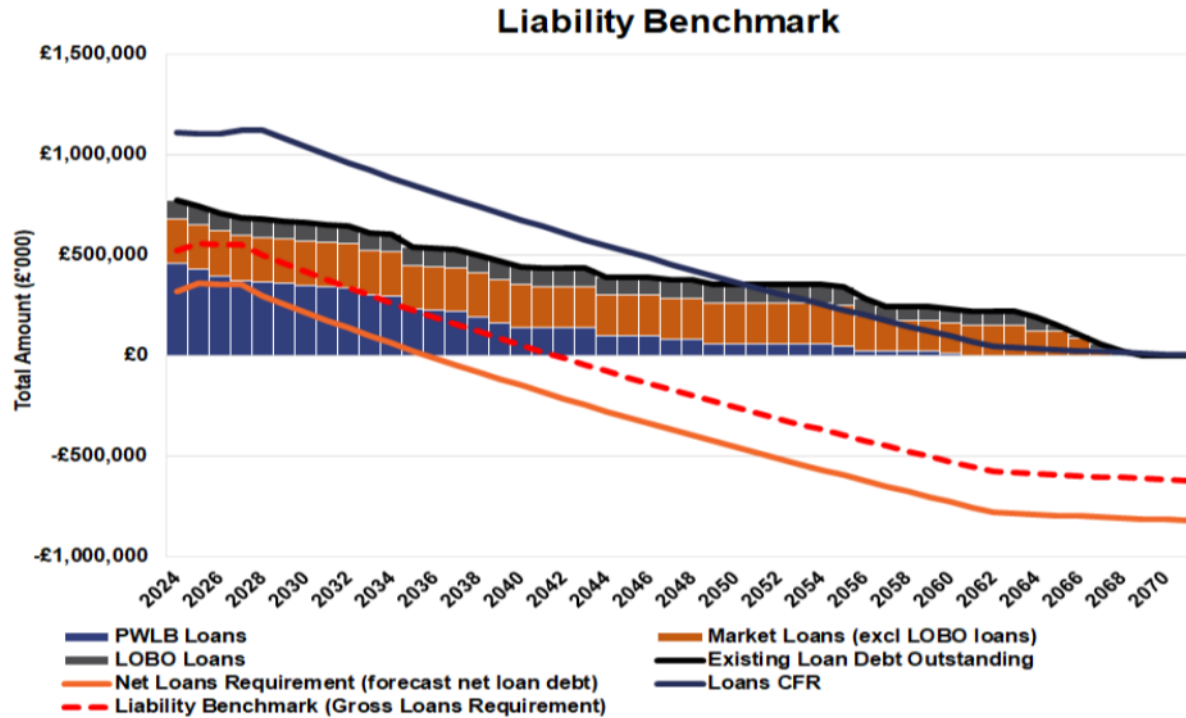
Interest rate risk indicator	Actual 30/09/2024	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	0.01%	100%	0%
12 months and within 5 years	5.49%	50%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	6.56%	50%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	35.59%	50%	0%
20 years and within 40 years	26.84%	50%	0%
40 years and longer	25.51%	50%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

8.12 **Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end were:

Price risk indicator	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	No Fixed Date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£150m	£100m	£50m	£250m
Actual as at 30 September 2024	£70.70m	£49.82m	£9.51m	£195.06m

**Prudential Indicator: Liability Benchmark**



The liability benchmark chart shows the Council should be able to accommodate the movement in Loans CFR through additional internal borrowing given the resources on the balance sheet if it wants to maintain treasury investments at the £200m liquidity allowance. However, this is based on the current assumption with regards to movement in reserves and that the working capital position remains at the 31/03/2024 level of £300m. It also assumes that the liquidity allowance of £200m remains appropriate given the £177.00m of external investments currently invested with fund managers over a long-term investment time horizon.

# 9 | Appendices

Appendix 1 – Key Service Statement

Appendix 2 – Savings

Appendix 3 – Prudential Indicators Monitoring

## Appendix 1 - Key Service Statement

		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>				
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Operations</b>				
	Adaptive & Assistive Technology	0.6	0.5	-0.1
	Adult Case Management & Assessment Services	40.7	42.0	1.3
	Adult In House Carer Services	2.4	2.8	0.4
	Adult In House Community Services	6.0	6.0	-0.0
	Adult In House Enablement Services	6.5	7.2	0.7
	Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Community Based Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Adult Learning & Physical Disability pathway - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Adult Learning Disability - Community Based Services & Support for Carers	127.1	129.3	2.2
	Adult Learning Disability - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	79.6	80.0	0.4
	Adult Mental Health - Community Based Services	21.2	30.1	8.9
	Adult Mental Health - Residential Care Services	21.4	23.5	2.1
	Adult Physical Disability - Community Based Services	32.9	37.5	4.7
	Adult Physical Disability - Residential Care Services	24.5	28.2	3.7
	ASCH Operations - Divisional Management & Support	6.8	6.7	-0.1
	Independent Living Support	1.0	1.0	-0.1
	Older People - Community Based Services	35.4	41.9	6.5
	Older People - In House Provision	15.8	18.1	2.3
	Older People - Residential Care Services	97.5	120.0	22.6
	Older People & Physical Disability Carer Support - Commissioned	1.7	2.3	0.6
	Sensory - Assessment Service	0.7	0.7	0.0
	Sensory - Community Based Services	0.3	0.5	0.2
	Sensory - Residential Care Services	0.0	0.1	0.0
	Statutory and Policy Support	1.7	1.9	0.2
	Strategic Safeguarding	0.7	0.7	0.0
	<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Operations Total</b>	<b>524.5</b>	<b>581.0</b>	<b>56.5</b>

		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Strategic Commissioning (Integrated and Adults)</b>				
	Community Based Preventative Services	7.5	9.1	1.5
	Housing Related Support	1.5	1.5	-0.0
	Partnership Support Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Social Support for Carers	3.0	2.4	-0.6
	Strategic Commissioning (Integrated and Adults)	2.4	2.6	0.2
	Transformation Delivery and support	7.8	7.7	-0.0
<b>Strategic Commissioning (Integrated and Adults) Total</b>		<b>22.2</b>	<b>23.3</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets (ASCH)</b>				
	Innovation and Partnership	3.3	3.5	0.2
	Operational and transformation costs pending allocation	1.5	1.0	-0.5
	Provision for Demographic Growth - Community Based Services	15.8	2.7	-13.0
	Provision for Demographic Growth - Residential Based Services	12.5	2.2	-10.3
	Strategic Management & Directorate Support (ASCH)	6.1	4.7	-1.4
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets (ASCH) Total</b>		<b>39.2</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>-25.1</b>
<b>Public Health</b>				
	Public Health - Advice and Other Staffing	0.0	-0.0	-0.0
	Public Health - Children's Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	0.0	-0.0	-0.0
	Public Health - Mental Health, Substance Misuse & Community Safety	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Public Health - Sexual Health	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Public Health Total</b>		<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Total</b>		<b>585.9</b>	<b>618.4</b>	<b>32.5</b>

		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>				
<b>Education &amp; Special Educational Needs</b>				
	Community Learning & Skills (CLS)	-0.1	0.8	<b>0.9</b>
	Early Years Education	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
	Education Management & Division Support	1.5	1.5	<b>-0.0</b>
	Education Services provided by The Education People	4.0	4.2	<b>0.2</b>
	Fair Access & Planning Services	0.6	0.6	<b>0.0</b>
	Home to School & College Transport	96.3	92.9	<b>-3.4</b>
	Other School Services	5.8	8.4	<b>2.6</b>
	Pupil Referral Units & Inclusion	0.0	0.0	<b>-0.0</b>
	Special Educational Needs & Psychology Services	17.5	17.7	<b>0.3</b>
	<b>Education &amp; Special Educational Needs Total</b>	<b>125.6</b>	<b>126.1</b>	<b>0.5</b>
	<b>Integrated Children's Services (Operations and County Wide)</b>			
	Adoption & Special Guardianship Arrangements & Service	17.6	17.7	<b>0.1</b>
	Adult Learning & Physical Disability Pathway - Community Based Services	46.7	43.6	<b>-3.1</b>
	Adult Learning & Physical Disability pathway - Residential Care Services & Support for Carers	8.3	6.6	<b>-1.7</b>
	Asylum	0.3	0.3	<b>-0.0</b>
	Care Leavers Service	5.6	4.8	<b>-0.8</b>
	Children in Need - Care & Support	3.8	3.8	<b>-0.0</b>
	Children in Need (Disability) - Care & Support	8.6	8.8	<b>0.2</b>
	Childrens Disability 0-18 Commissioning	1.8	1.5	<b>-0.3</b>
	Children's Social Work Services - Assessment & Safeguarding Service	52.1	51.2	<b>-0.8</b>
	Disabled Children & Young People Service (0-25 LD & Complex PD) - Assessment Service	9.9	9.9	<b>-0.1</b>
	Early Help & Preventative Services	2.9	2.5	<b>-0.4</b>
	Family Hubs	8.4	8.2	<b>-0.2</b>
	Integrated Services (Children's) Management & Directorate Support	6.4	6.1	<b>-0.3</b>
	Looked After Children - Care & Support	101.8	102.5	<b>0.7</b>
	Looked After Children (with Disability) - Care & Support	22.5	25.9	<b>3.3</b>
	Looked After Children (with Disability) - In House Provision	3.9	3.7	<b>-0.2</b>
	<b>Integrated Children's Services (Operations and County Wide) Total</b>	<b>300.8</b>	<b>297.0</b>	<b>-3.7</b>

		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets (CYPE)</b>				
Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (CYPE)		4.3	4.4	0.1
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education Total (Excluding Schools' Delegated Budgets)</b>		<b>430.6</b>	<b>427.6</b>	<b>-3.1</b>
<b>Schools' Delegated Budgets</b>				
Schools' Delegated Budgets		0.0	29.1	29.1
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education Total (Including Schools' Delegated Budgets)</b>		<b>430.6</b>	<b>456.7</b>	<b>26.1</b>
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>				
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>				
Environment				
		3.6	3.7	0.1
Environment and Circular Economy Divisional management costs		2.3	2.4	0.1
Residual Waste				
		52.6	53.3	0.7
Waste Facilities & Recycling Centres		38.8	40.4	1.6
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy Total</b>		<b>97.3</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Growth &amp; Communities</b>				
Community (Assets & Services)				
		2.3	2.3	-0.0
Community Protection				
		12.0	11.4	-0.5
Growth - Economy				
		1.7	1.7	-0.0
Growth - Place				
		3.8	3.7	-0.1
Growth and Communities Divisional management costs		0.5	0.5	-0.0
Libraries, Registration & Archives				
		11.1	10.8	-0.2
<b>Growth &amp; Communities Total</b>		<b>31.3</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>-0.9</b>



		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Highways &amp; Transportation</b>				
	English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS)	13.0	16.1	3.1
	Highway Assets Management	38.7	39.3	0.6
	Highways & Transportation divisional management costs	4.0	4.1	0.1
	Kent Karrier	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Kent Travel Saver (KTS)	5.1	5.1	-0.0
	Supported Bus Services	5.8	5.7	-0.0
	Transportation	6.4	6.5	0.1
	<b>Highway &amp; Transportation Total</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>76.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Directorate Budgets (GET)</b>				
	Strategic Management & Directorate Budgets (GET)	1.4	1.3	-0.1
	<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport Total</b>	<b>202.9</b>	<b>208.2</b>	<b>5.3</b>
<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>				
<b>Commercial &amp; Procurement</b>				
	Commercial & Procurement	3.1	2.9	-0.2
	Strategic Commissioning	0.0	0.0	0.0
	<b>Commercial &amp; Procurement Total</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>-0.2</b>
<b>Finance</b>				
	Finance	10.3	10.0	-0.3
	Grants to Kent District Councils to maximise Council Tax collection	3.7	3.8	0.0
	<b>Finance Total</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
<b>Governance, Law &amp; Democracy</b>				
	Governance & Law	7.5	7.4	-0.0
	Local Member Grants	1.0	0.5	-0.5
	<b>Governance, Law &amp; Democracy Total</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>-0.5</b>

		£m		
Directorate, Division & Key Service		Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Strategy, Policy, Relationships &amp; Corporate Assurance</b>				
	Childrens and Adults Safeguarding Services	0.4	0.4	0.0
	Resettlement Schemes, Domestic Abuse and Civil Society Strategy	0.4	0.4	-0.0
	Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	4.8	4.8	-0.0
	<b>Strategy, Policy, Relationships &amp; Corporate Assurance Total</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>-0.0</b>
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Departmental Budgets (CED)</b>				
	Strategic Management & Departmental Budgets	-0.7	-1.1	-0.4
	<b>Chief Executive's Department Total</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>-1.3</b>
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department</b>				
<b>Corporate Landlord</b>				
	Corporate Landlord	29.0	27.0	-1.9
<b>Human Resources &amp; Organisational Development</b>				
	Human Resources & Organisational Development	5.4	5.1	-0.3
<b>Infrastructure</b>				
	Emergency Planning	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Kent Resilience	0.7	0.7	-0.0
	Property related services	8.1	8.2	0.0
	<b>Infrastructure Total</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>8.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Marketing &amp; Resident Experience</b>				
	Marketing & Digital Services	2.0	2.0	0.0
	Resident Experience - Contact Centre; Gateways; Customer care & Complaints	5.0	4.9	-0.1
	<b>Marketing &amp; Resident Experience Total</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>6.9</b>	<b>-0.1</b>

Directorate, Division & Key Service	£m		
	Working Budget	Forecast	Variance
<b>Technology</b>			
Technology	26.1	26.1	0.0
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Departmental Budgets (DCED)</b>			
Business & Client Relationships	2.5	2.5	-0.0
Health & Safety	0.4	0.4	-0.0
Strategic Management & Departmental Support	1.4	1.2	-0.2
Strategic Reset Programme	1.6	1.6	0.0
<b>Strategic Management &amp; Departmental Budgets (DCED) Total</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>-0.3</b>
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department Total</b>	<b>82.2</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>-2.5</b>
<b>Non Attributable Costs</b>			
Non Attributable Costs	102.6	95.6	-7.0
<b>Corporately Held Budgets</b>			
Corporately Held Budgets (to be allocated)	-2.4	0.5	2.9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,432.3</b>	<b>1,488.2</b>	<b>55.9</b>
<b>Directorate Summary</b>			
Adult Social Care & Health	585.9	618.4	32.5
Children, Young People & Education	430.6	427.6	-3.1
Growth, Environment & Transport	202.9	208.2	5.3
Chief Executive's Department	30.5	29.1	-1.3
Deputy Chief Executive's Department	82.2	79.7	-2.5
Non Attributable Costs	102.6	95.6	-7.0
Corporately Held Budgets	-2.4	0.5	2.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,432.3</b>	<b>1,459.1</b>	<b>26.8</b>
Schools' Delegated Budgets	0.0	29.1	29.1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,432.3</b>	<b>1,488.2</b>	<b>55.9</b>

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## Appendix 2 - Savings

Saving	£000s				Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)				
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health</b>								
Alternate Provision Brand New Starts (DP)	-3,041.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,041.1	0.0	-3,041.1
Technology Enabled Lives Service (TELS)	-2,049.0	-3,460.1	0.0	0.0	-3,460.1	-1,411.1	0.0	0.0
Full Self-Service Solution (Front Door)	-407.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	407.9	0.0	-407.9
Reviews: Supported Living (Q&S) & First Reviews (23/24)	-656.8	-1,105.6	0.0	0.0	-1,105.6	-448.8	0.0	0.0
Efficiencies through Enablement	-3,500.0	-1,956.6	0.0	0.0	-1,956.6	1,543.4	0.0	-1,543.4
Initial Contact (Front Door)	-1,400.0	-963.3	0.0	0.0	-963.3	436.7	0.0	-436.7
Rehabilitation and Alternate Support for MH	-3,300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3,300.0	0.0	-3,300.0
Supported Living - LD	-900.0	-969.9	0.0	0.0	-969.9	-69.9	0.0	0.0
In-House Short Term Beds (Maximisation)	-1,500.0	-1,369.5	0.0	0.0	-1,369.5	130.5	0.0	-130.5
Reduction in Residential and Nursing Placements	-2,900.0	-939.4	0.0	0.0	-939.4	1,960.6	0.0	-1,960.6
Occupational Therapists	-2,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,500.0	0.0	-2,500.0
Partnership Working (Section 117)	-2,200.0	-245.3	0.0	0.0	-245.3	1,954.7	0.0	-1,954.7
Partnership Working (CHC)	-1,800.0	-2,574.9	0.0	0.0	-2,574.9	-774.9	0.0	0.0
Reviews: First Reviews	-2,300.0	-2,300.0	0.0	0.0	-2,300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reviews: Ongoing Reviews	-1,200.0	-252.0	0.0	0.0	-252.0	948.0	0.0	-948.0
Short Term Pathways: Timely Allocation of Workers	-500.0	-913.8	0.0	0.0	-913.8	-413.8	0.0	0.0
Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of residential care	-8,000.0	-3,187.9	0.0	0.0	-3,187.9	4,812.1	0.0	-4,812.1
Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of care and support in the home	-3,400.0	-2,500.0	0.0	0.0	-2,500.0	900.0	0.0	-900.0
Efficiencies from new contract for the supply of equipment for adult social care clients	-900.0	-900.0	0.0	0.0	-900.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - Older People	-6,400.0	-6,400.0	0.0	0.0	-6,400.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Older People	-2,188.0	-2,188.0	0.0	0.0	-2,188.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - Vulnerable Adults	-1,600.0	-1,600.0	0.0	0.0	-1,600.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Vulnerable Adults	-179.5	-179.5	0.0	0.0	-179.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Adult Social Care Staffing	-99.8	-99.8	0.0	0.0	-99.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Integrated Community Equipment Service and Assistive Technology	-4.4	-4.4	0.0	0.0	-4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of the Adults Charging Policy, in line with Care Act legislation and the statutory guidance	-2,600.0	-2,376.0	0.0	0.0	-2,376.0	224.0	0.0	-224.0
One-off contribution from Public Health for Mental Health Live Well Kent contract	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2022-23 Slipped Savings - review of all contracts	-4,388.5	-3,576.4	0.0	0.0	-3,576.4	812.2	0.0	-812.2
Adult Social Care - Consistently adhere to our policy framework in relation to areas such as: Third Party Top Ups; arranging support and debt for self-funders; transport and maximisation of relevant benefits; use of in house provision and occupancy to reduce reliance on external purchasing of short term beds; people in residential care in receipt of other services; timely reviews of Section 117 status with regard to charging	-851.4	-371.4	0.0	0.0	-371.4	480.0	480.0	-480.0
Adult Social Care contracts with Voluntary Sector	-3,216.8	0.0	0.0	-2,304.2	-2,304.2	912.6	0.0	-3,216.8
Adult Social Care PFI	-147.0	-147.0	0.0	0.0	-147.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Redesign of In House Adult Social Care Services	-1,456.4	-34.9	0.0	0.0	-34.9	1,421.5	0.0	-1,421.5
Additional income from NHSE to fund increased costs linked to HIV prevention	-275.2	-275.2	0.0	0.0	-275.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Estimated additional income for externally funded posts	-6.1	-6.1	0.0	0.0	-6.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of Public Health Services principally related to Healthy Lifestyles to ensure spending is contained within ringfenced grant	-9.2	0.0	0.0	-9.2	-9.2	0.0	0.0	-9.2
<b>Adult Social Care &amp; Health Total</b>	<b>-66,877.1</b>	<b>-41,897.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-2,313.4</b>	<b>-44,210.4</b>	<b>22,666.7</b>	<b>480.0</b>	<b>-28,098.6</b>

Saving	£000s				Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)				
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education</b>								
Estimated reduction to the impact of rising pupil population on SEN Home to School and College Transport	-6,300.0	-6,300.0	0.0	0.0	-6,300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Implement strategies to reduce the cost of packages for looked after children, including working with Health	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of 18-25 community-based services: ensuring strict adherence to policy, review of packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	-650.0	-650.0	0.0	0.0	-650.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expanding the reach of caseholding Early Help services	-560.0	0.0	0.0	-560.0	-560.0	0.0	0.0	-560.0
Review of children with disability packages ensuring strict adherence to policy, review packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	-550.0	-237.5	0.0	0.0	-237.5	312.5	0.0	-312.5
Explore strategies, including statutory guidance, to reduce dependency on social work agency staff	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Initiatives to increase use of Personal Transport Budgets to reduce demand for Hired Transport	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reduction in the number of Historic Pension Arrangements - CYPE Directorate	-206.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	206.0	0.0	-206.0
Adoption Service	-200.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - 0-25	-120.0	-120.0	0.0	0.0	-120.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kent 16+ Travel Saver price realignment to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	-100.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review our offer to schools in light of the latest DFE funding changes and guidance including exploring alternative funding arrangements and engaging in efficiency measure to reduce costs	-1,200.0	-1,200.0	0.0	0.0	-1,200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of youth services offer: cease commissioned youth services contracts	-913.0	-913.0	0.0	0.0	-913.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Introduction of charging for post 16 SEN transport and reductions to the Post 19 transport offer	-781.0	-781.0	0.0	0.0	-781.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of open access services in light of implementing the Family Hub model	-400.0	-400.0	0.0	0.0	-400.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Development of in-house residential units to provide an alternative to independent sector residential care placements (invest to save)	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Efficiency: Adult Social Care – Consistently adhere to our policy framework in relation to areas such as: Third Party Top Ups; arranging support and debt for self-funders; transport and maximisation of relevant benefits; use of in house provision and occupancy to reduce reliance on external purchasing of short term beds; people in residential care in receipt of other services; timely reviews of Section 117 status with regard to charging	-250.0	0.0	-250.0	0.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0	-250.0
Efficiency: Children's Social Care – Review of Legal Services Spend through cost efficiencies by Invicta Law and review of the use of legal services by social workers	-550.0	-550.0	0.0	0.0	-550.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Efficiency: 18-25 Adult Social Care Supporting Independence Service – Review of 18-25 community-based services: ensuring strict adherence to policy, review of packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income: Kent 16+ Travel Saver	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Care Leavers – Pursue a policy where independence is reached by a Young Person's 19th birthday	-700.0	-700.0	0.0	0.0	-700.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Disabled Children's Placements – Review of children with disability packages ensuring strict adherence to policy, review packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	-750.0	-587.5	0.0	0.0	-587.5	162.5	0.0	-162.5
Policy: Review of Open Access – Youth Services & Children's Centres – review of open access services in light of implementing the Family Hub model	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Review of Open Access Estate – Youth Provision & Children's Centres	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Services to Schools – Review our offer to schools in light of the latest DFE funding changes and guidance including exploring alternative funding arrangements and engaging in efficiency measure to reduce costs	-400.0	0.0	0.0	-400.0	-400.0	0.0	0.0	-400.0
Transformation: Looked After Children – Reduce the recent increase in the number of Looked After Children placements through practice reviews & improved court proceedings	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Children, Young People &amp; Education Total</b>	<b>-16,730.0</b>	<b>-14,839.0</b>	<b>-250.0</b>	<b>-960.0</b>	<b>-16,049.0</b>	<b>681.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-1,891.0</b>

Saving	£000s				Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)				
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport</b>								
Review of green waste contract, with market analysis indicating a reduction in gate fee	-621.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	621.0	621.0	0.0
Review of the services and as aspiration for all three to be amalgamated to ensure synergies achieved in systems/back office functions and to limit any reduction in service levels	-150.0	-150.0	0.0	0.0	-150.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Increased waste material segregation, increased re-use, black-bag splitting and trade waste recycling with a view to generating income or reducing cost	-105.0	-105.0	0.0	0.0	-105.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Work with Kent District Councils to deliver savings from improving kerbside food waste recycling rates	-80.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	0.0	-80.0
Review of all Highways & Transportation fees and charges, that are to be increased annually in line with inflation	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Temporary reduction in spend on weatherproofing windmills	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Withdraw the remaining contribution to the KCC hosted Active Kent and Medway.	-28.0	-28.0	0.0	0.0	-28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reduction to the Arts Investment Fund, which provides grants to Kent-based arts organisations	-25.0	-25.0	0.0	0.0	-25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Kent Travel Saver price realignment to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	-463.5	-463.5	0.0	0.0	-463.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of Highways income based on current/projected activity levels	-400.0	-400.0	0.0	0.0	-400.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
A review of income levels and fees and charges in relation to existing service income streams	-200.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income from traffic management penalties including contravening traffic restrictions, box junctions and bus lanes	-100.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Use of grant funding to support project & scheme costs	-100.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Increased income within Kent Scientific Services for toxicology analysis for the Coroners Service	-56.0	-56.0	0.0	0.0	-56.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Grant funding to support Electric Vehicle Strategy	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One-off increase in profit share from East Kent Opportunities LLP	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Increased contribution from Medway Council under SLA relating to increasing costs for provision of Coroner service in Medway	-49.0	-49.0	0.0	0.0	-49.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Inflationary increase in income levels and pricing policy for Kent Scientific Services	-45.0	-45.0	0.0	0.0	-45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Inflationary increase in fees and charges	-1.4	-1.4	0.0	0.0	-1.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Savings from reduced incentivisation payments to districts from the proposed introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation and where DEFRA will incentivise districts directly.	-1,300.0	-609.0	0.0	-500.0	-1,109.0	191.0	691.0	0.0
Review of Community Warden Service to deliver a £1m saving which is likely to result in an overall reduction in wardens	-433.0	-433.0	0.0	0.0	-433.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of level of campaigns and related activity within Road Safety	-200.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of staffing levels within Trading Standards service. Mix of one-off and permanent savings.	-60.8	-60.8	0.0	0.0	-60.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Adjustment of Trading Standards legal costs as Courts recover post-Covid	-55.0	-55.0	0.0	0.0	-55.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Savings from delayed recruitment	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Efficiency: Waste -Increased waste material segregation, increased re-use, black-bag splitting and trade waste recycling with a view to generating income or reducing cost	-390.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	390.0	0.0	-390.0
Income: Kent Travel Saver – Kent Travel Saver price realignment to offset an increase in bus operator inflationary fare increases in 2022-23 above the budgeted amount	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income: Kent Travel Saver (formerly Young Person's Travel Pass) – Kent Travel Saver price realignment to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	-1,500.0	-1,500.0	0.0	0.0	-1,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Highways Winter Service – Review of highways winter service policy including service levels, salting runs and network, resulting in reduced network coverage and detrimental impact on Keeping Kent Moving policy	-100.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy: Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) – Review of the number and operation of HWRC sites	-500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.0	500.0	0.0
Policy: Review of Community Wardens	-500.0	-500.0	0.0	0.0	-500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Growth, Environment &amp; Transport Total</b>	<b>-8,712.7</b>	<b>-6,430.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-500.0</b>	<b>-6,930.7</b>	<b>1,782.0</b>	<b>1,812.0</b>	<b>-470.0</b>



Saving	£000s					Total Forecast	Variance	Un-deliverable	To be achieved in future years
	2024-25 Savings Target	Forecast against original saving	Forecast against alternative saving (ongoing)	Forecast against alternative saving (one-off)					
<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>									
Reduction in the number of Historic Pension Arrangements within CED Directorate	-250.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Efficiencies within the Member support administration	-5.0	-5.0	0.0	0.0	-5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cease Early Intervention Payments to District Councils	-82.5	0.0	0.0	-82.5	-82.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	-82.5
Review of Committee support arrangements	-20.0	0.0	0.0	-20.0	-20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-20.0
<b>Chief Executive's Department Total</b>	<b>-357.5</b>	<b>-255.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-102.5</b>	<b>-357.5</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-102.5</b>
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department</b>									
Property savings from a review of specialist assets	-45.0	-45.0	0.0	0.0	-45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review of Office Assets	-763.9	-375.0	0.0	-388.9	-763.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	-388.9
Review of Community Delivery including Assets	-101.0	-101.0	0.0	0.0	-101.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Income: Resilience and Emergency Planning - Additional income from reservoir work	-60.0	0.0	0.0	-60.0	-60.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-60.0
<b>Deputy Chief Executive's Department Total</b>	<b>-969.9</b>	<b>-521.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-448.9</b>	<b>-969.9</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-448.9</b>
<b>Non Attributable Costs</b>									
Estimated increase in the income contribution from our limited companies, including a one-off increase in 2024-25.	-3,500.0	-3,500.0	0.0	0.0	-3,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
One-off use of capital receipts under the Governments flexible use of capital receipts policy, which allows authorities to use the proceeds from asset sales to fund the revenue costs of projects that will reduce costs, increase revenue or support a more efficient provision of services	-7,688.0	-7,688.0	0.0	0.0	-7,688.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Increase in investment income largely due to the increase in base rate	-2,279.6	-4,108.4	0.0	0.0	-4,108.4	-1,828.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Review amounts set aside for debt repayment (MRP) based on review of asset life	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Non Attributable Costs Total</b>	<b>-14,467.6</b>	<b>-16,296.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-16,296.4</b>	<b>-1,828.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Corporately Held Budgets</b>									
The reduction in the volume and duration of agency staff	-750.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	750.0	750.0	750.0	0.0
Part year impact of further discretionary policy decisions and deep dive into contract renewals with consideration of reducing service specifications	-2,300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,300.0	2,300.0	2,300.0	0.0
<b>Corporately Held Budgets Total</b>	<b>-3,050.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>3,050.0</b>	<b>3,050.0</b>	<b>3,050.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>-111,164.8</b>	<b>-80,239.1</b>	<b>-250.0</b>	<b>-4,324.8</b>	<b>-84,813.9</b>	<b>26,350.9</b>	<b>5,342.0</b>	<b>5,342.0</b>	<b>-31,011.0</b>



## Appendix 3 - Prudential Indicators Monitoring

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)

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2024-25 Forecast	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027-28 Estimate
Total	237.29	426.61	337.26	284.69	253.84	186.45

### 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.

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2024-25 Forecast	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027-28 Estimate
Total CFR	1,268.01	1,300.80	1,251.60	1,243.70	1,254.40	1,241.60

### 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.

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2024-25 Forecast	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027-28 Estimate
Other Long-term Liabilities	178.77	168.00	178.55	178.55	178.55	178.55
External Borrowing	771.89	715.90	715.92	684.73	660.55	653.32
<b>Total Debt</b>	<b>950.66</b>	<b>883.90</b>	<b>894.47</b>	<b>863.28</b>	<b>839.10</b>	<b>831.87</b>
Capital Financing Requirement	1,268.01	1,300.80	1,251.60	1,243.70	1,254.40	1,241.60
Internal Borrowing	317.35	416.90	357.13	380.42	415.30	409.73

#### 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.

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2024-25 Forecast	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027-28 Estimate
Authorised Limit - borrowing	946	1,261	1,261	1,271	1,248	1,248
Authorised Limit - Other long term liabilities	179	168	179	179	179	179
<b>Authorised Limit - total external debt</b>	<b>1,125</b>	<b>1,429</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>1,450</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>1,427</b>
Operational Boundary - borrowing	822	1160.6	1161	1171	1148.1	1148.1
Operational Boundary - Other long term liabilities	179	168	179	179	179	179
<b>Operation Boundary - total external debt</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>1,327</b>	<b>1,327</b>

#### Prudential Indicator 5: Estimate 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.

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Budget	2024-25 Forecast	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate	2027-28 Estimate
Proportion of net revenue stream	8.17%	7.48%	7.41%	6.97%	6.61%	6.61%

#### Prudential Indicator 6: Estimates of Net Income from Commercial and Service Investments to Net Revenue Stream

	23-24 Actuals	2024-25 Estimate	2025-26 Estimate	2026-27 Estimate
Net income from commercial and service investments to net revenue stream (%)	0.46	0.60	0.37	0.35

From: **Robert Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment**  
**Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport**

To: **Cabinet - 28 November 2024**

Subject: **Adoption of the Kent County Council Environment Plan**

Key decision: 24/00094

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 November 2024**

Future Pathway of report: **Cabinet Member Decision**

Electoral Division: **All**

**Summary:** The KCC Environment Plan is a comprehensive plan designed to unify and enhance the organisation's environmental and sustainability efforts. By embedding these goals across all areas of work, the plan aims to support environmental, growth, and health outcomes without imposing additional financial burdens. The Environment Plan has been developed with significant input divisions across KCC that have shaped the aim, objectives and actions that define the Environment Plan. Actions listed in the plan have corresponding target outcomes which will be reported on annually at Environment and Transport Committee to ensure that progress is monitored and maintained.

**Recommendation(s):** Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision to:

- To adopt the Kent Environment Plan on behalf of Kent County Council.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision as shown at Appendix A.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent boasts a rich, diverse and unique natural environment that benefits the health and well-being of Kent residents and is crucial for sustainable economic and social growth.

- 1.2 The Kent environment is facing unprecedented challenges. Climate change, habitat and biodiversity loss, flooding and sea level rises, invasive species and pollutants contaminating our natural and marine ecosystems, air and water quality problems and resource depletion are all issues affecting the county.
- 1.3 The UK government has responded to environmental challenges by implementing several key policies and pieces of legislation including the 25-Year Environment Plan, the Environment Act 2021, the 2023 Green Finance Strategy and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023.
- 1.4 The pace of legislative change has accelerated and KCC has responded by developing its own knowledge, strategies and action plans in response to the increase in duties and responsibilities required of the Authority.
- 1.5 The development of policy and strategy has resulted in an explosion of environmental activity that is delivering significant outcomes for and within Kent. However, this activity is, by design, often focused on a specific policy or target and does not benefit from a holistic approach.
- 1.6 Financial challenges including the withdrawal of both EU and UK government funding and the financial pressures on the Authority have reduced the ability to progress environmental activity at the pace and scale currently needed to deliver required outcomes.
- 1.7 Kent County Council's Environment Plan outlines KCC's role in delivering the national agenda locally and focuses on a holistic approach that delivers maximum benefits. The Environment Plan does not seek to replace previous strategies and policies but acts as an umbrella plan to provide clarity of priorities and action and enabling progress to be made most efficiently and effectively.
- 1.8 The Environment Plan recognises the interconnected principles of Environment, Growth and Health supporting mutual progress and providing significant co-benefits without requiring fundamental changes to current or future work.

## **2. Overview of the Kent County Council Environment Plan**

- 2.1 The 25-Year Environment Plan, introduced in 2018, emphasises the natural environment as a vital inheritance to be protected and enhanced for future generations. It outlines ten long-term goals, including cleaner air and water, thriving plants and animals and a greener country for everyone. By fostering better connections to nature, the plan aims to make this generation the first to leave the environment in a better state than it was found, ensuring a protected and enhanced natural environment for the future.
- 2.2 The Environment Act 2021 is a landmark piece of legislation aimed at improving environmental protection in the UK. It sets legally binding targets to enhance air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, halt species decline and improve the natural environment. The Act imposes greater duties on local authorities, including developing Local Nature Recovery Strategies, conserving biodiversity, reforming waste services, reducing pollution and ensuring

community involvement in green space decisions. It works alongside existing policies to enhance their impact.

- 2.3 The 2023 Green Finance Strategy, titled “Mobilising Green Investment,” aims to position the UK as a global leader in green finance. It focuses on enhancing the growth and competitiveness of UK financial services, mobilising private sector investment in the green economy, integrating climate and environmental risks into financial decision-making, incorporating nature and biodiversity into financial strategies and aligning financial flows with the UK’s climate and nature goals. This strategy supports the transition to a sustainable economy and reinforces the UK’s commitment to addressing climate change and environmental sustainability.
- 2.4 The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023, the first revision of the 25-Year Environment Plan, outlines how the government will collaborate with landowners, communities, and businesses to achieve environmental goals. It focuses on ten key areas: thriving plants and wildlife, clean air, clean and plentiful water, managing exposure to chemicals, maximising resources while minimising waste, sustainable use of natural resources, climate change mitigation and adaptation, reducing environmental hazards, enhancing biosecurity and improving the beauty and engagement with the natural environment. The plan sets ambitious targets to improve air quality, ensure clean water, halt biodiversity decline, and enhance resource efficiency and waste reduction, aiming for a sustainable and prosperous future.
- 2.5 The aim of the KCC Environment Plan is to safeguard and improve our environment, supporting healthy communities and sustainable growth. This mirrors the governments approach to consider environment not as a solo discipline but one embedded within health and growth to ensure long-term sustainability.
- 2.6 The Environment Plan aims to deliver on the following objectives to work towards the overarching aim:
  - Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions: enable the delivery of green energy infrastructure in the county, deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions across KCC’s estate and operations and collaborate with partners to achieve countywide net zero emissions
  - Adapt to a changing climate: assess the risks and impacts of climate change and reduce the impact on our residents by adapting to Kent’s future climate and more frequent severe weather
  - Reduce flood risk and manage water resources effectively: mitigate flood risk and contribute to improving community flood resilience, sustainable drainage and water efficiency across the county.
  - Protect and improve the natural and built environment: drive nature protection and recovery across the county, ensure that our habitats are abundant with wildlife and plants and drive environmentally sustainable development
  - Manage resources through a circular economy: manage materials more efficiently by minimising wates and reusing and recycling materials, enabling the development of a circular economy in Kent

- Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage: ensure that Kent's historical environment is sustained for future generations and promote public engagement with our unique countryside and natural beauty
- 2.7 Actions to meet each objective are set out in Section 6 of the Environment Plan. An annual monitoring report of the plan will be provided that will outline planned activity for each year and show progress made against each action ensuring that the plan remains live and fit for purpose over time.
- 2.8 The actions that support the delivery of the objectives will be reviewed as part of the annual report.
- 2.9 The adoption of the Environment Plan supports the national delivery of environmental outcomes. It also meets outcomes of Priority 3 of Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026, 'Environmental Step Change', which seeks to reach our Net Zero targets, protect and strengthen our natural environment, work with our partners towards Kent being Net Zero by 2050, explore options for carbon zero energy production and use and ensure that the county is well placed to adapt to climate change.

### **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 KCC's Environment Plan has been developed by base funded staff from the Environment and Circular Economy Division, and at no additional cost to the council. Staff time will be the main resource required to deliver the objectives and actions that are set out in this plan and will be undertaken by base funded staff from all services involved. The objectives and actions are predominantly focused on capacity building through upskilling and knowledge transfer, as well as practical support and collaboration to embed the goals across the organisation and take into account relevant spending controls including Securing Kent's Future.
- 3.2 Actions that self-impose a duty to consider environmental impacts will be undertaken on a no regret basis where it is possible to do so at net cost to the council.
- 3.3 Opportunities to invest further in environmental outcomes may be developed as a result of activity relating to the delivery of the action plan. Requests for further funding will be considered after the development of robust business cases. Where match funding or in-kind funding may be required, it will be assessed on a project-by-project basis.
- 3.4 Financing options underpinned by KCC's emerging green finance strategy will provide an alternative route to funding for environmental outcomes. This will be crucial in funding environmental interventions moving forward, as current budgets are highly unlikely to be able to fund the measures that are needed to meet the scale of the environmental challenge faced by KCC, unless there are significant changes to how local government is funded.

## 4 Equalities implications

- 4.1 An EqIA has been undertaken and concluded that there are no positive or adverse implications to any groups with protected characteristics as a result of this plan and that the plan complies with the Equality Duty 2010.

## 5 Other corporate implications

- 5.1 Relevant services within the council will need to consider the Environment Plan in relation to their operations as they are already required to do. Delivering the Environment Plan will require organisation wide support to ensure that actions and activity in all areas of the business are considered alongside the sustainability requirements of the Environment Plan in order that outcomes and co-benefits are maximised, and duplication of effort minimised. There are no expectations for any additional spending.

## 6 Conclusions

- 6.1 The KCC Environment Plan is a comprehensive plan designed to unify and enhance the organisation's environmental and sustainability efforts. By embedding these goals across all areas of work, the plan aims to support environmental, growth, and health outcomes without imposing additional financial burdens. Internal stakeholders have been consulted during the development of the Environment Plan and amendments have been made accordingly. It is considered that the Environment Plan can be adopted at no additional financial burden to the council.

## 7 Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision to:

- To adopt the Kent Environment Plan on behalf of Kent County Council.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision as shown at Appendix A.

## 8 Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix A: Proposed Record of Decision

Appendix 1 : KCC Environment Plan v5

Appendix 2: Environmental Achievements 2023-24

Appendix 3: Governance Structure for the Environment Plan

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment

## 9 Contact details

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment

**DECISION NO:**

24/00094

For publication

Key decision: YES / NO

**Subject Matter Adoption of Kent County Council Environment Plan****Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree to:

- To adopt the Kent Environment Plan on behalf of Kent County Council.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The UK environment is facing challenges from climate change, habitat and biodiversity loss, flooding and sea level rises, invasive species and pollutants contaminating our natural and marine ecosystems, air and water quality problems and resource depletion. The UK government has responded to environmental challenges by implementing several key policies and pieces of legislation including the 25-Year Environment Plan, the Environment Act 2021, the 2023 Green Finance Strategy and the Environmental Improvement Plan 2023. KCC has responded by developing its own knowledge, strategies and action plans in response to the increase in duties and responsibilities required of the Authority. Kent County Council's Environment Plan outlines KCC's role in delivering the national agenda locally and focuses on a holistic approach that delivers maximum benefits. The Environment Plan does not seek to replace previous strategies and policies but acts as an umbrella plan to provide clarity of priorities and action and enabling progress to be made most efficiently and effectively.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Members of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee will consider the proposal at their meeting on 14 November 2024.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

To not have a Plan rejected as the Environment Plan as written will act as an umbrella plan to provide clarity of priorities and action and enabling progress to be made most efficiently and effectively across a range of existing policies and strategies.

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

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.....  
signed

.....  
Date

# Kent County Council Draft Environment Plan



Governance Route		
Place	Date	Version
GET DivLT	02/09/24	v1.0
Rob Thomas and Tony Hills	06/09/24	v2.0
KMEG	09/09/24	Summary only
Leader	13/09/24	v3.0
SLF / Ext SLF	17/09/24	v3.0
CMT	17/09/24	v3.0
CPMG	20/09/24	v3.0
Environment Board	26/09/24	v3.0
CMM	07/10/24	v4.0
ETCC	14/11/24	v5.0

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## 1. Executive Summary

## 2. Introduction

## 3. Policy Landscape

3.1 National context

3.2 Kent context

3.3 A long-term vision for the UK Environment

## 4. Delivering in Kent

4.1 Our environment plan

4.2 Our goals

4.3 Linked strategies

4.4 Embedding these goals in the organisation

4.5 Outcomes

4.6 Delivery approach

4.7 Funding

4.8 Governance

## 5. Measures of Success

## 6. Annual Action Plan 2025-26

## 7. Appendices

## 1. Executive Summary

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Kent boasts a rich and diverse environment, full of internationally important habitats, nature reserves and protected landscapes that enhance Kent's natural beauty and ecological health. Our environment is crucial for sustainable economic and social growth,

supporting a range of industries, driving innovation in green technologies and fostering community identity and cohesion. And a healthy environment that provides access to green open spaces also improves the mental and physical wellbeing of our residents.

Kent County Council (KCC) has invested significantly in enhancing our environment, reducing our own environmental footprint and supporting our residents and businesses to do the same. However, the Kent environment faces unprecedented challenges from climate change, air and water pollution and biodiversity loss, with communities and industries across the county already dealing with the environmental, economic and health related consequences of these challenges.

The size and scale of this task means that we need to transform the way we think and the way we operate, harnessing the multiple benefits that come from considering environmental improvement alongside sustainable economic growth and population health.

This plan aims to do just that, through identifying six environmental goals that we will embed in our business, whilst enabling and inspiring all parts of our community to work together to deliver environmental step change. These goals are:

1. Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions
2. Adapt to our changing climate
3. Reduce flood risk and effectively manage water resources
4. Protect and improve the natural and built environment
5. Manage resources through a circular economy
6. Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage.

Delivery will be focused on the six interconnected themes of delivery through partnership, leveraging private equity and investment, strategic planning, our buildings, our assets and delivering social value through our commissioning activities.

Each of these goals has a set of clear actions that are flexible and scalable, enabling activity to be responsive to opportunities and resources as they arise. The action plan will be reviewed by Members annually, with progress published on the kent.gov website.

## 2. Introduction



Kent, the Garden of England, boasts a unique, rich and diverse environment that has supported its reputation of lush landscapes, fertile farmland and stunning gardens for centuries. With habitats ranging from woodlands, wetlands and extensive coastal areas to the UK's only desert, Kent is home to numerous endangered species and a stunning variety of flora and fauna. The county's internationally important sites, national nature reserves, protected landscapes and local wildlife sites contribute significantly to conservation and environmental sustainability, enhancing Kent's natural beauty and ecological health.

The environment in Kent is crucial for sustainable economic and social growth. Natural resources support industry and agriculture, while the county's landscapes and biodiversity attract tourism and investment. Sustainable practices and green initiatives create jobs and drive innovation in low-carbon technologies. Sustainable economic development promotes prosperity and a prosperous local economy supports a good quality of life. Additionally, Kent's cultural and heritage significance fosters community identity and cohesion, highlighting the vital connection between the environment and economic and social stability.

Protecting and preserving Kent's environment ensures better health outcomes for communities. Healthy ecosystems provide essential resources for agriculture and fisheries, supporting food security. Clean air and water reduce exposure to pollutants, lowering the risk of disease. Access to green spaces improves mental well-being and provides opportunities for physical activity, enhancing quality of life and reducing healthcare costs through prevention.

Through consistent and focused effort, KCC has made significant progress towards its environmental priorities over recent years:

- Reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from its own estate and operations by over 50% and bringing together a county wide partnership with collective actions targeting Net Zero 2050 for the county.
- Implementing comprehensive waste reduction initiatives and recycling programs, significantly reducing landfill waste.
- Enhancing biodiversity through local habitat restoration projects and the creation of greenspace as well as directly managing 1,500 hectares of land in its country parks to protect and restore nature and support health and wellbeing through community access.
- Investing in renewable energy projects including solar panel installations on public buildings and schools and supporting residents to access schemes to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.
- Leveraging millions of pounds of UK government and EU funding to support the decarbonisation of businesses and buildings in the county and to stimulate the green skills market.
- Implementing natural flood management techniques such as wetland restoration and tree planting to enhance water retention and reduce flood risks, as well as schemes that directly protect Kent residents and businesses from flooding.
- Integrating climate resilience into its heritage conservation work to protect heritage assets from environmental threats.

More detail on environmental achievements in 2023/24 can be found in Appendix 1.

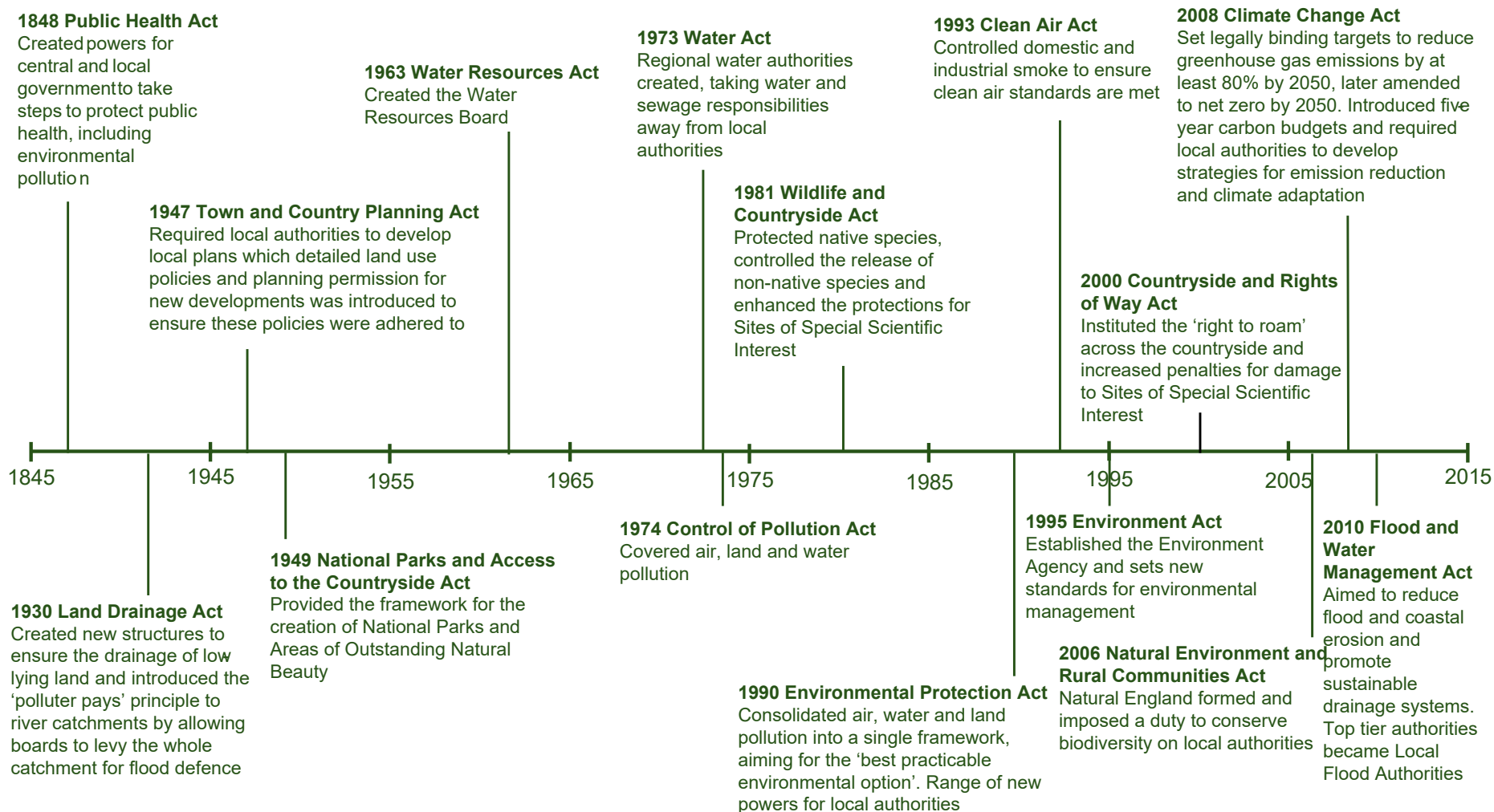
However, despite these significant efforts, Kent's environment continues to face unprecedented challenges. Climate change is bringing warmer seasons, more extreme weather patterns leading to flooding and drought and coastal erosion from rising sea levels. Air and water pollution from traffic and industrial activities impact our terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. And biodiversity loss due to fragmented habitats and overdevelopment pressurises the county's infrastructure and natural resources. Communities and industries across the county are already having to deal with the consequences of these challenges.

The size and scale of this task means that we need to transform the way that we think and the way we operate, embedding environmental priorities into our operations whilst leveraging our role as community leaders to inspire all parts of the Kent community to work together to deliver environmental step change.

### 3. Policy Landscape

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#### 3.1. National context



The chart above provides a snapshot of some of the key pieces of legislation that have sought to (directly or indirectly) protect or enhance the natural environment, dating back to the industrial revolution and the first Public Health Act in 1848.



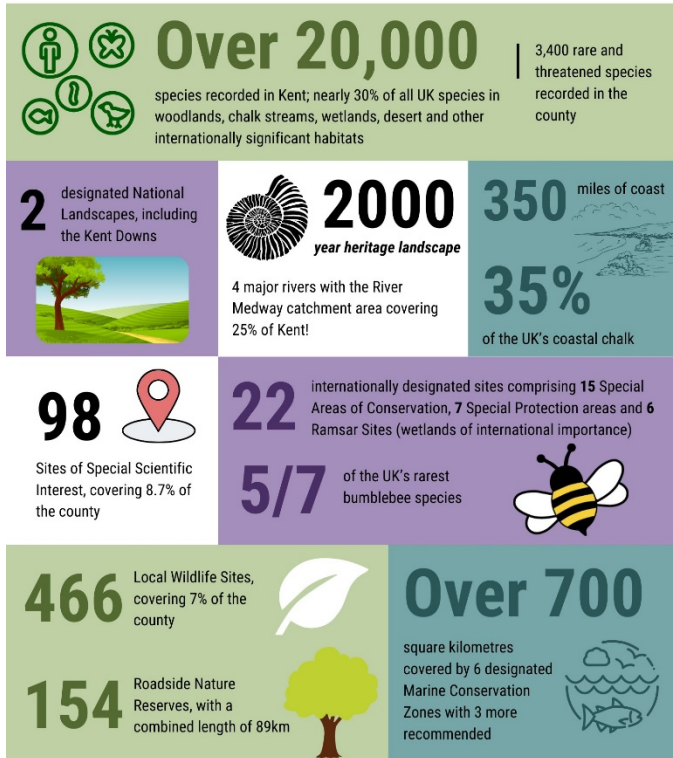
The pace of legislative change accelerated significantly between the Environmental Protection Act in 1990 and the Flood and Water Act in 2010, in response to international commissions and treaties, pan-national directives and national issues. With this acceleration has increasingly come additional powers, duties and responsibilities for local authorities.

### 3.2. Kent context

## ENVIRONMENT PLAN

### SUSTAINABLE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

**Kent's uniquely rich habitat and biodiversity**  
What's so special about Kent?



Kent's rich biodiversity, natural and heritage landscapes not only support ecological health but also attract tourism and inward investment, fostering economic growth. Sustainable practices and green initiatives create new markets and green jobs, driving innovation in low-carbon technologies. Additionally, access to green spaces, a stronger connection to nature, clean air and water, and better climate resilience enhance physical and mental health, reducing healthcare costs through prevention and improving residents' quality of life.

As legislative duties and responsibilities on local authorities increased, KCC invested in teams, increased its knowledge and expertise and worked with partners. We have delivered groundbreaking projects, improved performance and made a significant difference to the Kent environment. We also innovated, tested and pushed boundaries and came to realise that if we were truly going to respond to the challenges being faced by the environment, addressing the environmental determinants that enable healthy lives including housing, transport and the natural and built environment with a systems approach was needed.

The development of strategy formed a key part of this response:

**2020 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy**

The 2020 Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy builds on the 2016 Kent Environment Strategy, outlining pathways to net-zero emissions by 2050, improving air quality and promoting clean energy. It integrates sustainable practices across sectors, enhances public sector decision-making and fosters low carbon business growth to address the climate emergency and support resilient economic growth.

**2016 Kent Environment Strategy**

The 2016 Kent Environment Strategy aims to balance environmental protection with economic and community well-being. It focuses on building delivery foundations, optimising resource use while minimising impacts and fostering a sustainable future through cross-sector collaboration to enhance natural assets, support growth and create vibrant communities.

**Framing Kents Future 2022-26**

Framing Kent's Future (2022-2026) prioritises economic recovery, infrastructure development, environmental protection and improved health and social care services. It aims to level up Kent by reducing disparities, ensuring necessary infrastructure, achieving Net Zero by 2050 and integrating new technologies for better care and support.

The strategies prioritise fostering economic growth, enhancing public health through prevention and improving quality of life and ensuring environmental sustainability. They emphasise collaboration, innovation and the use of cutting-edge technologies to boost efficiency and productivity, all while addressing significant financial and environmental challenges.

### 3.3. A long-term vision for the UK environment

In 2018, the UK government set out a long-term approach to environmental protection and improvement in its [25-year Environment Plan](#). This plan highlighted the natural environment as our most precious inheritance that we must protect and enhance for future generations. Its long-term goals (as shown in figure 1) include cleaner air and water, thriving plants and animals and a cleaner, greener country for everyone. By fostering better connections to nature, the plan aims to make our generation the first to leave the environment in a better state than we found it, ensuring a protected and enhanced natural environment for the future.

This ambitious plan was followed by the groundbreaking [Environment Act 2021](#), described as a turning point for nature recovery. This world-leading legislation aims to improve environmental protection in the UK by setting legally binding targets to enhance air and water quality, tackle waste, increase recycling, halt species decline and improve the natural environment. The Act imposes greater duties and responsibilities on local authorities, including developing and implementing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy, conserving and enhancing biodiversity, reforming waste and recycling services, reducing pollution from vehicles and industry and ensuring community involvement in decisions affecting local green spaces. The Act also requires the government to consider the environmental impact of all decision-making processes. Importantly, the Act does not replace existing policies but works alongside them to enhance their reach and impact.

The [2023 Green Finance Strategy](#), titled “Mobilising Green Investment,” aims to position the UK as a global leader in green finance by focusing on five key objectives: enhancing the growth and competitiveness of UK financial services, mobilising private sector investment in the green economy, integrating climate and environmental risks into financial decision-making to ensure financial stability, incorporating nature and biodiversity into financial strategies and aligning financial flows with the UK’s climate and nature goals. These objectives collectively support the transition to a sustainable economy and reinforce the UK’s commitment to addressing climate change and environmental sustainability, with the aim of accelerating global growth in green finance. The strategy provides several avenues to support and enable KCC to develop a model for financing its new and existing responsibilities. However, it also places the responsibility for funding these initiatives back on local authorities. To meet its environmental

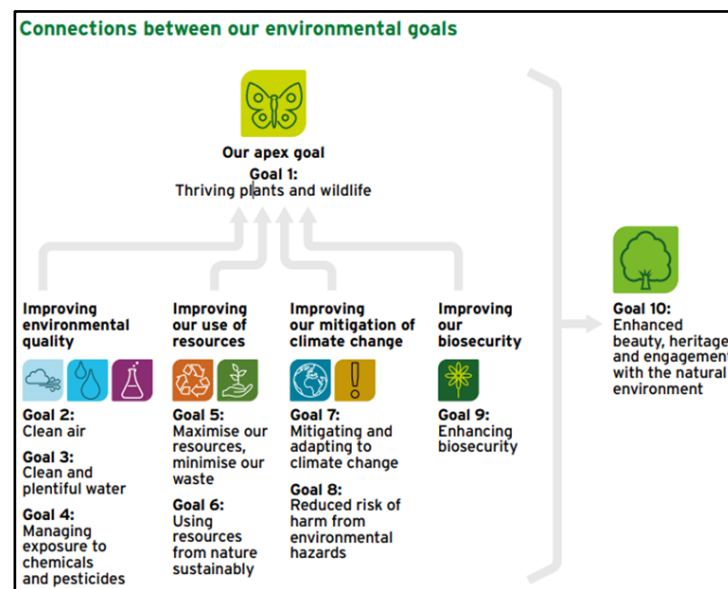


Figure 1 – the 10 environmental goals contained in the 25-year Environment Plan

aspirations, KCC will need to attract and facilitate investment in projects and infrastructure through partnerships with stakeholders, including the private sector and financial institutions.

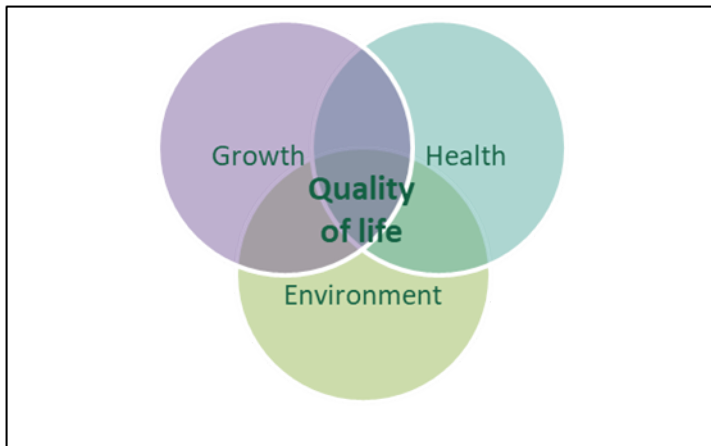
Following the Green Finance Strategy, the government released the [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#), the first revision of the UK's 25-Year Environment Plan. This delivery plan outlines how the government will collaborate with landowners, communities and businesses to achieve environmental goals. The plan focuses on ten key areas: thriving plants and wildlife, clean air, clean and plentiful water, managing exposure to chemicals, maximising resources while minimising waste, sustainable use of natural resources, climate change mitigation and adaptation, reducing environmental hazards, enhancing biosecurity and improving the beauty and engagement with the natural environment.

The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 sets ambitious targets to improve air quality, ensure clean and plentiful water, halt biodiversity decline, and enhance resource efficiency and waste reduction. It also aims to increase woodland cover and protect marine environments. By integrating environmental goals with economic strategies and health outcomes, the plan seeks to foster a more sustainable and prosperous future that enhances public well-being.

## 4. Delivering in Kent

### 4.1. Our environment plan

Given this legislative and policy framework, our environment plan outlines KCC's role in delivering the national agenda locally, focusing on holistically protecting and enhancing the Kent environment. Our plan does not seek to replace previous strategies and policies but acts as an umbrella plan to enhance and, where possible, improve them. It also links to wider strategies that are not specifically environmentally focused such as those delivering health, growth, transport and asset management but where environmental outcomes can be achieved as a co-benefit. This approach allows us to build on past work and progress, enabling us to move further and faster, driven by a consistent framework that addresses both current and future challenges.



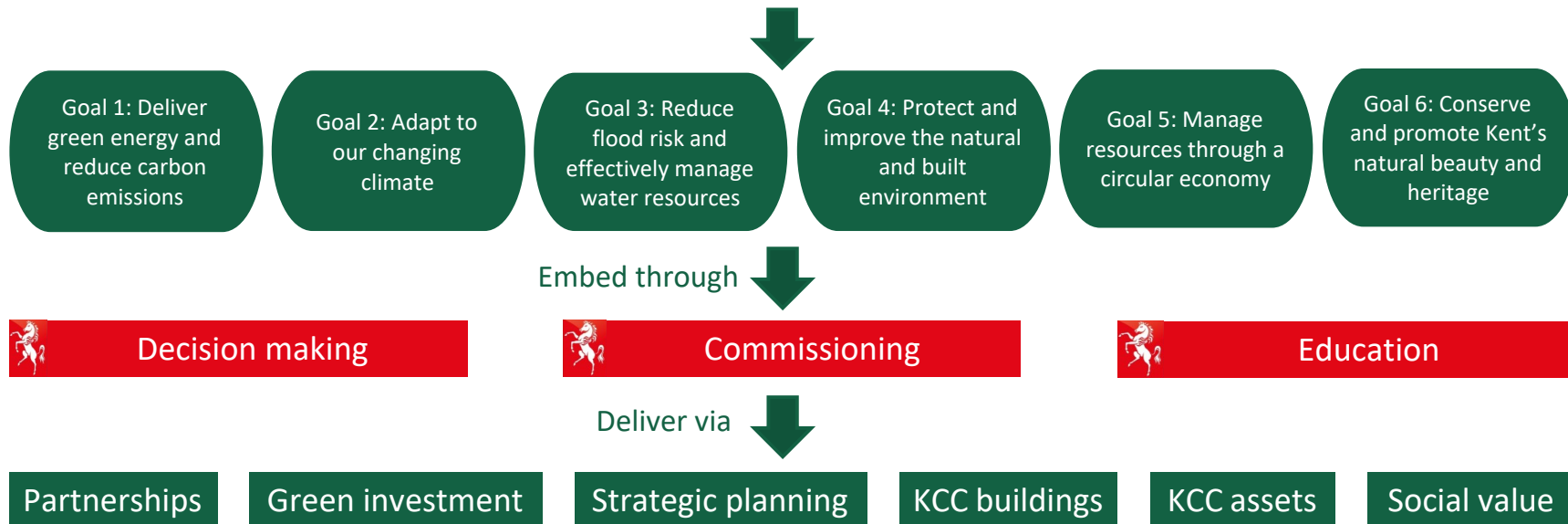
Much like the government's approach, our environment plan recognises the interconnected principles of environment, growth and health. By integrating these principles, the plan aims to align with existing and new strategies, leading to outcomes that are more sustainable, affordable and equitable. By working closely with policymakers and delivery teams, the environment plan will support mutual progress and activities, providing significant co-benefits without requiring fundamental changes to existing or future work.

Our aim is to safeguard and improve our environment, supporting healthy communities and sustainable growth. To achieve this, our plan identifies six goals that we will embed across the organisation, ensuring that environmental considerations are integrated into how we operate. We will deliver these goals through six interconnected approaches. This is discussed in more detail in the

following sections.



Our aim: A protected and enhanced environment that enables our communities to be healthy and supports the delivery of sustainable growth



## 4.2. Our goals

Our goals encompass both statutory duties and areas where KCC can influence environmental outcomes through internal and external collaboration and partnerships. These ambitious goals outline KCC's role in delivering the national agenda amidst unprecedented change, challenge and opportunity. The plan focuses on protecting and enhancing the quality of life for Kent's residents through environmental conservation, mitigation, adaptation, protection and careful management of our emissions, natural environment, air, water, heritage and waste.

Kent's future prosperity hinges on a healthy and thriving natural environment that minimises conflicts between growth, health and the environment, allowing us to live within our ecological and financial means. These goals highlight the significant task ahead and

the unique opportunity we have to make a difference for the county and its residents through collaboration, shared knowledge and evidence-based decision-making.

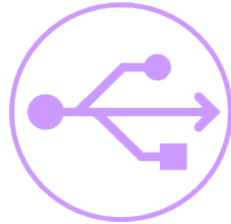
Goal 1



Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions

What will we do: enable the delivery of green energy infrastructure in the county, deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions across KCC's estate and operations and collaborate with partners to achieve countywide net zero emissions.

Goal 2



Adapting to a changing climate

What will we do: assess the risks and impacts of climate change and reduce the impact on our residents by adapting to Kent's future climate and more frequent severe weather.

Goal 3



Reduce flood risk and manage water resources effectively

What will we do: mitigate flood risk and contribute to improving community flood resilience, sustainable drainage and water efficiency across the county

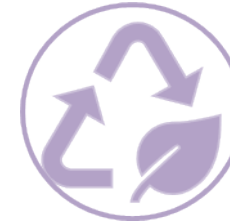
Goal 4



Protect and improve the natural and built environment

What we will do: drive nature protection and recovery across the county, reduce air pollution, ensure that our habitats are abundant with wildlife and plants and drive environmentally sustainable development

Goal 5



Manage resources through a circular economy

What we will do: manage materials more efficiently by minimising waste and reusing and recycling materials, enabling the development of a circular economy in Kent

Goal 6



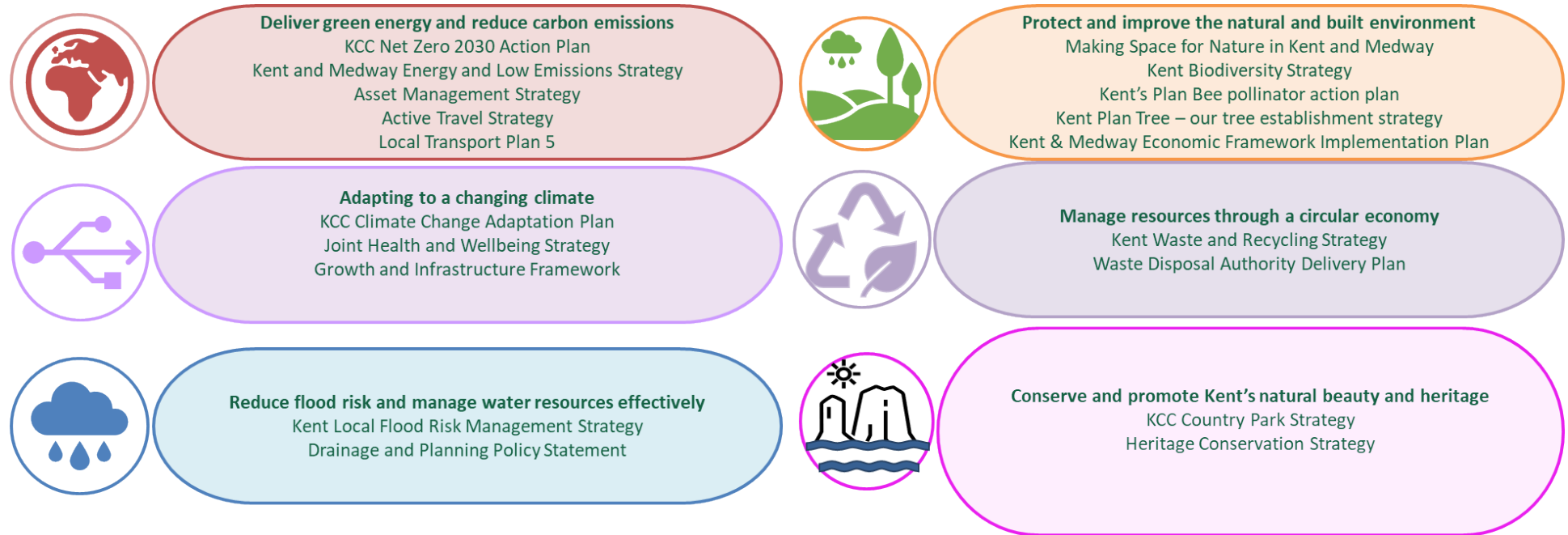
Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage

What we will do: Ensure that Kent's historical environment is sustained for future generations and promote public engagement with our unique countryside and natural beauty

### 4.3. Linked strategies



There are a number of subject specific strategies and plans that directly deliver these goals and these are shown in the graphic below. Other organisational strategies also contribute to the delivery of these goals, which will be enhanced even further as these goals are embedded into the organisation.



#### 4.4. Embedding these goals in the organisation

Consistently making informed decisions that consider climate, environmental and health impacts through an assessment and guidance tool will significantly enhance our environmental outcomes. Data and evidence will drive decision-making, enabling us to make informed choices about policies, projects and programs by placing the best available environmental information at the heart of policy development and implementation. This rigorous approach will support existing processes by diversifying data sources, moving the organisation from intuitive or perceived environmental impacts to evidence-based choices that lead to genuinely



informed recommendations or decisions. Shared decision-making across partnerships using the same data and intelligence will also enable collaborative solutions and more efficient delivery models, balancing risk and innovation while leveraging the expertise of environmental specialists to support the entire process.

Enhancing commissioning and procurement processes to include climate, environment and sustainability considerations through an improvement toolkit will enable KCC to meet the needs for goods and services in a way that achieves value for money on a whole-life basis while minimising environmental damage and focusing on inequalities by encouraging suppliers to target vulnerable groups or areas that are disproportionately affected by environmental issues. Embedding sustainability into procurement will advance KCC's environmental objectives while driving innovation in the supply chain and generating social and economic benefits for local communities. By targeting high-value contracts, those with the greatest reach or those supporting vulnerable groups for climate adaptation first, we can refine new sustainability requirements with large suppliers before extending them to the SME business community, minimising disadvantages for small businesses in the county.

Increasing awareness of environmental issues and opportunities and the corresponding health impacts through generalised and targeted training, webinars, networking opportunities, hands-on experience and improving our knowledge bank will enable all employees, leaders and elected members to better understand their roles and responsibilities in achieving the organisation's environmental objectives. By providing a deeper understanding of the environment, we will enhance problem-solving, considering risks and mitigation measures and providing the context needed to innovate practical and impactful solutions to environmental problems while continuing to deliver value for money. Outside of specialist input, designated sustainability champions within the organisation will drive initiatives and keep sustainability at the forefront of daily operations by supporting those around them. Regular updates and communications about progress, successes, and challenges related to the environment plan will ensure stakeholders are well-informed and enable the dissemination of information and requests for data internally and externally.

#### 4.5. Outcomes

Outcomes are crucial to our environment plan as they represent the tangible impacts of our actions and policies. These outcomes will help us determine the effectiveness of our environmental activities and strategies. They will hold us accountable, ensuring that our organisational commitments to sustainability are met, provide opportunities to learn from past actions and make better decisions for the future.

Key outcomes for the environment, along with linked outcomes for the shared growth and health agendas, are shown in the table below:

#### Environmental outcomes:

- Achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions, significantly reducing the county's carbon footprint and improving air quality.
- Facilitating green energy infrastructure, promoting the use of renewable energy sources and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.
- Assessing risks and impacts to inform strategy and action to support preparation, response and recovery from climate-related events and minimise damage to ecosystems, infrastructure and the historic environment.
- Implementing effective flood risk management and sustainable drainage systems, reducing the occurrence and severity of flooding.
- Improving water efficiency, conserving water resources, maintaining natural water cycles and reducing pollution.
- Protecting and improving natural habitats, ensuring that wildlife and plant species thrive and resilience and functionality is enhanced.
- Minimising waste through efficient resource management, reducing landfill use, conserving natural resources and reducing the need for raw material extraction.
- Utilising advanced technology such as artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), geographic information system (GIS), drones and remote sensing to monitor and manage climate risks and opportunities, increasing flood protection and management and providing early warning systems for extreme weather events reducing the impact on communities.
- Enhancing data collection and analytic capabilities, leading to better decision making and more effective environmental management approaches

#### Growth outcomes:

- Investing in green energy and climate-resilient infrastructure, creating jobs in the county, stimulating economic growth
- Successfully implementing green energy strategies, positioning KCC as a sustainability leader and attracting recognition and investment in future projects
- Creating jobs in conservation, environmental management, eco-tourism, recycling, reuse and remanufacturing in new and existing businesses across the county, driving innovation and new business opportunities
- Increased availability of training programmes and skills development in green technologies and sustainable practices leading to higher employment rates in this sector and enhanced collaboration between educational institutions, businesses and local authorities to develop relevant skills
- Implementing circular economy principles, leading to the development of more comprehensive and integrated policy frameworks
- Monitoring and reporting on carbon emissions and energy, enhancing transparency and accountability and fostering trust among stakeholders

- Enhancing institutional capacity to manage climate risks and implement adaptation strategies

#### Health outcomes:

- Focusing on prevention to create a healthier, more resilient community that can thrive in a sustainable environment
- Reducing health inequalities by identifying and providing targeted climate adaptation for vulnerable groups most susceptible to climate impacts, such as care homes, schools, hospitals, pregnant women, and coastal communities
- Reducing air pollution leading to fewer respiratory and cardiovascular diseases
- Improving greenspaces and natural and heritage environments, leading to better mental health, reduced stress and promotion of relaxation
- Increasing the use of local renewable energy sources, reducing dependence on imported fuels, enhancing energy security and lowering costs for residents
- Increasing adaptive measures, reducing health risks from heat stress and vector borne diseases and mitigating anxiety by ensuring protective measures are in place
- Encouraging active lifestyles by providing access to quality green spaces and natural environments, facilitating public engagement through volunteerism
- Promoting a circular economy, reducing waste and increasing recycling leading to lower levels of pollution and increasing public awareness about sustainable practises
- Providing educational opportunities through engaging with Kent's natural and historical environments, enhancing public knowledge and appreciation of the local heritage and fostering social cohesion
- Focusing on improving data collection and analytic capabilities for climate impacts on health, leading to better decision making

#### 4.6. Delivery approach

The priorities within our environment plan cannot be delivered in isolation, they are all interrelated and co-dependent. Sustainable and long-term progress in any area can only be achieved with support from other areas, with each underpinning the success of the others. Different areas of Kent also have different environmental needs, challenges and opportunities that relate not only to the geology and natural environment of the area but also to the range of environmental, social and economic factors that influence people's mental and physical health. We will therefore focus our delivery on six interconnected delivery approaches.



### Partnerships

Our environmental objectives are complex and far-reaching, and no one organisation can achieve them alone. We will leverage our statutory and soft powers and our position as community leaders to collaborate with our communities and both private and public sector partners. By joining up services and activities, we aim to achieve the best possible outcomes for the county.



### Private finance

The urgency to protect our environment and respond to the climate emergency is now. Given the current national financial landscape for local authorities, funding these necessary measures is challenging. We will explore alternative delivery models that reduce reliance on public funds and find new, affordable ways to finance our green ambitions.



### Strategic planning

The national planning policy framework recognises that environmental issues transcend council boundaries. Effective environmental solutions require collaboration across administrative lines. By aligning local plans or strategic statements, we can set broader environmental objectives and develop sustainable local plans that deliver greener infrastructure and attract inward investment. Every climate action, policy, and strategy should aim to improve health and wellbeing, and every health action, policy, and strategy should mitigate and prevent negative health impacts from climate change.



### Our buildings

Our buildings provide essential services to Kent residents, such as education, care facilities and cultural connectivity. By deploying a coordinated approach to decarbonisation and adaptation, we can ensure that any appraisal of a building's worth includes its environmental impact and potential to support future environmental outcomes. Targeting buildings with the most impact or potential will help drive down maintenance costs and contribute to our environmental goals.



### Our assets

KCC owns an extensive portfolio of assets, including vehicles, equipment, land, historic assets, highways and investment assets. By embedding our environmental priorities in decisions related to the use, management and disposal of these assets, we can improve our environmental impact across the organisation and beyond, supporting evidence-based approaches and maximising co-benefits.



### **Social value**

KCC is committed to social value by applying social value criteria to contracts, aiming to leverage social value from contracts up to £1bn annually to support local community organisations and outcomes. By developing community projects that enhance conservation efforts, renewable energy development, sustainable infrastructure or community resilience, we can channel resources from public spending into environmentally focused projects. This approach could also serve as a funding stream for future environmental projects and activities.

#### 4.7. Funding

KCC's Environment Plan has been developed by base funded staff from the Environment and Circular Economy Division, and at no additional cost to the council. Staff time will be the main resource required to deliver the objectives and actions that are set out in this plan and will be undertaken by base funded staff from all services involved. The objectives and actions are predominantly focused on capacity building through upskilling and knowledge transfer, as well as practical support and collaboration to embed the goals across the organisation and take into account relevant spending controls including Securing Kent's Future.

Actions that self-impose a duty to consider environmental impacts will be undertaken on a no regret basis where it is possible to do so at no net cost to the council.

Changing approaches to how activities are undertaken could present the opportunity to invest further in environmental outcomes. This will be dependent on the development of robust business cases. Where match funding or in-kind funding may be required, it will be assessed on a project-by-project basis.

Financing options underpinned by KCC's emerging green finance strategy will provide an alternative route to funding for environmental outcomes. This will be crucial in funding environmental interventions moving forward, as current budgets are highly unlikely to be able to fund the measures that are needed to meet the scale of the environmental challenge faced in Kent.

#### 4.8. Governance

Ownership of the Environment Plan and all associated strategies and activity will be governed by the KCC Environment Board. Progress and risk and issues will be managed by the board and reported annually to KCC's Corporate Management Team and the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee. The full governance structure for the Environment Plan and roles and responsibilities within it is included in Appendix 2.

## 5. Measures of Success

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Each goal has a set of clear actions that are linked to measures that will enable us to monitor progress. The actions are flexible and scalable, enabling activity to be agile and responsive to opportunities and resources as they arise. To keep this plan live, up to date and relevant, it will be reviewed on an annual basis. This review will consider the progress, successes of the previous year and lessons learned. Additionally, an annual action plan will be developed that will set out the priority actions for the year ahead for each of the six goals each with their own actions and measures. Detailed workstreams, actions and performance measures to achieve the priority actions for the year will be built into the divisional work programmes to ensure consistency of approach and rigour in performance monitoring. Decision making, commissioning and knowledge remain vital to embedding the priorities across the organisation and are therefore inherent across all six goals.

Progress will be reported quarterly to the KCC Environment Board who will also provide an escalation point for issues and ownership of any risks identified in the delivery of the plan. Annual progress in the form of the annual review will be reported to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee and made publicly available to Kent residents via the [kent.gov](http://kent.gov) webpages and targeted mailing lists and social media sites.

## 6. Annual Action Plan 2025-2026

Action	Description	Responsible Division	Key outcomes
<b>Embedding the environment plan across the organisation</b>			
Embed environment plan goals into decision-making activity through the development, testing and implementation of an Environment and Climate Change Impact Assessment	KCC has numerous environmental duties and responsibilities. To ensure these are met, we will integrate environment plan goals into future decisions using a climate and environment impact assessment tool (that also addresses health to prevent inequalities being over looked) and associated guidance.	Environment and Circular Economy	Environment plan goals considered in future decisions
Review and update the Kent State of the Environment report	We will maintain an up-to-date and accurate evidence baseline that reflects current environmental issues and opportunities, informing both current and future activities.	Environment and Circular Economy	An up to date and accurate baseline has been established fully reflecting current environmental issues and opportunities through a Kent State of the Environment report
Conduct a public perception survey to measure how residents perceive, use and prioritise different aspects of the Kent environment	Feedback from Kent residents will be collected through a public perception survey to compare previous and current responses, with results analysed and used to align future initiatives with community needs and priorities	Environment and Circular Economy	Public perception survey and analysis has been completed



<p>Embed justified and proportionate contractual requirements for environmental outcomes and Net Zero targets into commissioning and procurement frameworks</p>	<p>KCC contracts with a range of organisations from different sectors to deliver services on behalf of the council. We will embed contractual requirements for environmental outcomes within our commissioning and procurement processes, ensuring that suppliers incorporate these outcomes into the services they deliver.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy, Commercial and Procurement</p>	<p>Justified and proportionate contractual requirements and supporting guidance for procurement and commissioning staff.</p>
<p>Embed baseline and, where appropriate, specialist environmental knowledge across all services</p>	<p>To better understand the risks and opportunities that the environment poses to KCC, our climate change, energy, natural environment, flood and water, heritage and public health teams will provide generalised and specialist training, webinars, networking opportunities, and knowledge bank updates. This will help all services, leaders, and Members develop a comprehensive understanding of environmental risks and opportunities and how these impact their work.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy, Public Health</p>	<p>Training, webinar and networking opportunities provided to all services, leaders and members and supporting communications updated on KNET pages</p>

**Delivery approaches**

Map existing strategies, actions and activity with environmental commitments	To better understand the existing scope and breadth of environmental commitments relevant to the environment plan and goals, enabling the production of a master list of actions and opportunities to inform future focus areas	Environment and Circular Economy	Prioritised master list of strategies, actions and activity linked to the environmental goals
Review and update strategies, actions and activity to improve links to environmental goals and outputs	Based on the priorities identified in the mapping work of all relevant current strategies, actions and activity will be updated to include specific references to environmental goals	Environment and Circular Economy	Evidence of input into KCC strategy renewal
Develop a green finance investment strategy	Research and develop a green finance strategy that includes models of delivery that attracts private finance into nature recovery, climate adaptation and net zero through a cyclical investment portfolio.	Environment and Circular Economy	Green finance strategy created
Align monitoring and evaluation metrics with funding requirements	Develop and align our monitoring and evaluation metrics with funders and create metrics with partners so that bids align with framework objectives, create buy-in and partnership approaches and create opportunities rather than barriers.	Environment and Circular Economy	Evidence of successful funding bids

Create a strategic partnership register	KCC works with a range of partners to deliver its environmental objectives. KCC will create a strategic partnership register to identify environmental opportunities, track progress and evaluate performance. Where appropriate partnership strategies will be updated to directly reference and contribute to our goals.	Environment and Circular Economy, Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance	Strategic partnership register created
Embed sustainability into all aspects of urban planning, including transportation, housing, and economic development to influence Local Planning Authority decision making	The planning system plays a significant role in shaping what Kent looks like moving forward. By making recommendations on what will be included in future planning, KCC can steer activity towards including more considerations for the environment.	Environment and Circular Economy, Growth and Communities	Environment featuring on corporate responses to local plans, housing applications, other developments and countywide guidance through the development of local strategic statements or aligned local plans
Support the delivery of Local Transport Plan 5	Local Transport Plan 5 includes a range of proposals that will improve the environment including delivery of the Bus Service Improvement Plan, Cycling and Walking Improvement Plans and electric vehicle infrastructure	Highways and Transportation	Road-side air quality improves as decarbonisation of travel accelerates

Utilising existing asset databases develop a sustainable land use register for all KCC assets	KCC owns land across the county that could be utilised for development to support green energy, biodiversity or carbon capture. In order to ensure that the best use is made of land for any environmental outcomes, it is important to understand what the portfolio looks like and where it will deliver best value	Energy and Climate Change, Infrastructure	Sustainable land use register created
Update the Kent Design Guide to include the latest evidence-based approaches for climate mitigation and adaptation	The Kent Design Guide is a comprehensive resource aimed at promoting high standards of design in the built environment across Kent. It provides guidance for house builders, architects, engineers, town planners, and other professionals involved in designing and developing buildings and spaces.	Growth and Communities	Kent Design guide in use as a supplementary planning document
Create a detailed decarbonisation plan for the entire KCC estate that identifies the actions needed at a building-by-building level	KCC's property portfolio is extensive. In order to understand and inform decisions on the rationalisation of the estate and the retrofitting requirements for existing buildings, a comprehensive review plan at a building-by-building level is required	Infrastructure	Estate wide decarbonisation plan created

Contribute to the review of the asset management plans that underpin the Asset Management Strategy to include environmental outcomes as a key driver	KCC has existing asset management plans that provide the framework for operation and maintenance of the assets within the Asset Management Strategy. Inclusions of all relevant environmental outcomes in the plans will increase opportunities for coordinated delivery.	Infrastructure	Evidence of environmental considerations being included in asset management plans. Investigate implementing the new Net Zero building standard in the KCC estate for new builds.
Implement sustainable water management practices	To better understand opportunities to improve water management across the KCC estate, climate change officers will undertake building-level water efficiency reviews	Environment and Circular Economy	Evidence of water efficiency reviews being carried out and recommendations for improvements being adopted
Implement indoor air quality management practises in KCC buildings	To better understand issues with indoor air quality across the KCC estate and opportunities to implement management actions to improve the quality of indoor air	Environment and Circular Economy, Infrastructure	Evidence of monitoring of particulates and temperature in KCC buildings and subsequent improvements following corrective action
Review the current system for management and reporting of severe weather events	KCC currently uses SWIMS as its severe weather reporting tool, however engagement is low and therefore the data gathered is of low quality and impact. Conducting a review to determine the ongoing viability of existing systems alongside a market appraisal will identify whether there is a better system available for use.	Environment and Circular Economy	SWIMS review completed

Evaluate the prevalence of volunteerism in environmental projects	Understanding the prevalence and contribution that volunteerism makes to environments projects will define the key drivers and promote increased opportunities for future volunteering	Environment and Circular Economy	Evaluation of volunteerism in environmental projects completed
Provide opportunities through the social value exchange for external investment in environmental outcomes	Align environment social and governance responsibilities with the funding and investment need and provide opportunities for increased external investment into projects and activities that support environmental outcomes.	Environment and Circular Economy	Evidence of external investment in environmental projects through the social value exchange
Improve Active Travel facilities at appropriate KCC locations (minimum standard to be agreed)	Appropriate active travel facilities are explored at KCC locations to support the ability of staff and visitors to choose an active mode of transport when accessing KCC locations.	Environment and Circular Economy Highways and Transportation	Active travel standard agreed and implemented at appropriate KCC locations
Install EV charge points at appropriate KCC locations (for staff / visitors)	Strategic assessment of the need and technical specification of electric vehicle charge points identifies the most appropriate location and infrastructure required to support the installation of charge points at key KCC locations.	Environment and Circular Economy Infrastructure	EV charge points available for use at all appropriate KCC locations
Provide alternative travel options at appropriate KCC locations e.g. car clubs, bike hire etc			

Review opportunities to expand KCC Staff Rewards programme to incentivise net zero actions / behaviours			
Implement Kent's Plan Bee action plan across KCC managed land including highways, public rights of way, corporate estate and country parks			
Work with districts to secure a policy commitment to 20% biodiversity net gain in Kent			
Ensure relevant aspects of the KNP Kent Biodiversity Strategy are embedded within all relevant KCC services			
Development of Kent Local Nature Recovery Strategy			
Develop a delivery plan that will implement and monitor the Kent target of establishing 1.5 million trees (one per Kent resident)			
Develop and communicate case studies to promote net zero actions and behaviours			
Develop a net zero awareness raising programme for KCC members and staff			

## 7. Appendices

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Appendix 1 – Environmental Achievements 2023/24

Appendix 2 – Governance structure for the Environment Plan





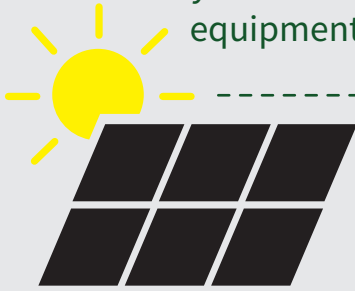
# Environment Achievements in 2023/24

## GOAL 1: Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions

**1,217**

**Solar Together**

**installations** generating 4MWh of clean power - 1,200 tonnes CO2e emissions will be avoided in first of the 25 years of the life of equipment



**12** small businesses and **46** social homes retrofitted with **solar PV** saving **130 tonnes of CO2e** per year

**Solar park** opened in Somerset generating 21 MWh or **£3.5m** worth of clean energy per year **reducing emissions** and **energy costs**

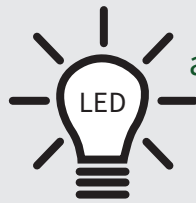
**Opened 2nd Solar park** near Kings Hill which will generate enough renewable energy for **750 homes**



**266**

small businesses supported with **£1,570,000** of grant funding, reducing CO2e by **1,000** tonnes annually, reducing costs by **£900,000** helping create **80** new jobs through LoCASE project

**39 businesses** supported for **sustainable projects** such as LED lighting



**£1.8m**

funding for decarbonising the KCC estate

## GOAL 2: Adapt to our changing climate

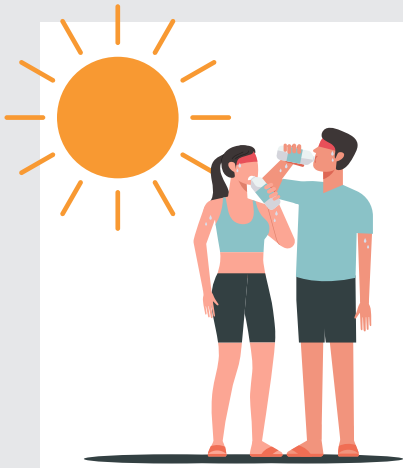
Developed **KCC's 1st** organisational **climate change adaptation plan**

**3 on-site climate change risk assessments** completed at KCC sites



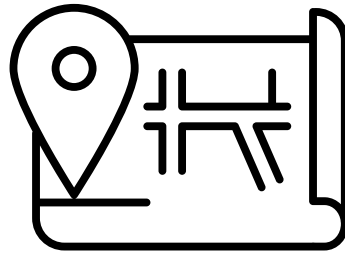
Shaped **national guidance** for local authorities participating in the **Adaptation Reporting Power pilot**





Supported partners from **Belgium, France, Luxembourg and the Netherlands** in addressing neighbourhood level heat stress

Contributed to the testing and development of **3 national adaptation mapping platforms**



**Kent wide local authority adaptation network established**, with additional knowledge and information sharing across the region

### GOAL 3: Reduce flood risk and effectively manage water resources

**£115K**

funding secured to **protect properties** from **flooding**



**Rainwater harvesting calculator**

developed with Cranfield University to help Kent's soft fruit farmers manage water more efficiently

**£70k**

funding secured for Gravesend **Surface Water Management Plan**



**Water saving audits** undertaken on KCC and other public sector properties with Thames and South East Water, saving tens of thousands of costs annually e.g. £13k annually at Kroner House



## GOAL 4: Protect and improve the natural and built environment

**£478K**

grant funding secured to enhance our natural environment

**10 YEARS**

of **Plan Bee** creating pollinator friendly places, gaining national recognition by Bees' Needs Champion scheme for exceptional work

**264**

residents signed up to **No Mow May**, **58 hectares** in KCC estates left uncut to help **wildlife**



**10,000**

responses to planning applications influencing the quality of our environment and improving water and flood management



**13**

**WORKSHOPS,**

attended by **451 people**, representing **218 organisations** for the Making Space for Nature Kent & Medway project to shape priorities for local **nature recovery**

**60,777**  
**TREES**  
**PLANTED**



## GOAL 5: Manage resources through a circular economy

Only **0.41%** of **municipal waste sent to landfill** (third lowest county council in England)

**42%** of waste **recycled, composted or re-used**, the rest being burnt for energy **recovery**

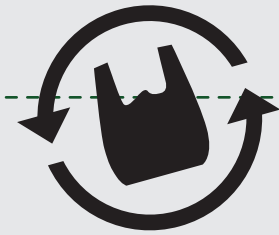
**96%** satisfaction with recycling centres and award-winning online booking system



Reuse activities introduced at recycling centres, including charity partnerships, pop-up shops, auctions, material specific projects, with **more than 156 tonnes being diverted for reuse** (of which **131 tonnes** being **book reuse**)

Over **1,000** items of **care equipment** such as walking sticks and frames recycled and reused through partnerships with Adult Social Care, NHS and NRS Healthcare

**50% reduction** in rejected recycling at the materials recycling facility



**Bag splitting** introduced at recycling centres **to reclaim nearly 40% of recyclable material**

**3,847** tonnes of wood recycled instead of incinerated through effective contract management

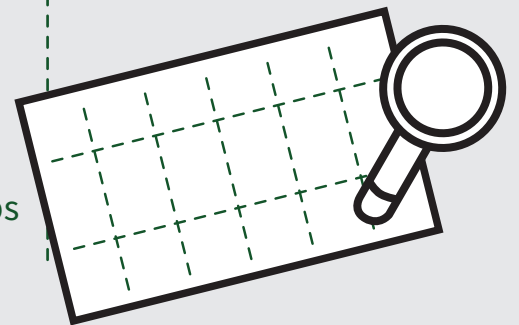


**VAPE recycling introduced** enabling capture of vapes in residual waste and avoidance of fires at recycling centres

**500** **Hey Girl Sustainable period kits** distributed alongside education programme for young people about financial and environmental benefits

**49** **circular economy business** cases identified through Upcycle Your Waste with **247** **businesses engaged** in waste matching workshops and audits

**Repair, Reuse and Upcycling Locator Map** launched highlighting alternatives to traditional waste streams



## GOAL 6: Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage

At our Country Parks and Partnerships...

**1,145,902**

visitors, **17,375** took part in educational visits and events

**4,702**

volunteer days delivered

**8 green flags**

retained and

**5 South East**

In Bloom awards

**£1,200,000**

funding for green projects

**700+ people**

benefiting from green wellbeing activities

**440** sites

improved for nature and people



More people encouraged to **walk, cycle and connect** with nature through the Explore Kent website which received **720,000** visitors and **60,000** route downloads



**£148K**

secured to research Thanet's archaeological past

**£62,750**

secured for a community archaeology project



**Discovery of the sea god**

**Triton** Roman statue and foundations of a **Roman mausoleum**



**Digitised 3,700 records** to the Kent Historic Environment Record

Worked with scientists and partners across **UK, France, Belgium** and the **Netherlands** to connect people with their **maritime heritage**

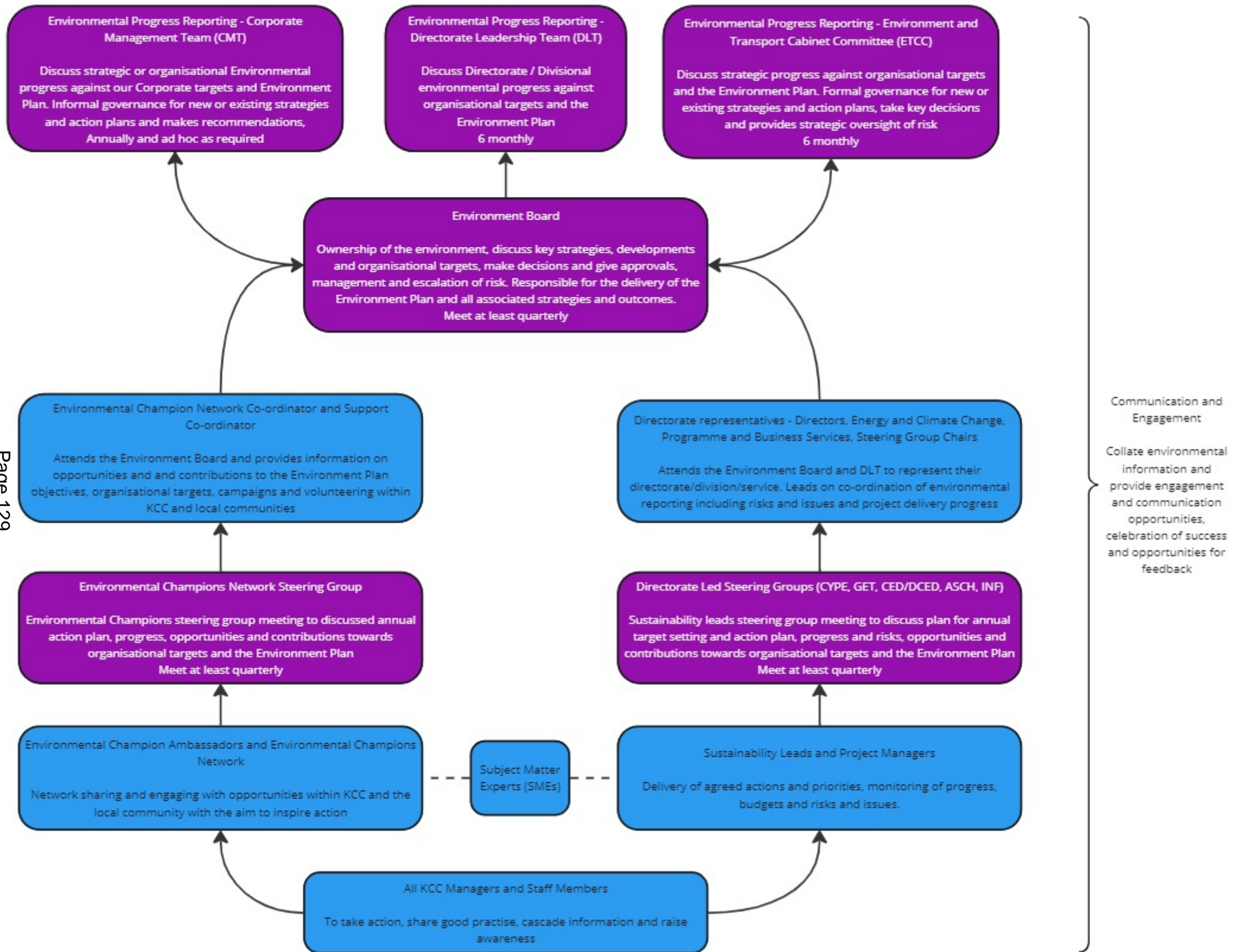


**2 windmills restored** to their former glory, others maintained and **2,322** respondents to windmills consultation



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## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

#### EQIA Title

Environment Plan

#### Responsible Officer

Katie Jones - GT - ECE

#### Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

### Type of Activity

#### Service Change

No

#### Service Redesign

No

#### Project/Programme

No

#### Commissioning/Procurement

No

#### Strategy/Policy

Strategy/Policy

#### Details of other Service Activity

No

### Accountability and Responsibility

#### Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

#### Responsible Service

Environment & Circular Economy

#### Responsible Head of Service

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

#### Responsible Director

Matthew Smyth - GT - ECE

### Aims and Objectives

The aim of the KCC Environment Plan is to safeguard and improve our environment, supporting healthy communities and sustainable growth. This mirrors the governments approach to consider environment not as a solo discipline but one embedded within health and growth to ensure long-term sustainability.

The Environment Plan aims to deliver on the following objectives to work towards the overarching aim:

- Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions: enable the delivery of green energy infrastructure in the county, deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions across KCC's estate and operations and collaborate with partners to achieve countywide net zero emissions
- Adapt to a changing climate: assess the risks and impacts of climate change and reduce the impact on our residents by adapting to Kent's future climate and more frequent severe weather
- Reduce flood risk and manage water resources effectively: mitigate flood risk and contribute to improving community flood resilience, sustainable drainage and water efficiency across the county.
- Protection and improve the natural and built environment: drive nature protection and recovery across the county, ensure that our habitats are abundant with wildlife and plants and drive environmentally sustainable development
- Manage resources through a circular economy: manage materials more efficiently by minimising

wates and reusing and recycling materials, enabling the development of a circular economy in Kent

- Conserve and promote Kent’s natural beauty and heritage: ensure that Kent’s historical environment is sustained for future generations and promote public engagement with our unique countryside and natural beauty

The adoption of the Environment Plan supports the national delivery of environmental outcomes. It also meets outcomes of priority 3 of Framing Kent’s Future 2022-2026, ‘Environmental Step Change’, which seeks to reach our Net Zero targets, protect and strengthen our natural environment, work with our partners towards Kent being Net Zero by 2050, explore options for carbon zero energy production and use and ensure that the county is well placed to adapt to climate change.

## Section B – Evidence

**Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?**

Yes

**It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?**

Yes

**Is there national evidence/data that you can use?**

Yes

**Have you consulted with stakeholders?**

Yes

**Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?**

Teams across the division for input, environment board, KMEG

**Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?**

Yes

**Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?**

Yes

## Section C – Impact

**Who may be impacted by the activity?**

**Service Users/clients**

Service users/clients

**Staff**

Staff/Volunteers

**Residents/Communities/Citizens**

Residents/communities/citizens

**Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?**

Yes

**Details of Positive Impacts**

Overall, the impacts of the environment policy should benefit service users, residents, and KCC staff by ensuring that climate change, the environment and resilience is factored into KCC service delivery and asset management.

Improving/maintaining the environment will positively impact certain characteristics such as age and disability as reduction in carbon emissions and having access to nature can improve health and wellbeing.

## Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

<b>19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for age?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of negative impacts for Age</b>
Any resources provided digitally via the KCC website may not reach certain age groups due digital inaccessibility.
<b>Mitigating Actions for Age</b>
Non-digital copies to be provided to users that cannot access digital resources online, upon request.
<b>Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age</b>
Katie Jones
<b>20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Disability?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of Negative Impacts for Disability</b>
Only in regards to reading the plan and associated documents, rather than the outcomes of the plan itself: Those with disabilities may have difficulty in using resources shared on KCC’s website, as well as difficulty reading or making use of the material provided.
<b>Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
Any content listed on KCC’s website must adhere to digital accessibility requirements. If content is uploaded to KCC’s website, KCC’s Digital Accessibility Team will be contacted prior to making a request for new material to be uploaded. If desired materials are found be inaccessible, efforts will be made to ensure that materials are adjusted to meet digital accessibility requirements. If adjustments cannot be made, they will not be uploaded.
<b>Responsible Officer for Disability</b>
Katie Jones
<b>21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sex</b>
No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Race</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Race</b>

Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable



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From: **Robert Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment**  
**Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport**

To: **Cabinet – 28 November 2014**

Subject: **Adoption of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028**

Key decision: 24/00095

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 November**

Future Pathway of report: **Cabinet Member Decision**

Electoral Division: **All**

**Summary:** The Climate Change Adaptation Plan sets out how Kent County Council will start to adapt its assets and services to climate change between 2025 and 2028. Findings from the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway and activity and input from divisions across KCC have shaped the aim, objectives and actions that define the Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Actions listed in the action plan have corresponding target outcomes which will be reported on annually at Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee. The final draft reflects comments received.

**Recommendation(s):** Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision to:

- To ADOPT the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028.
- To DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision as shown at Appendix A.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent's climate is changing. More extreme weather, such as extended periods of excessive precipitation, periods of exceptionally hot or cold weather and

prolonged spells without precipitation, is highly likely to be experienced across the county. Conditions are expected to shift significantly further away from what Kent has previously enjoyed towards an increasingly disruptive and challenging climate.

- 1.2 Changes in extreme and average weather conditions are already affecting life in Kent due to the impacts on the built environment, communities, economy, natural environment and public services that shape the county. Climate change adaptation can help to limit the potential harm caused by changes to Kent's climate, as well as harness any of the potential opportunities, whilst also delivering other benefits across the county.
- 1.3 This paper outlines the steps KCC will take to adapt to climate change between 2025 and 2028.

## **2. Overview of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028**

- 2.1 The Climate Change Act 2008 provides the framework for mitigating climate change, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. For the latter, it includes a requirement to complete a National Climate Change Risk Assessment every five years, followed by a National Adaptation Programme, setting out how the risks identified in the National Climate Change Risk Assessment will be addressed.
- 2.2 The National Adaptation Programme represents the government's strategy to address the main risks and opportunities identified in the risk assessment for England and is also produced every five years, as a response to the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment.
- 2.3 The second National Adaptation Programme (2018 to 2023) and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting was published in July 2018 and addresses the priority risks identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017. The National Adaptation Programme sets out the actions that government is taking, outcomes the government wants to achieve and the means by which the government will be measuring the progress made towards achieving the objectives.
- 2.4 On 23 May 2019 KCC recognised the UK climate and environment emergency acknowledging the significant threats posed and opportunities presented by climate change. In response, the Council committed to developing and adopting the Kent & Medway Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Plan.
- 2.5 In 2020, KCC published the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway. This led to the preparation and drafting of The Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway by KCC. This followed a sector-based approach to adaptation across Kent consistent with the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment and was due for public consultation in September 2022.
- 2.6 However, concerns over the deliverability of The Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway led to a pause in this county wide work and a



revised scope of activity for all individual partner organisations first. Adaptation planning is now currently focussed on KCC and its assets, services and areas of influence, as opposed to a countywide approach. KCC is committed to working with partners, communities and other stakeholders to deliver a countywide response to adapting to the impacts of climate change and will look to explore opportunities for a countywide response during the lifecycle of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

- 2.7 The revised scope led to the creation of an internal working group with membership from across divisions deemed most likely to be affected by climate change to redraft the strategy. Subsequent revisions to the draft have led to the final version 5 found in Appendix 2.
- 2.8 The aim of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan is to ensure that KCC is resilient to the negative impacts and well-positioned to benefit from any opportunities that arise from Kent's changing climate.
- 2.9 The Climate Change Adaptation Plan outlines future predictions of the Kent climate and the impacts that might have across the county and how this is likely to affect KCC.
- 2.10 The Climate Change Adaptation Plan aims to deliver on the following objectives to work towards the overarching aim:
- Raise awareness of the risks and opportunities of climate change across KCC.
  - Integrate climate change adaptation into KCC's decision-making and service delivery.
  - Explore opportunities to act upon climate risks and impacts affecting services.
  - Encourage climate change adaptation through KCC activity across Kent.
- 2.11 Actions to meet each objective are set out in Section 6 of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan. An annual monitoring report of the plan will be provided that will outline planned activity for each year and show progress made against each action.
- 2.12 The actions that support the delivery of the objectives will be reviewed as part of the annual report.
- 2.13 The adoption of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan supports the delivery of the KCC Environment Plan, which lists adapting to climate change as one of six priority areas of environmental work that the council delivers. It also meets outcomes of Priority 3 of Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026, 'Environmental Step Change', which seeks to ensure that the county is well placed to adapt to climate change.

### **3. Options considered**

- 3.1 Do nothing

Continue with a business-as-usual approach and allow climate change impacts to affect KCC and Kent as and when they happen without a strategic approach to mitigating them.

- 3.2 Revise and adopt the Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway. Adopt the Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway, which takes a sector-based approach to adaptation across Kent and Medway, but lacks clearly defined roles and partnership governance, and would require significant financial resourcing to enable delivery.
- 3.3 **Recommended option:** Adopt the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028

Adopt the Climate Change Adaptation Plan which will integrate climate risk management into KCC service delivery and encourage climate adaptation across Kent through work that KCC already delivers. The Climate Change Adaptation Plan has defined roles, responsibilities and an agreed governance structure, and does not commit the council to any additional expenditure.

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

- 4.1 The KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan has been developed by base funded staff from the Environment and Circular Economy division and at no additional cost to the council. The current actions within the Climate Change Adaptation Plan will be delivered by base funded staff from all services involved. It is not anticipated that the Climate Change Adaptation Plan will place any additional financial obligations on the council. However, where match funding or in-kind funding may be required to further progress outcomes from the action plan this will be assessed on a project by project basis. This will be facilitated by an environmental impact consideration embedded into all future decision making, commissioning and procurement activity, whilst also taking into account the requirements of Securing Kent's Future.

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

- 5.1 An EqIA has been undertaken and concluded that the publication of online resources on KCC's website could adversely affect two groups of protected characteristics (age and disability). This will be mitigated by recommendations from KCC's Digital Accessibility Team to ensure that the Plan complies with the Equality Duty 2010.

#### **6. Other corporate implications**

- 6.1 Relevant services within the council will need to consider the Climate Change Adaptation Plan in relation to their operations. Delivering the Climate Change Adaptation Plan will require support from other areas of KCC in order to calculate how climate risk is anticipated to affect service delivery and asset management, what actions need to be taken to mitigate risks and the thematic actions set out in the action plan. There are no expectations for any additional spending.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 KCC has prepared the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028. The plan sets out how KCC will start to adapt its assets and services to climate change. Internal stakeholders have been consulted during the development of the Climate Change Adaptation Plan and amendments have been made accordingly. It is considered that the Climate Change Adaptation Plan can be adopted at no additional financial burden to the council.

## 8. Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment on the proposed decision to:

- To ADOPT the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028.
- To DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision as shown at Appendix A.

## 9. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix A: Proposed Record of Decision

Appendix 2: KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025 – 2028 v5

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

### Background documents:

[Climate change risk and impact assessment - Kent County Council](#)

## 10. Contact details

### Report Author:

Helen Shulver  
Head of Environment  
03000 417711  
[Helen.shulver@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.shulver@kent.gov.uk)

### Relevant Director:

Matthew Smyth  
Director for Environment and Circular  
Economy  
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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:**

Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment

**DECISION NO:**

24/00095

For publication

Key decision: YES / NO

**Subject Matter Adoption of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028****Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree to:

- To adopt the Kent Environment Plan on behalf of Kent County Council.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment to refresh and/or make revisions to the Strategy as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- To delegate authority to the Corporate Growth, Environment and Transport to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

Kent County Council (KCC) recognised the UK climate emergency on 23rd May 2019, acknowledging the significant threats posed and opportunities presented by climate change. In response, the Council committed to developing and adopting the Kent & Medway Climate Change Adaptation Implementation Plan.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

Members of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee will consider the proposal at their meeting on 14 November 2024.

**Any alternatives considered and rejected:**

1. **Do nothing** - continue with a business-as-usual approach and allow climate change impacts to affect KCC and Kent as and when they happen without a strategic approach to mitigating them.
2. **Revise and adopt The Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway** – adopt a strategy that takes a sector-based approach to adaptation across Kent, but lacks clearly defined roles and governance structures and would require significant financial resourcing.

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

.....  
signed

.....  
Date

[plan will be designed following input from Members and officers. All images and infographics currently included are temporary]

# Kent County Council

## (Draft) Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025 - 2028



Governance Route		
Place	Date	Version
GET DivLT	02/09/24	v1.0
Rob Thomas and Tony Hills	06/09/24	v2.0
KMEG	09/09/24	Summary only
Leader	13/09/24	v3.0
SLF / Ext SLF	17/09/24	v3.0
CPMG	20/09/24	v3.0
CMT	24/09/24	v3.0
KCC Environment Board	26/09/24	v3.0
CMM	14/10/24	v4.0
ETCC	14/11/24	v5.0

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- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Policy landscape**
  - 2.1 National context
  - 2.2 KCC Context
- 3. Kent's changing climate**
  - 3.1 Climate projections
  - 3.2 Potential impacts
  - 3.3 Reducing the impact
  - 3.4 Considerations for KCC
- 4. Responding to the climate emergency**
  - 4.1 Seizing the opportunity of adapting
  - 4.2 Action to date
  - 4.3 What next?
  - 4.4 Funding
- 5. Implementation and monitoring progress**
- 6. Action plan 25/28**
- 7. Appendices**

## **1. Introduction**

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Kent's climate is changing. More extreme weather, such as extended periods of excessive precipitation, periods of exceptionally hot or cold weather and prolonged spells without precipitation, is already being experienced across the county. Conditions are expected to shift significantly further away from what Kent has previously enjoyed, towards an increasingly disruptive and challenging climate.

Changes in extreme and average weather conditions are already affecting life in Kent and impact the built environment, communities, economy, natural environment, and public services that shape the county. Climate change adaptation can help to limit the potential harm caused by changes to Kent's climate, as well as harness any of the potential opportunities<sup>1</sup>, whilst also delivering other benefits across the county.

The cumulative effect of historic emissions and land use change mean that global temperatures are likely to continue to rise until the middle of this century<sup>2</sup>. This means that action to adapt is needed now to ensure that Kent is prepared for an unpredictable climate that will last throughout the rest of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Kent County Council (KCC) is committed to working with partners, communities and other stakeholders to deliver a countywide response to adapting to the impacts of climate change. KCC aspires to be an organisation that is climate resilient, that works effectively with others in different sectors to build collective resilience and fulfils its role as a community leader across Kent.

As part of this work, KCC must first focus on the assets that it manages, the services that it delivers, and the areas that it can influence across the county. That is what this plan seeks to deliver, with the overarching aim of the KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan being:

***“To ensure that KCC is resilient to the negative impacts and well-positioned to benefit from any opportunities that arise from Kent's changing climate.”***

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<sup>1</sup> CCC. 2021. Technical report (CCRA3-IA). Glossary: <https://www.ukclimaterisk.org/publications/technical-report-ccra3-ia/glossary/#section-1-glossary-for-the-technical-report-of-the-third-uk-climate-change-risk-assessment-ccra3-ia>

<sup>2</sup> IPCC. 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/#SPM>.

## 2. Policy landscape

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### 2.1. National context

The Climate Change Act was passed in 2008. It sets out what the government is required to do to limit the extent of climate change and its impacts. Part 4 of the Act outlines how the government needs to plan for the impact of climate change and what it will do to adapt. The government is committed to producing a national climate change risk assessment every five years, followed by a National Adaptation Programme (NAP), which outlines what action will be taken to address any identified risks during the risk assessment<sup>3</sup>.

Part 2 of the Act outlines the role of the Climate Change Committee (CCC), an expert advisory group who undertake the national climate change risk assessment and review the implementation of the NAP<sup>4</sup>. The CCC has set out required outcomes for different sectors across the UK. The communities sector, the most relevant to local government, requires that 'good local authority adaptation planning' occurs, enabled by 'understanding and skills in managing climate risks in local authorities'<sup>5</sup>.

### 2.2. KCC context

KCC recognised the UK climate emergency on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2019 in response to the threats and opportunities presented by climate change<sup>6</sup>. In doing so, the council is committed to providing resources and aligning its policies to deliver on adapting to and mitigating climate change.

The following year, KCC published the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway (CCRIA). The CCRIA outlined some of the threats and opportunities that climate change presents to the area and provided recommendations for future action.

The four key recommendations from the CCRIA were:

- Undertake more in-depth research into localised and specific climate risks and impacts to build the evidence base, awareness and capacity to take action.

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<sup>3</sup> Climate Change Act 2008, Part 4: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/part/4>

<sup>4</sup> Climate Change Act 2008, Part 2: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/part/2>

<sup>5</sup> CCC. 2023. CCC Adaptation Monitoring Framework. Assessing the effectiveness of adaptation action across the UK: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/ccc-adaptation-monitoring-framework/?chapter=3-how-we-monitor-progress-on-preparing-for-climate-change#3-how-we-monitor-progress-on-preparing-for-climate-change>

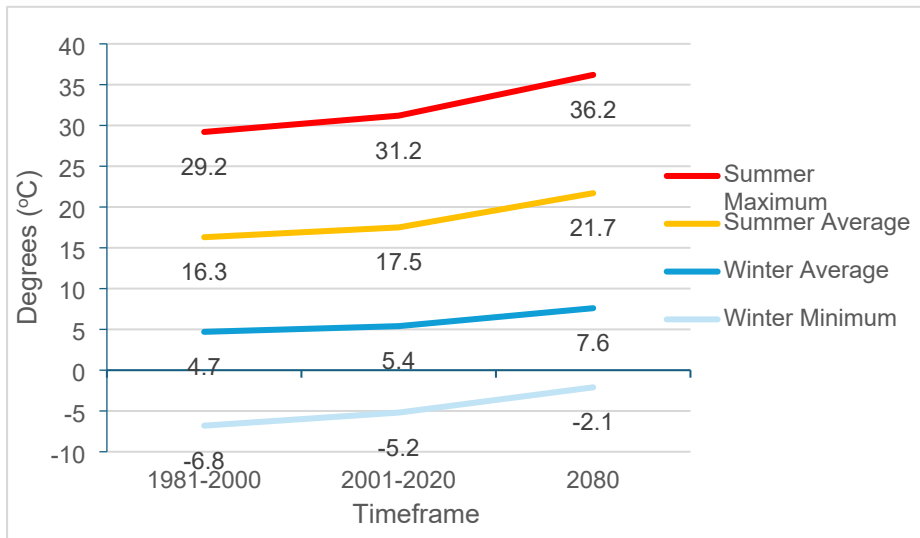
<sup>6</sup> KCC. 23 May 2019. 145. Motions for Time Limited Debate – Climate Emergency: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=91285>

- Ensure projects, plans and processes have considered climate change and are resilient to climate risk in the long-term.
- Take action to reduce future financial costs.
- Invest in cross-sector co-benefits.<sup>7</sup>

### 3. Kent’s changing climate

#### 3.1. Climate projections

Climate projections are an estimation of what future climates may look like. They can be produced by combining weather data with future greenhouse gas emission scenarios, land use changes, and aerosols<sup>8</sup>. In 2018, the Met Office Hadley Centre published the most recent UK climate projections. As referenced in the Met Office’s Local Authority Climate Service<sup>9</sup>, under the worst-case scenario Kent could experience:



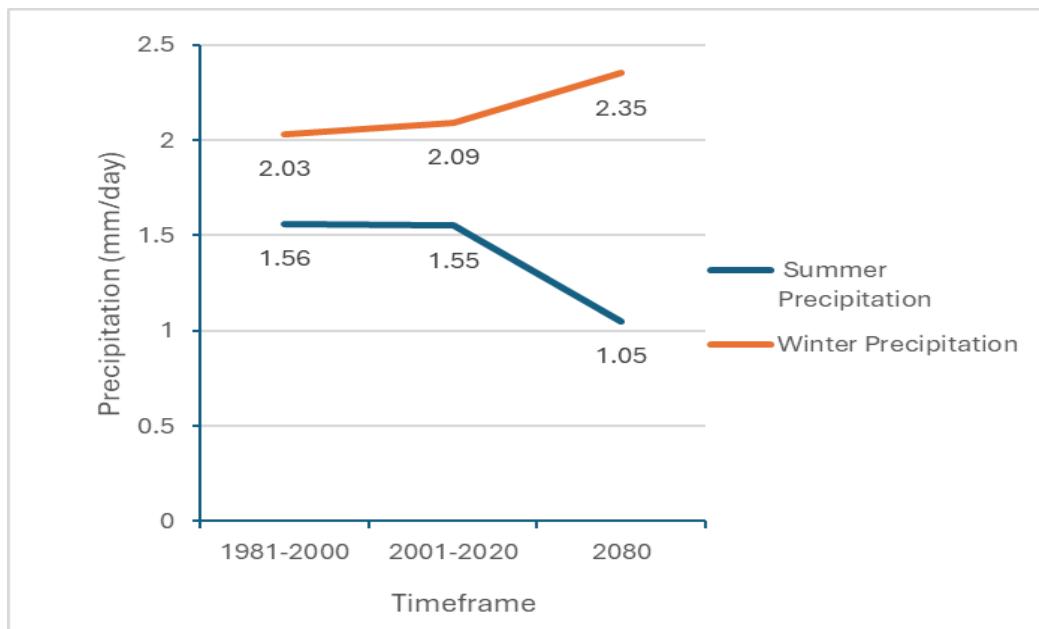
Temperature	Change (°C)
Summer Maximum	+7 (+6.2 - +8.2)
Summer Average	+4.2 (+3.7 - +5.0)
Winter Minimum	+4.7 (+3.5 - +6.1)
Winter Average	+2.9 (+2.1 - +3.5)
Annual Average	+3.4 (+3.0 - +4.0)

<sup>7</sup> JBA Consulting. 2020. Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway. Part 1: Methodology and Summary of Findings: [https://www.kent.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0015/111381/CCRIA-for-Kent-and-Medway-part-one-methodology-and-summary-findings.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0015/111381/CCRIA-for-Kent-and-Medway-part-one-methodology-and-summary-findings.pdf)

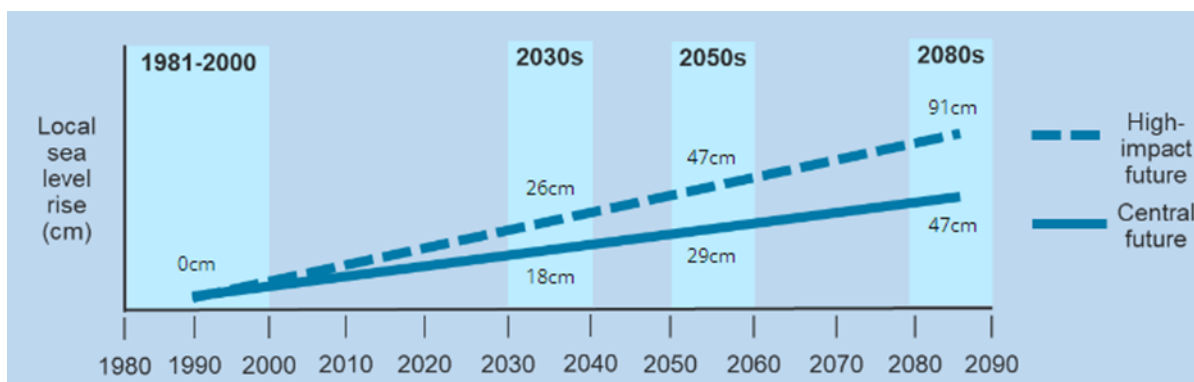
<sup>8</sup> IPCC. 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Glossary: [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGIII\\_Annex-I.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_Annex-I.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> The Met Office. 2024. Local Climate Adaptation Service. Version 1.0. Available at: <https://climatedataportal.metoffice.gov.uk/pages/lacs>

Precipitation	Change (%)
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Summer rate	-33 (-46 to -22)
Winter rate	+16 (+4 to +27)
Regional hourly extreme (20mm/h) events per year	+207 <sup>10</sup>



Sea Level Rise	Change (cm)
Local level	47 - 91

<sup>10</sup> Kendon, E.J., et al. 2023. Variability conceals emerging trend in 100yr projections of UK local hourly rainfall extremes. *Nat Communications* **14** (1133).

### 3.2. Potential impacts

These changes to average temperatures, precipitation, and sea levels will increase the variability of weather that Kent experiences. This is likely to lead to both positive and negative impacts that will increase in frequency and intensity over time. Some of the climate hazards that are likely to occur in Kent include:

- Landslips and soil erosion.
- Coastal, fluvial, groundwater, and surface water flooding.
- Heatwaves.
- Wildfires.
- Drought.
- Storm events.

Climate hazards cause climate impacts, which are felt by businesses, communities, ecosystems, and organisations. In recent years, the following impacts have occurred in Kent:

- Over 6,000 homes were left without power due to Storm Ciarán in 2023<sup>11</sup>.
- Midges carrying bluetongue disease infected livestock in 2023 and 2024<sup>12</sup>.
- The Road of Remembrance, Folkestone was closed throughout the entirety of 2024 due to a landslip<sup>13</sup>.
- 172 excess deaths were recorded during heat periods of Summer 2022<sup>14</sup>.
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service responded to 399 grass fires in July 2022<sup>15</sup>.
- Bewl Water's reservoir levels dropped to 42% in October 2022<sup>16</sup>.

Whilst the negative impacts of climate change outweigh any potential benefits, there are still positive outcomes that could arise from Kent's future climate. Examples of these include:

<sup>11</sup> BBC News. 2023. Kent: Delays at Port of Dover as Storm Ciarán lashes county: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-67287143>

<sup>12</sup> BBC News. 2024. Bluetongue: South East livestock farmers warned over virus risk: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clynr9r5v1vo>

<sup>13</sup> Folkestone & Hythe District Council. 2024. Folkestone landslips 2024: <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/parks-beaches-open-spaces/folkestone-landslips-2024#:~:text=The%20number%20taking%20place%20during%20February%20and%20March,makes%20it%20prone%20to%20erosion%20and%20being%20unstable>

<sup>14</sup> ONS. 2022. Excess mortality during heat-periods, England and Wales: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/excessmortalityduringheatperiodsenglandandwales>

<sup>15</sup> BBC News. 2022. UK wildfires: Firefighters on tackling flames moving faster than you can run: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62485130>

<sup>16</sup> Bewl Water. 2022. Recovery for Bewl Water reservoir levels: <https://www.bewlwater.co.uk/recovery-for-bewl-water-reservoir-levels/>

- Longer growing seasons.
- Reduced winter mortality.
- New tourism and commercial opportunities.
- Reduced winter energy consumption.

### 3.3. Reducing the impact

Identifying the risk that climate change poses, and implementing ways to proactively manage the risk, can help to limit potential damage and disruption before impacts occur. Climate risk is typically broken down into 3 aspects: the climate hazard, the level of exposure to the hazard, and the ability to cope with the hazard.

#### **Climate Risk = Climate Hazard x Exposure x Vulnerability**

This means that whilst there is very little that can be done to reduce the extent of a climate hazard when it occurs, it is possible to reduce exposure and vulnerability to a point where climate risks are less impactful.

### 3.4. Considerations for KCC

The most recent UK Climate Change Risk Assessment identified 61 cross-sectoral risks and opportunities<sup>17</sup>. Some of these physical risks are applicable to KCC and emphasise areas of consideration for this plan. These include:

- Risks to health and wellbeing.
- Risks to building fabric and other structures.
- Risks to IT assets.
- Risks to the highway and public rights of way assets.
- Risks to natural capital and landscapes (tree stock, grass verges, etc.).
- Risks to utilities (gas, electricity, water, permitted/licenced wastewater systems).
- Risks to social care provision.
- Risks to educational service provision.
- Risks to external service provision and supply chains.

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<sup>17</sup> CCC. 2021. Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk. Advice to Government for the UK's third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3): <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Independent-Assessment-of-UK-Climate-Risk-Advice-to-Govt-for-CCRA3-CCC.pdf>

Physical risks are linked to financial and reputational risks. Increased expenditure to repair damage to assets, maintain safe working environments, cover rising insurance premiums, provide new or additional services to residents who through their vulnerability are disproportionately affected, and reduced service user and resident satisfaction are all possible if physical climate risks are left unmanaged.

## 4. Responding to the climate emergency

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### 4.1. Seizing the opportunity of adapting

Through effective climate change adaptation, Kent could become a healthier, safer, more sustainable and prosperous place to live. There is an opportunity to make beneficial change across the county through co-benefits and added value, which can help KCC and partners to not only increase resilience to the impacts of climate change, but also make progress towards achieving other strategic objectives and priorities, all while benefitting Kent's residents.

An example of this is how implementing nature-based solutions to reduce heat stress, such as installing green walls on buildings or targeted tree planting in urban areas, can deliver the following benefits:

- Creation of new habitats for wildlife.
- Absorption of carbon dioxide.
- Improvements in surface water management.
- Improvements in air quality.
- Creation of more attractive spaces and amenities.

Adapting to some of the negative impacts of climate change can deliver economic benefits, such as productivity gains from reduced weather-induced disruption and cost savings from less expenditure on healthcare. Similarly, harnessing opportunities arising from a changing climate could lead to reduced expenditure on treating winter illnesses in the health sector, new commercial opportunities for the agricultural and tourism sectors, and less expenditure on gas and electricity to power domestic and non-domestic buildings

during colder months. These economic benefits can act as a potential stimulant of economic growth in Kent, assuming that savings are reinvested into Kent’s economy and productivity gains lead to greater consumption or investment.

However, adapting to climate change will present a financial cost to KCC, as adjustments to service delivery and asset management are needed to mitigate additional service demands and pressures driven by climate change. KCC services are impacted by climate change to varying degrees of extent, but those that are responsible for vulnerable residents and assets are most likely to experience increasing budgetary pressures, due to the combined effect of climatic, demographic, and societal changes.

Without adapting, it is likely that over time these budgetary pressures would exceed the cost associated with adapting to climate change. The incidence of costs and benefits can mean that expenditure on adaptation measures may not directly benefit those that make the initial investment. However, when considered in totality, there is evidence to suggest that certain climate change adaptation interventions deliver positive benefit-to-cost ratios, as shown in Figure 1:

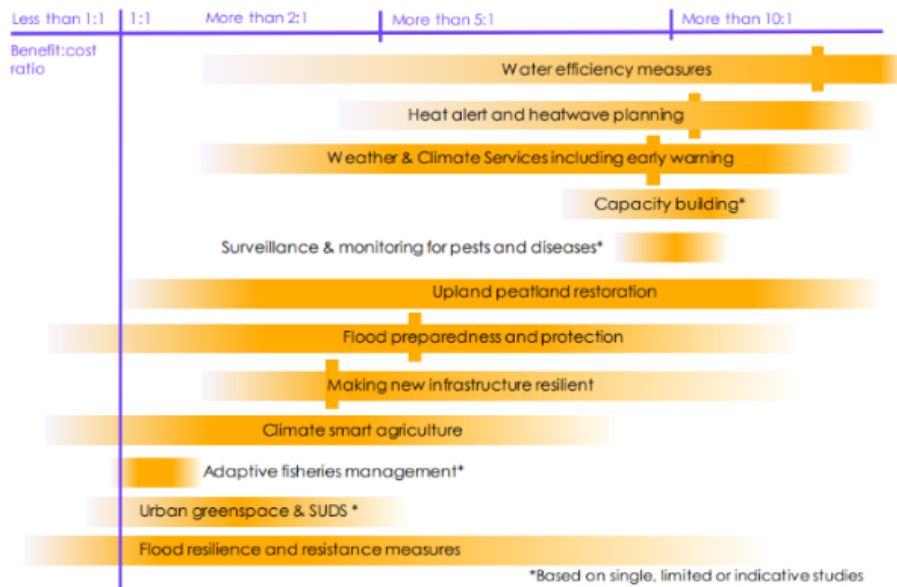


Figure 1. Benefit-cost ratios of adaptation measures included in the UK Government’s Third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3).



That is why it is vital that KCC explores opportunities to adapt to climate change and considers not just the cost of action, but also the value of any potential benefits that may arise to both KCC and partners across the county.

#### **4.2. Action to date**

Since recognising the climate emergency and publishing the Kent & Medway CCRIA, KCC has taken numerous steps to address climate impacts.

KCC has led and participated in match-funded EU Interreg projects that have sought to increase resilience to climate change within Kent. Reduced heat stress, increased resilience to flood risk and improved water resource use have all been achieved through nature-based and technical solutions, such as urban tree planting and the creation of a rainwater harvesting calculator.

KCC has delivered projects to reduce flood risk in areas where Kent residents have experienced flooding, such as those at Catts Place in Paddock Wood, St Katherine's School in Snodland, and George V Park in Margate. KCC has also coordinated water audit visits, in collaboration with Thames Water and South East Water, to increase water efficiency across its estate, schools, and non-KCC schools, within Thames Water & South East Water supply areas.

KCC has also factored the potential impact of climate change into corporate strategy and processes. KCC's Strategic Statement Framing Kent's Future (2022-2026) includes 'ensuring that Kent is well placed to adapt to climate change' within the 3<sup>rd</sup> key priority 'Environmental Step Change'<sup>18</sup>. In 2022, climate change was identified and listed as a risk on KCC's Corporate Risk Register for the first time. In 2024, KCC's Environment Plan listed adapting to climate change as one of six areas of environmental work that the council delivers.

#### **4.3. What next?**

KCC has done some great work through pilots and individual projects to increase resilience to climate change and embed climate change into corporate processes. The next step is to upscale activity across the council so that adapting to climate change becomes a part of KCC's business-as-usual activity.

This will involve capacity building through training and upskilling staff and the provision of support and guidance across the organisation, so that services feel empowered to plan for climate change and act upon climate risks and opportunities. Services will

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<sup>18</sup> KCC. 2022. Framing Kent's Future – Our Council Strategy 2022-2026: [https://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/136431/Framing-Kents-Future-strategy-document.pdf](https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/136431/Framing-Kents-Future-strategy-document.pdf)

be supported in this by officers who have a strong knowledge and understanding of climate adaptation, who will be able to help to guide services through the process of applying climate change to service delivery.

To achieve this change in approach, the following objectives have been selected, based on recommendations provided by the Climate Change Committee and the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment for Kent and Medway, as described in Section 2.

**Objective 1: Raise awareness of the risks and opportunities of climate change across KCC.**

**Objective 2: Integrate climate change adaptation into KCC's decision-making and service delivery.**

**Objective 3: Explore opportunities to act upon climate risks and impacts affecting services.**

**Objective 4: Encourage climate change adaptation through KCC activity across Kent.**

#### **4.4. Funding**

KCC's Climate Change Adaptation Plan has been developed by base funded staff from the Environment and Circular Economy Division, and at no additional cost to the council. Staff time will be the main resource required to deliver the objectives and actions that are set out in this plan and will be undertaken by base funded staff from all services involved. The objectives and actions are predominantly focused on capacity building through upskilling and knowledge transfer, as well as practical support and adaptive planning. This is why no additional expenditure is anticipated in the short term.

The plan will help to identify the risks and implications of climate change on KCC and the services that it delivers. The understanding gained from this process can be used to determine the appropriate service adaptation and mitigation in future spending reviews. Changing approaches to how activities are undertaken could lead to a spend-to-avoid approach, which could then present the opportunity to invest further in climate change adaptation measures. This will be entirely dependent on the development of robust business cases, which is what this plan seeks to facilitate, and where match funding, or in-kind funding, may be required, it will be assessed on a project-by-project basis.

Financing options underpinned by KCC's emerging green finance strategy will provide an alternative route to funding for adaptive measures. This will be crucial in funding climate change adaptation interventions moving forward, as current budgets are highly unlikely to be able to fund the measures that are needed to meet the scale of the challenge that climate change poses to KCC, unless there are significant changes to how local government is funded.

## 5. Implementation and monitoring progress

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This plan will be assessed against the progress made on each action and corresponding key outcome listed in the action plan. Progress made on each action will be considered and reviewed by the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on an annual basis.

To facilitate this process, annual reviews and workplans will be developed. The first of these annual workplans will be developed once this plan has been adopted and they will be published in March 2025, prior to the start of the 2025/26 financial year. These documents will define the specific yearly activity that will be undertaken for each action. Milestones will be revised after each review to inform the workplan for the following year.

The KCC Environment Board will oversee the implementation of the plan and monitor its progress. The Environment Board will receive mid-year updates on advancements made over the first and second halves of each annual workplan. This will aid risk and issue management processes and allow for escalation, if required. A full breakdown of the governance structure that the plan sits within can be found in Appendix 1.

The criteria for reviewing the progress of each action are set out in Table 1. This follows a similar methodology used by the Climate Change Committee to evaluate progress on implementation of the National Adaptation Plan.

Table 1:

Scoring criteria for delivery and implementation	
Score	Criteria

Completed	Actions have been completed or are being maintained at a high level.
Ongoing	Actions are progressing but are yet to be completed.
Incomplete	Actions are not progressing or were not completed within the agreed timeframe.
Unable to evaluate	Work streams yet to commence.

## 6. Action plan 2025 - 2028

Although the focus of this climate change adaptation plan is on KCC, the council understands that it cannot achieve its aim of adapting to climate change by working in isolation. That is why the work required to deliver on the objectives set out earlier in this Plan will require collaboration from across the organisation, alongside partners, and throughout Kent's wider community. To start this process, KCC will aim to deliver on the following actions:

Action	Description	Responsible Division	Key Outcomes
<b>Objective 1: Raise awareness of the risks and opportunities of climate change across KCC</b>			
<b>Assess the risks and impacts of climate change across all services</b>	To better understand the risk that climate change poses to KCC, climate change officers will work with officers across all services to undertake service-level climate risk assessments.	All divisions	Quantity of climate risk registers for each KCC service completed
<b>Brief services on the impact of climate change</b>	Climate change officers will provide briefings and presentations to services that seek support in developing their understanding of climate change and how it impacts their work.	Environment and Circular Economy	Quantity of briefings and presentations delivered.
<b>Discuss climate change adaptation at relevant environmental, leadership, and member groups</b>	Climate change adaptation will be discussed at environmental groups for KCC staff and members, such as: Environment Boards, Environmental Champions Network, and Kent Environment Strategy Cross-Party Members Group.	Environment and Circular Economy	Quantity of agendas of relevant internal environmental, leadership, and member groups, with climate change adaptation featured.

**Objective 2: Integrate climate change adaptation into KCC's decision-making and service delivery**

<p><b>Create action plans to address risks identified during risk assessments</b></p>	<p>As part of the risk assessment process, controls and actions will be established that mitigate identified risks. Controls and actions will provide the basis for service-level action plans, which services will write and outline what they need to do to adapt to climate change moving forward.</p>	<p>All divisions</p>	<p>Quantity of service-level action plans created.</p>
<p><b>Embed climate change adaptation into decision-making activity</b></p>	<p>KCC has numerous environmental commitments, including climate change adaptation. Climate change adaptation will be considered in future KCC decisions through the use of an assessment and guidance tool.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy</p>	<p>Quantity of future key decisions with climate change adaptation considered.</p>
<p><b>Embed justified and proportionate contractual requirements for climate adaptation into commissioning and procurement frameworks</b></p>	<p>KCC contracts with a range of organisations from different sectors to deliver services on behalf of the council. Contractual requirements for climate adaptation will be embedded within commissioning and procurement processes to ensure that suppliers build climate resilience into the services they deliver.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy, Commercial and Procurement</p>	<p>Justified and proportionate contractual requirements and supporting guidance for procurement and commissioning staff. Quantity of awarded contracts with climate risk considered.</p>
<p><b>Explore implementing enhanced proactive maintenance and continuing improvement in Kent's Highways Asset Management Plan</b></p>	<p>Increased degradation of road surfaces is likely to occur as a result of changes in precipitation patterns due to climate change. Preservation works to seal road surfaces are extremely cost-effective treatments and on average extend the life of a road by about 8-10 years. By increasing preservation works KCC undertakes, the decline in the condition of our network can be slowed whilst maintaining the resilience of our highway network.</p>	<p>Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Percentage change in Highways maintenance budget invested in preservation over renewal.</p>

<b>Objective 3: Explore opportunities to act upon climate risks and impacts that affect KCC services.</b>			
<b>Participate in adaptation-related projects funded by external partners</b>	Opportunities to participate in adaptation-related projects will arise throughout the life cycle of this plan. Services will seek to explore externally funded opportunities that can help to build climate resilience within their area of work, as and when they become available.	All divisions	Quantity of adaptation-related projects that are participated in across the council.
<b>Create pilots or projects that build climate resilience</b>	Certain KCC services may already be aware of and experiencing climate change impacts. Resource availability permitting, services will look to create project work that addresses climate risks that are affecting service delivery and asset management, in order to improve resilience to climate change.	All divisions	Quantity of new climate change adaptation project work created from within the council.
<b>Objective 4: Encourage climate change adaptation through KCC activity across Kent</b>			
<b>Promote climate change adaptation policies in planning</b>	The planning system plays an important role in shaping what Kent looks like moving forward. By making recommendations on what will be included in future planning, KCC can steer activity towards including more considerations for climate change.	Environment and Circular Economy, Growth and Communities	Quantity of corporate responses to local plans, housing applications, other developments, and countywide guidance, featuring climate change adaptation.
<b>Deliver climate change adaptation benefits through nature recovery activities</b>	KCC is responsible for coordinating local nature recovery across Kent. Adapting to climate change is not the primary reason for restoring nature, but it is one of many co-benefits that arises from doing so. By delivering on activities to restore nature through partnership work, KCC can help upscale climate resilience in Kent.	Environment and Circular Economy	Quantity of nature recovery activities with climate change adaptation benefits overseen.

<p><b>Input into regional flood risk and water management activities</b></p>	<p>KCC works with the local water supply companies and the regional water resources alliance (WRSE) and national charities to promote water efficiency and water savings. KCC will encourage more ambitious targets to save water and use it more efficiently.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy</p>	<p>Quantity of responses to non-KCC strategy and creation of KCC strategy.</p>
<p><b>Support Southern Water's Clean Rivers and Seas Plan</b></p>	<p>Southern Water established the Clean Rivers and Seas Task Force to reduce storm overflow releases. KCC will work with Southern Water to retrofit sections of Kent's highway network with SuDS to reduce combined sewage overflows and surface water flooding.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy, Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Quantity of planned implementation of Pathfinder Projects on KCC assets.</p>
<p><b>Continue to produce messaging on public health risks associated with climate impacts</b></p>	<p>KCC is responsible for helping to improve the general health of everyone in Kent. Climate change is one of many wider determinants of health. KCC produces messaging for residents on how climate hazards, such as extreme heat or cold, can affect their health. KCC will continue delivering this messaging to ensure that residents are aware of what they can do during periods of climatic extremes.</p>	<p>Public Health</p>	<p>Quantity of climate-related public health messaging campaigns delivered.</p>
<p><b>Create relevant guidance for how Kent's businesses and third sector organisations can adapt to climate change</b></p>	<p>The Kent &amp; Medway Economic Framework (KMEF) is the Kent &amp; Medway Economic Partnership main strategy, and it recognises the economic impact of climate change within its SWOT analysis. KCC will seek to provide guidance and information to businesses, where required, to help them adapt to climate change.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy, Growth and Communities</p>	<p>Quantity of guidance documents provided to Kent's businesses, quantity of interactions with businesses.</p>
<p><b>Support schools with including climate risk management into climate action plans</b></p>	<p>As part of the Department for Education's strategy for sustainability and climate change, schools across Kent are expected to produce their own climate action plans. To ensure that schools are including climate adaptation in their plans, KCC will provide school sustainability leads with guidance on how to undertake risk assessment and examples of actions to mitigate risks.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy</p>	<p>Quantity of guidance sessions given and interactions with school sustainability leads.</p>



<p><b>Engage a wider stakeholder network across Kent for future countywide planning</b></p>	<p>If KCC is to deliver a countywide climate change adaptation plan with partners in the future, it must first establish who needs to be a part of that process and what is required of them. KCC will start engaging stakeholders before prospective strategy planning begins.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy</p>	<p>Quantity of stakeholders engaged. Mapping and engagement completed.</p>
<p><b>Update KCC's website to provide residents with relevant climate change adaptation information</b></p>	<p>KCC is in a position to provide effective, reliable, online resources that provides households with insights with what they can do to adapt to Kent's changing climate.</p>	<p>Environment and Circular Economy</p>	<p>Quantity of relevant, up-to-date resources made accessible to residents.</p>

**7. Appendix**

Appendix 1 (Environment Plan Governance Structure)

## EQIA Submission – ID Number

### Section A

**EQIA Title**

KCC Climate Change Adaptation Plan

**Responsible Officer**

David Bennett - GT - ECE

**Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)**

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

### Type of Activity

**Service Change**

No

**Service Redesign**

No

**Project/Programme**

No

**Commissioning/Procurement**

No

**Strategy/Policy**

Strategy/Policy

**Details of other Service Activity**

No

### Accountability and Responsibility

**Directorate**

Growth Environment and Transport

**Responsible Service**

Environment & Circular Economy

**Responsible Head of Service**

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

**Responsible Director**

Matthew Smyth - GT - ECE

### Aims and Objectives

**Context:**

The KCC CCAP stems from Kent County Council (KCC) recognised the UK climate emergency on 23rd May 2019, in response to the threats and opportunities presented by climate change.

**Aims & Objectives:**

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that KCC is resilient to the negative impacts and well-positioned to benefit from any opportunities that arise from Kent's changing climate.

**The objectives of the strategy are to:**

- Raise awareness of the risks and opportunities of climate change across KCC.
- Integrate climate change adaptation into KCC's decision-making and service delivery.
- Explore opportunities to act upon climate risks and impacts affecting services.
- Encourage climate change adaptation through KCC activity across Kent.

## Equality Recommendation Summary:

Given that much of the focus of the KCC CCAP is based around capacity building across KCC, it is anticipated that there will not be substantial impacts, both positive and negative, to residents, staff or service users with protected characteristics.

However, having undertaken this analysis, it is possible that the following might apply to certain groups with protected characteristics:

Residents, service users, or staff with visual impairments or learning disabilities, who are seeking to access guidance provided on KCC's website or public health messaging, will be disadvantaged if accessibility functions are not considered. Therefore, mitigating any negative impact will be resolved by consulting with the digital communications team to ensure that the correct resources are incorporated.

Similarly, certain age groups (both younger and older audiences) may not have access to the technology or digital skills to access online resources or messaging. Therefore, mitigating any negative impact will be resolved by exploring opportunities for providing non-digital copies to be provided to users that cannot access digital resources online, upon request.

## Section B – Evidence

**Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?**

Yes

**It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?**

Yes

**Is there national evidence/data that you can use?**

Yes

**Have you consulted with stakeholders?**

Yes

**Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?**

As part of the development of the KCC CCAP, a group of officers formed part of a steering group from across of a select range of services.

The steering group was disbanded, however officers from other services were contacted for comment on a future draft of the KCC CCAP.

Elected members who form part of the KES Cross-Party Members Group have also been engaged.

**Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?**

No

**Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?**

Yes

## Section C – Impact

**Who may be impacted by the activity?**

**Service Users/clients**

No

**Staff**

Staff/Volunteers

**Residents/Communities/Citizens**

Residents/communities/citizens
<b>Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of Positive Impacts</b>
Overall, the aim of increasing KCC's resilience to the impacts of climate change should benefit service users, residents, and KCC staff by ensuring that climate change is factored into KCC service delivery and asset management.
Public Health Messaging and guidance documents provided on KCC's website may positively impact, through increased awareness of their vulnerability to climate impacts, the following protected characteristics:
Age Disability
<b>Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions</b>
<b>19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for age?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of negative impacts for Age</b>
Any resources provided digitally via the KCC website may not reach certain age groups due digital inaccessibility.
<b>Mitigating Actions for Age</b>
Non-digital copies to be provided to users that cannot access digital resources online, upon request.
<b>Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age</b>
David Bennett
<b>20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Disability?</b>
Yes
<b>Details of Negative Impacts for Disability</b>
Those with disabilities may have difficulty in using resources shared on KCC's website, as well as difficulty reading or making use of the material provided.
<b>Mitigating actions for Disability</b>
Any content listed on KCC's website must adhere to digital accessibility requirements. If content is uploaded to KCC's website, KCC's Digital Accessibility Team will be contacted prior to making a request for new material to be uploaded. If desired materials are found to be inaccessible, efforts will be made to ensure that materials are adjusted to meet digital accessibility requirements. If adjustments cannot be made, they will not be uploaded.
<b>Responsible Officer for Disability</b>
David Bennett
<b>21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sex</b>
No
<b>Details of negative impacts for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sex</b>
Not Applicable

<b>Responsible Officer for Sex</b>
Not Applicable
<b>22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender</b>
Not Applicable
<b>23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Race</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race</b>
Not Applicable
<b>24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Religion and belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief</b>
Not Applicable
<b>25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation</b>
Not Applicable
<b>26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity</b>
Not Applicable
<b>27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
No

<b>Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships</b>
Not Applicable
<b>28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
<b>Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
No
<b>Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities</b>
Not Applicable

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From: **Roger Gough, Leader of the Council**  
**John Betts, Acting Corporate Director for Finance**

To: **Cabinet,**  
**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

Subject: **Financial Hardship Programme**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Summary:** This report provides a high-level overview of the support provided in response to the ongoing financial pressures, focussing in particular on the work being funded by the Helping Hands Scheme, and the delivery of the Department of Work and Pensions Household Support Fund. This report will also outline the work delivered through these schemes to support the uptake of Pension Credit in the county.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is asked to comment on, and note, the report.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The Helping Hands Scheme was created in February 2021 by the Kent County Council Leader using £10m of the Covid Emergency Grant to support projects aimed at helping people experiencing, or at risk of, financial hardship, and to achieve sustainable longer term outcomes for people with what would otherwise be short term, one-off funding. The scheme has four key areas: Residential, Digital Inclusion and Capabilities, Crowdfunding and Business.

1.2 From the priorities of the Helping Hands scheme, the Financial Hardship Programme was established, initially working to deliver Residential and Digital Inclusion and Capabilities focused projects. More recently, the Financial Hardship Programme has also been working on a new phase of projects delivered under the Business workstream.

1.3 The Programme works closely in partnership with many organisations including District and Borough Councils, the voluntary sector, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, as well as other teams within KCC. Its unique and trusted position working across the local Kent public sector has enabled the Programme to achieve many positive impacts for Kent.

1.4 Some key impacts that have been achieved to date are: over 180,000 awards of support issued through the Household Support Fund, written off over £57,000 of debt for residents, supported people into employment, helped upskill people into better jobs with higher income, diverted over 32,000kg from landfill, set up the largest

Digital Champions Network in the country and been shortlisted for 7 awards. The programme has recently finalised an impact report to showcase the significant impact delivered through the programme and Helping Hands Scheme to date.

1.5 The work of the Programme was scheduled to complete at the end of March 2025. As a result of efficient financial management and a focus on attracting significant additional income, the initial investment from the Helping Hands Scheme has been able to operate beyond the initial timeline and is now able to continue past March 2025 without any further investment required by Kent County Council.

1.6 This report provides an update on the work undertaken by the Financial Hardship Programme, including the recently launched impact report, delivery of the Household Support Fund and specific support related to Pension Credit.

## **2. Household Support Fund**

2.1 On 30 September 2021, the Government announced that vulnerable households across the country would be able to access a new £500 million support fund to help them with essentials over the winter. The Household Support Fund (HSF) was distributed by Upper Tier councils in England to directly help those who needed it most.

2.2 The fund aims to support vulnerable households and families with children, where alternative sources of assistance may be unavailable. It should be used to meet immediate needs and help those who are struggling to afford food and utility bills and water for household purposes, as well as debt and benefit advice.

2.3 Following the Government's decision in September 2024 to provide a 6 month extension, the fund has now entered its sixth round of delivery, running until the end of March 2025. More recently, it was announced in the Chancellor's budget that the Government will provide £1 billion in 2025-26, to extend both the Household Support Fund (HSF) in England, and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) in England and Wales.

2.4 Kent County Council's previous rounds of funding have been allocated to provide targeted support to Free School Meal eligible households, as well as delivering a publicly available scheme to support with food and energy bills and other county-wide initiatives. In the last round of the county-wide voucher scheme, 10,000 households were supported with a £100 award value for food and/or energy vouchers.

2.5 In previous rounds, 20% of KCC's allocation has been distributed to District and Borough Councils to deliver local initiatives in line with the scheme. In the most recent return from districts, over 55,000 awards were provided to approximately 46,000 households through this local delivery. The support has included initiatives to help with food, energy and water, housing, advice services, as well as wider essentials households in need could benefit from. This approach has been commended by DWP and LGA and will be continued in round six, enabling local projects and schemes to be delivered through district and borough councils.

2.6 In the previous round of funding, other county-wide schemes have been delivered through KCC including the Winter Support Scheme, administered through the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC), which gave parish, town and local councils the opportunity to apply for funding for new or existing initiatives helping people in financial hardship as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. In addition, a second round of the Warm Home Essentials Scheme was launched, providing carpeting and curtains to households in need.

2.7 In the sixth round of funding KCC will continue to deliver a county-wide scheme, as well as providing direct support to Free School Meal eligible households. As in previous rounds, 20% of funds will be provided to District and Borough councils to deliver local initiatives. There will also be targeted support delivered to those just missing out on pension credit, as outlined in section three of this report.

### **3. Pension Credit**

3.1 In July 2024 the Chancellor announced that people not eligible for Pension Credit or other means-tested entitlements will no longer receive a winter fuel payment worth between £100 and £300 every year. The announcement could potentially affect up to one million households across England who have been eligible to receive the payment up until now. It is estimated that around 18,000 households across Kent are eligible for Pension Credit but not applying, this results in each of these households potentially missing out on an estimated £186 per month.

3.2 Kent County Council and partners have been working to establish mechanisms for providing support in this area. This includes general promotional work to increase awareness through the Kent Together banner, as well as targeted projects and schemes that aim to support pensioners in need.

3.3 The aim of the Pension Credit campaign is to raise awareness of Pension Credit, dispel some of the misconceptions and ask family, friends and professionals to support with the application process if a person is having trouble applying to increase uptake of the entitlement.

3.4 A variety of communication channels are being used to disseminate the key messages to residents and professionals. This has included discussing the issue at the Financial Hardship Task and Finish Group and delivering a ReferKent Spotlight Session which saw just under 300 attendees. The work has also included the development of a marketing campaign and dedicated web page which can be accessed via the following link: [Pension Credit - Kent County Council](#)

3.5 Kent County Council's Household Support Fund will also be used as a mechanism to support in this area. Funding will be made available to Citizens Advice to provide additional resourcing for supporting eligible residents in making a pension credit application. There will also be support delivered to ensure those who are digitally excluded are aware of their entitlements and how to apply for them.

3.6 In addition to supporting the uptake of Pension Credit, KCC is also looking to provide support to those that are just missing out on Pension Credit and will therefore be disproportionately affected in not receiving the Winter Fuel Payment. This support will be delivered through a voucher scheme, providing a £200 voucher to be used

towards food or energy costs. This scheme will be open for those aged 66 and over who are not claiming or eligible to claim pension credit and have a household income between £11,343.80 - £40,000 for single applicants and between £17,313.40 - £40,000 for a joint application. £1m has been allocated for this scheme from the Household Support Fund Round 6 allocation.

3.7 Many District and Borough councils are considering the use of HSF funds to support those just missing out. Some of the options being explored include working with the voluntary sector and increasing the provision of services to specific groups, as well as targeting planned fuel voucher schemes or expanding them for those who have just missed out on the winter fuel payment.

#### **4. Financial Hardship Programme Updates**

4.1 Throughout the last 3 years, there has been a comprehensive programme of activity developed and delivered to support people in hardship. This work has focussed on innovative ways to achieve long term benefits for residents, as well as supporting people who are in immediate hardship.

4.2 The programme has been collecting and evaluating data throughout the various projects and schemes delivered. An Impact Report has been produced to showcase the work to date and provide evidence of the benefits in delivering financial hardship support to residents. A copy of the report can be found in Appendix 1.

4.3 Within the report, the importance of partnership working is highlighted. Through continued strong partnership working and collaboration, projects have been tailored to best support the needs of residents, whilst ensuring efficient delivery and value for money. Some of the key partnership achievements highlighted in the report include; the district and borough council delivery of the Household Support Fund, the success of the Parish Council Grant, and the continued collaborative work of the Financial Hardship Task and Finish Group.

4.4 The report highlights some of the key achievements of the Financial Hardship Programme and partners in delivering support to residents across a variety of hardship related projects and services. These include achieving over £2,800,000 in financial outcomes for residents, such as increased benefits, written off debts and grants, through the Citizen's Advice run Kent Advice Hub, delivering over 150 beds to children in bed poverty, providing over 26,000 fuel and 22,000 food vouchers through the Household Support Fund, and providing over 5,000 devices to those experiencing digital exclusion.

4.5 The Financial Hardship Programme was established as a temporary endeavour, utilising COVID Emergency Grant to respond to the impact of the pandemic and subsequently the cost-of-living crisis.

4.6 Due to efficient financial management and a focus on attracting significant additional income, the initial investment from the Helping Hands Scheme has been able to operate beyond the initial timeline and is now able to continue past March 2025. Looking ahead, the Programme will work with partners and continue to adapt to the changing strategic and political environment, whilst maintaining the principle of supporting people to improve their long-term financial resilience.

## **5. Summary**

5.1 The Household Support Fund is a key mechanism to providing support to residents in hardship. Now in its sixth round, the fund continues to support Free School Meal eligible households, as well other county-wide initiatives. Kent County Council is continuing to allocate funds to district and borough councils for local projects. The future of HSF remains uncertain, but current efforts continue to focus on immediate needs and targeted support.

5.2 The government's announcements around Winter Fuel Payments will affect many households. The Financial Hardship Programme is actively promoting Pension Credit uptake through awareness campaigns and partnerships. Additionally, the Household Support Fund will assist in this effort by providing resources to Citizens Advice and supporting digitally excluded residents. To aid those just missing out on Pension Credit, a voucher scheme will also be offered to eligible residents.

5.3 Over the past three years, the Financial Hardship Programme has developed and delivered a range of activities to support residents in need, focusing on both immediate relief and long-term benefits. An Impact Report has been produced to showcase the programme's achievements and the importance of partnership working. Initially funded by the COVID Emergency Grant, the programme has managed its finances efficiently and attracted additional income, allowing it to extend operations beyond March 2025. Moving forward, the programme will continue to adapt to changing circumstances while supporting residents' financial resilience.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 Cabinet is asked to comment on, and note, the report.

## **7. Appendices**

7.1 Appendix 1 – Financial Hardship Programme Impact Report

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# Financial Hardship Programme

## Impact Report

September 2024

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# Foreword from Roger Gough



Kent County Council's  
Helping Hands Scheme



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The economic challenges faced across the country have placed unprecedented strain on households in Kent, with many struggling to make ends meet as prices rise and incomes are stretched thin. In 2021, I launched the Helping Hands scheme, utilising £10 million of Covid Emergency Grant to urgently respond to the impact of the pandemic and subsequently address the challenges presented by cost-of-living pressures.

The Helping Hands scheme has been instrumental in providing targeted support to those facing financial hardship, including individuals, families, and businesses. This funding enabled the establishment of the Financial Hardship Programme, allowing us to deliver support to residents in a holistic and effective manner. The programme has been a vital lifeline for many households, offering direct aid to alleviate immediate pressures while also providing sustainable interventions to help them in the long term.

The ongoing financial pressures on our residents require innovative solutions that offer lasting benefits. This programme embodies that ethos, from helping residents manage and write off debt to improving digital capabilities across the county. I am extremely proud of the work of KCC's Financial Hardship team and how they are working collaboratively with all our partners across Kent to help people find a practical way forward.

The achievements of the work to date have been remarkable, supporting thousands of residents through various forms of support. This success is testament to the dedication and hard work of our teams and partners across Kent, who have come together to deliver meaningful change during a time of immense challenge. Through ongoing collaboration and shared commitment, we can continue to support residents in overcoming hardship and addressing financial issues, ensuring that everyone in Kent has the opportunity to achieve stability and success.

Roger Gough  
Leader, Kent County Council



# Introduction

The Financial Hardship Programme has been instrumental in addressing economic challenges faced in Kent, delivering projects that have supported those experiencing hardship as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently the cost-of-living crisis.

This impact report provides an overview of the programme's work and impact to date. It highlights specific projects within the programme, detailing their achievements and contributions towards alleviating financial hardship in Kent.

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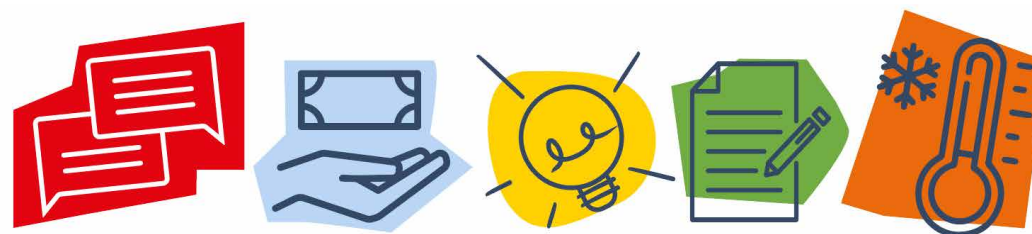


# Overview of the Financial Hardship Programme

In February 2021 the Helping Hands Scheme was created by Kent County Council's leader using £10m of the Covid Emergency Grant to support projects aimed at helping residents experiencing, or at risk of, financial hardship. The scheme had four key areas: Residential, Digital Inclusion and Capabilities, Crowdfunding and Business.

The Financial Hardship Programme was established to deliver projects and schemes based on the Helping Hands funding priorities, as well as working with partners to deliver local initiatives. Initially the programme worked to deliver on the Residential and Digital Inclusion and Capabilities funds and later started delivery on phase two of the Business funding stream. Within Residential, three additional workstreams were developed: Strengthening Referrals, Free School Meals & Healthy Start, and Data Sharing. Each of the areas utilise Helping Hands funding, as well as obtaining external funds to deliver impactful and sustainable projects that work towards the overall aim of reducing financial hardship in the county.

The programme has operated on the principles of sustainability, innovation and partnership working. Many of the projects initiated through the programme have provided a test bed for future work, trialling initiatives and providing evidence on their impact. Whilst the work was established as a fixed term endeavour, the programme operates to deliver sustainable outcomes wherever possible and consider the best delivery routes to enable longevity of support.



# Where did we start?

To ensure a collaborative and informed approach to tackling financial hardship, the programme of work was established through collaborative partnership meetings – which has continued as the Financial Hardship Task and Finish Group. Key stakeholders came together to identify and decide on effective activities and establish the key areas of need. This partnership included representatives from Kent County Council and Medway Council, District and Borough

Councils, voluntary sector organisations and other public sector colleagues. Through a series of sessions with the support of a consulting agency, the group devised a Theory of Change Model, defining the interventions needed to meet the needs of those experiencing financial hardship, the principles of which have been used to develop and deliver projects and schemes that work together to tackle the many aspects of financial hardship.

Interventions (Output)	Short term outcomes	Medium term outcomes
<b>01</b> Identify and engage key partners	<b>S1</b> All appropriate partners are represented on and contribute to service planning forums	<b>M1</b> Key stakeholder organisations work in partnership to plan and provide joint services effectively
<b>02</b> Develop a range of financial hardship services based on needs/segmentation	<b>S2</b> Those at risk of financial hardship access support	<b>M2</b> Hardship schemes provide a range of interventions including employment, housing, food and fuel
<b>03</b> Create holistic and accessible benefits and entitlements advice services	<b>S3</b> People in Kent & Medway access good benefits and entitlements advice	<b>M3</b> People in Kent & Medway are claiming benefits and entitlements effectively
<b>04</b> Develop risk identification and referral process in partnership with key stakeholders	<b>S4</b> People at risk are referred to appropriate services in a timely manner	<b>M4</b> Robust referral and signposting processes promote early intervention
<b>05</b> Produce educational interventions that address effective financial management	<b>S5</b> People at risk access educational interventions	<b>M5</b> People in Kent & Medway are supported to manage their finances effectively through increased financial capability
<b>06</b> Co-produce strategic service delivery plan with key stakeholders including at risk families and individuals	<b>S6</b> At risk individuals and families willingly engage with services as needed	<b>M6</b> A single holistic view of financial hardship supports practice and delivery of services
<b>07</b> Develop ICT resource to create data lakes capable of identifying at risk groups	<b>S7</b> Task & Finish Group has capacity for early identification of at-risk individuals and families	<b>M7</b> Aggregated data sets from across agencies drives effective identification of those at risk
<b>08</b> Produce data collection and evaluation templates	<b>S8</b> Interventions and schemes collect data to enable robust cost benefit analysis	<b>M8</b> Impact data is used to create robust business cases for investment in support

**Fewer people in Kent and Medway are experiencing financial hardship**

# How has it worked?

Using the initial Helping Hands Fund, the Financial Hardship Programme was established to develop and deliver initiatives that would support residents experiencing hardship. Starting as a small team, the programme has evolved, allowing the council to deliver county-wide initiatives, as well as leveraging other funding to expand and sustain the work. As well as delivering projects in-house, the team has also been responsible for supporting and monitoring the delivery of external projects funded by the Helping Hands Scheme. Taking this approach has enabled a holistic offer of support to residents, involving a range of partners and organisations.

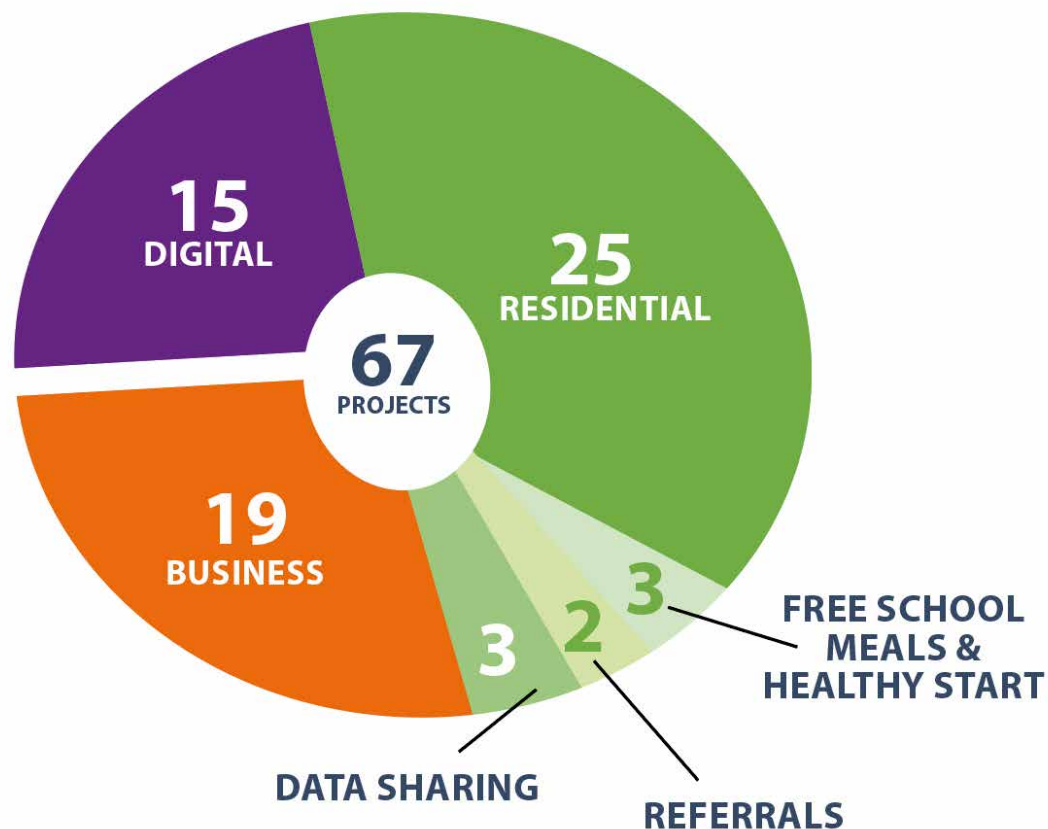


Kent County Council's  
Helping Hands Scheme

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**HELPING HANDS FUND**  
**£9,500,000**

**67 project applications**  
**approved for funding from**  
**Helping Hands**



# Other Funding

The programme has successfully enhanced this initial resource by working in partnership with organisations to expand on the delivery of projects, providing wider benefits to residents supported. These collaborative efforts have enabled the programme to offer a comprehensive range of support to holistically tackle financial hardship.



**£3,000,000**  
Clinically Extremely  
Vulnerable



**£135,000**  
Utility partners



**£130,894**  
Support for Self-Isolation



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

**£66,390,000**  
Household Support Fund



**£127,739**  
District or Parish Councils



**£4,425,283**  
Contain Outbreak Management Fund

**Other partnerships,  
including  
public bodies**

**£470,993**

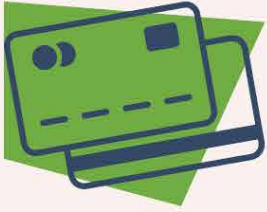
The **Financial Hardship Programme** aims to work holistically, tackling multiple areas of hardship and working with partners to broaden the level of support available. The case study below is a fictional family aimed to illustrate areas of need and how the various projects and schemes delivered can support a household experiencing financial hardship.

## The Smith Family

The Smith family, consisting of parents **John and Sarah**, and their three children, have been struggling with financial hardship for several years. Living in a rented flat, their financial situation has steadily worsened due to a combination of low income, mounting debt, and other socio-economic challenges.







**John and Sarah** have accumulated significant debt from credit cards and payday loans, taken out to cover basic living expenses. High interest rates have made it impossible for them to pay off the principal loan, leading to a vicious cycle of borrowing and repayment.



The family experiences fuel poverty, struggling to afford their utility bills, which forces them to choose between heating their home and other essential expenses such as food. The family does not have adequate carpeting or curtains in the living room which results in a very poorly insulated home.



Both **John and Sarah** work low-wage jobs with inconsistent hours, providing minimal job security and insufficient income to cover their family's basic needs. Despite their best efforts, they are unable to find better-paying jobs due to a lack of qualifications and job opportunities in their area.



The children's beds and mattresses are damaged, which affects their sleep quality and overall health. This, in turn, leads to poor educational outcomes as they struggle to concentrate and perform well in school.

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The family lacks access to a computer and reliable internet, hindering their ability to apply for jobs, access online educational resources, and benefit from digital services. This digital exclusion exacerbates their financial situation and social isolation.



The family frequently relies on local services such as food banks to meet their nutritional needs.

Considering the various aspects of hardship this family is experiencing, the following sections of this report will highlight how the Financial Hardship Programme can support them, demonstrating the impact these projects and schemes have had on individuals and households so far.



**John and Sarah** have accumulated significant debt from credit cards and payday loans, taken out to cover basic living expenses. High interest rates have made it impossible for them to pay off the principal loan, leading to a vicious cycle of borrowing and repayment.

## Bills and Finance

The rising cost-of-living has seen an increase in household bills and subsequently many households like the Smiths are getting into debt to afford basic living costs (StepChange, 2022). Since 2020, **Citizens Advice** have seen a gradual increase in the number of individuals they are supporting with debt issues, and the amount of debt amongst the people they help is rising (Citizens Advice, 2024).

The **Financial Hardship Programme** is working to support households like this by ensuring professional debt advice is accessible to all. A project John and Sarah could access for support is the Kent Advice Hub, delivered by Citizens Advice North & West Kent. This provides a central hub for specialised debt advice which they can access through a video call from home, or via a local kiosk.

If **John and Sarah** were experiencing mental health issues because of their financial struggles, they could also be referred to this service through a dedicated referral route. The Money and Mental Health project ensures that those struggling with mental health can receive debt advice that is flexible to their needs, allowing them to come in and out of support when required.

Across the Kent Advice Hub and Money and Mental Health Projects:



**2,638**

clients have been supported

**25,000**

contacts have been made into the services



**30 local advice hubs**

are in operation, with many more in progress

**£2,819,005**

has been achieved in financial outcomes for individuals, including £585,000 in debt outcomes



The **Debt Relief Order (DRO)** pilot project provided a one-off payment of £90 to help people access a Debt Relief Order (DRO) which can clear existing debt on everything from council tax to energy bills and rent. This was a collaborative project with KCC working with Citizens Advice and Wave Community Bank.



**66 debt relief orders paid for**

## referKent

ReferKent is another project that could support the Smith family. This online referral platform mitigates the action of signposting, so that people get help and support quickly. Professionals working with the family can use ReferKent to identify further support and make referrals, alleviating the pressure on John and Sarah to get in touch with other services.

**50** of the organisations on ReferKent are providing financial advice

**26.6%** of outcomes for those referred through the system are related to financial support



## CASE STUDY

The following case study is a real client supported through the Kent Advice Hub. The client is a young single mother, living in a one-bedroom flat with her three-year old son. She suffers from various mental health issues and is the sole custodian of her son which has impacted her ability to take up employment. The client is reliant on benefits as sources of income. However, this did not cover the entirety of her housing costs.

The client contacted the Kent Advice Hub as she was facing financial hardship and wanted help dealing with numerous debts, amounting to £4,833.50. The service successfully managed to get some of the client's debts written off on health grounds. She was also supported to get a new washing machine to replace one she had on hire purchase, saving her £20/month. She was also referred to the benefits team for help with a PIP appeal for which she was awarded the enhanced rates for both elements, providing her an extra £156.90 a week.







Both **John and Sarah** have low-wage jobs with inconsistent hours, providing minimal job security and insufficient income to cover their family's basic needs. Despite their best efforts, they are unable to find better-paying jobs due to a lack of qualifications and job opportunities in their area.

# Business, Skills and Employability

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The **Helping Hands Fund** established business as one of the funding areas, enabling projects and initiatives that support businesses to thrive, growing the local economy and enabling further opportunities for individuals as a result of this growth. This area has also sought to deliver projects that support with local skills development, ensuring we have individuals with the right skillsets for the current and future state of our local workforce. This workstream aligns to the Local Skills Improvement Plan and Kent and Medway Economic Framework.



## Digital After School Clubs

John and Sarah's children could access one of the funded Digital After School Club places, enabling them to obtain digital skills and be inspired about careers across the sector. Having this extra childcare support will also help John and Sarah when seeking employment opportunities.

**30 digital after school clubs funded.**



## Recover Pivot Scale

This project provided high intensity support to businesses to enable them to adapt, recover from economic challenges and grow.

**50 businesses supported resulted in them receiving 2443 hours of coaching, supported them to adopt new technology and adapt to the market.**

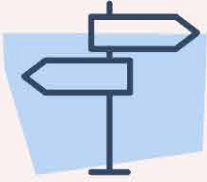
**50% of businesses secured capital investment worth more than £2mn.**



## High Street Recovery

Supported high street retailers to accelerate their evolution into online selling to help ensure they could continue trading during the pandemic.

**801 businesses signed up on the platform to support this evolution.**



### Roadmap out of lockdown

Providing business support to Thanet-based businesses to support them through the impact of the pandemic.

**This was well received with 414 enquiries, 18 training and networking sessions and 204 businesses participating in those.**



### Kent Foundation - From Ideas to Income (up to 40 year olds)

Sarah wants to start a home-based business to supplement her household income. The Kent Foundation project offers online training to help develop the necessary knowledge and skills. The course is flexible, allowing completion around work or study, and provides access to a network of other Kent residents and business mentors, with support continuing even after the course ends.



### Rebel Business School

**8 courses ran to teach Kent residents entrepreneurial skills to set up or build their own business.**

**464 Kent residents attended.**



### Worldly Wise Education Programme

Provides Dover district's female students in secondary schools and colleges with exposure to the STEM businesses in Kent. They provide opportunities such as talks, work placements, visits, interview support and Q&A sessions, supporting young women into roles where they have historically been under-represented and where there is a skills shortage in Kent.



### Integrated Skills Provision and Progression

These projects have reviewed how Kent's education, DWP, housing associations and other organisations can improve progression for Kent's workforce. They support residents to train to find improved career opportunities in sectors where there are workforce and skills shortages, and help those that are economically inactive to return to the workforce to achieve improved wellbeing and financial outcomes.



The children's beds and mattresses are damaged, which affects their sleep quality and overall health. This, in turn, leads to poor educational outcomes as they struggle to concentrate and perform well in school.

# Bed Poverty

In the past decade, an increasing number of children are growing up in households that cannot meet their basic needs. According to Crisis, 30% of low-income families cannot afford a bed for their child (Chroniclive, 2021). Many children in the UK sleep without their own bed, often sharing with siblings or sleeping on sofas or the floor. Buttle UK estimates that around 400,000 children lack their own bed. Quality sleep is crucial for a child's development, impacting emotional regulation, physical growth, and neurological processes. Good sleep is essential for brain reorganisation and helps children focus and process information throughout the day (Peters, 2022).

Helping Hands funding has enabled the Financial Hardship Programme to support families experiencing financial hardship with new beds, mattresses and bedding.

**OVER 80 families supported with over 150 beds**



*"This is fantastic. We have moved here with nothing, sleeping on mattresses on the floor. This is going to change our lives"*



The family experiences fuel poverty, struggling to afford their utility bills, which forces them to choose between heating their home and other essential expenses such as food. The family does not have adequate carpeting or curtains in the living room which results in a very poorly insulated home.

# Fuel Poverty



Utility prices have been a significant factor in rising household outgoings, notably impacted by the energy crisis. National Energy Action estimates there are 6.5 million households in fuel poverty and their impact report estimates that despite the Ofgem price cap, energy bills will still be £1000 higher than before the energy crisis (National Energy Action, 2023). The Household Support Fund, provided by the governments Department for Work and Pensions, has been key in enabling the Financial Hardship Programme to tackle this issue.

The Warm Home Essentials scheme can support the Smith family to insulate their home by providing them with carpeting and curtains. Carpets and curtains both play an important part in providing a thermal barrier to the home, trapping in the heat during colder seasons. By minimising heat loss through these measures, it is hoped the family will see a reduction in their energy usage, saving on their household bills.

**Over 350 carpets and curtains supplied in the first round of the scheme.**  
*"This has completely transformed my life, being without carpeting for years. I cannot thank you enough for doing that for me and my children, it is much warmer now"*

The publicly available voucher scheme that has been delivered throughout the rounds of Household Support Fund has been a support mechanism for families like the Smiths. This has delivered a fuel voucher or card of £100 to be used towards helping pay for household energy bills.

**Over 26,000 fuel vouchers issued through Household Support Fund over the last four rounds of funding.**



The family can also be referred to one of the many organisations on the ReferKent system offering fuel support and advice.  
**41% of support outcomes on the system are for Fuel Advice and Support**



The family frequently relies on local services such as food banks to meet their nutritional needs.

# Food and Nutrition



Food poverty is a continuing issue for families like the Smiths. Figures from the Trussell Trust (2023) show a 16% increase in the number of emergency food parcels provided between April and September 2023 compared to the previous year; 65% of these parcels were provided to families with children. Within the Financial Hardship Programme, food poverty has been tackled through the promotion of Free School Meals (FSM) and Healthy Start (HS) schemes, providing food vouchers through the Household Support Fund, and ensuring effective referrals to support services through ReferKent.

The programme has been working to promote Free School Meals eligibility so that families like the Smiths can check whether they are eligible. By accessing this support, the children would get a meal provided at school every day at no cost and the family would receive a £10 food voucher per eligible child each week during the school holidays. Free School Meals also provides wider benefits as it enables schools to receive additional funding.

**Kent has seen a 2.1% increase in FSM uptake from Jan 2022 to October 2023.**

### Cost benefit

A cost benefit analysis conducted for an Urban Health report (2022) suggests that providing free school meals for pupils in receipt of Universal Credit returned benefits valued at £1.38p for every £1.00 spent. Providing universal free school meals generated benefits of £1.71p for every £1.00 invested.



Department for Work & Pensions

The Household Support Fund has also benefitted many households by providing them with vouchers of £100 to use towards the cost of food shopping.



**OVER 22,000** food vouchers provided through Household Support Fund

### referKent

The ReferKent system can be used to refer the Smith family onto further support around food and nutrition.

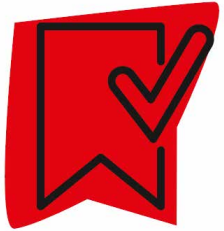
**4%**

food advice and support outcomes





For families like the Smiths to learn about schemes, professionals need to be aware of what they involve and who is eligible. The Healthy Start Champions project was established by the Financial Hardship Programme to spread awareness and upskill professionals on the scheme.



**97%**

feel confident  
telling clients  
about Healthy Start  
following training



**1085**

views on the Healthy  
Start training  
video



**228**

Healthy Start  
Champions

Healthy Start is another scheme that could support the Smith family with their youngest child. Those who qualify, and are at least 10 weeks pregnant or have a child under 4, can get a prepaid card to spend on milk, fruit and vegetables and infant formula milk. The card also enables pregnant mothers and children to get free vitamins.

The Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust Vitamin Project provided mothers in five high-deprivation postcodes with a full-term supply of Healthy Start vitamins.

The project resulted in:



**23%**

increase in new  
registration for  
Health Start  
vitamins in the  
targeted towns



**4740**

vitamin tubs  
supplied  
(2 months supply)



The family lacks access to a computer and reliable internet, hindering their ability to apply for jobs, access online educational resources, and benefit from digital services. This digital exclusion exacerbates their financial situation and social isolation.

# Digital Inclusion & Capabilities



The latest Digital National statistics from The Good Things Foundation demonstrates that 8.5m individuals lack basic digital skills, with 3.7m families below the minimum digital living standard. Families like the Smiths can be left behind and unable to access support and services online. The Digital Inclusion & Capabilities workstream has developed and delivered a number of projects and schemes to tackle the digital divide.

## Skills

Not having had access to digital tools before can make using them nerve wracking, particularly when it is important to be aware of online safety. The family can get help from Digital Kent to build on their digital skills by accessing support from a Digital Champion at their local Digital Hub.

**There are currently 267 active volunteers available to support across 40 monthly Digital Hub locations. In these sessions the family can get a range of support and guidance around utilising digital services, ensuring they feel confident in using digital tools safely.**

## Access

Digital Kent can support the Smith family through their Hardware Access and Connectivity Access Schemes. These schemes will provide the family with a refurbished device which they can keep, as well as providing them with a wi-fi voucher enabling them to get online.

Through these schemes:



**5,006**

devices have been provided to residents



**1,167**

connectivity solutions have been provided to residents

## More than digital

The Digital Kent team have been working collaboratively with a range of partners to tackle the digital divide in a holistic way. Current projects running with the NHS, SGN and UKPN mean the team can support individuals with specific digital tools that relate to health services and energy needs. This will further support the Smiths with the hardship they are experiencing as they can utilise their new devices and skills to do things like access online GP appointments, compare energy prices, and explore social tariffs.



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### CASE STUDY

Carol had been referred into the service to receive a laptop from the Hardware Access Scheme, but also stated that she struggled with her digital skills. The team got in touch with Carol to ensure that she was aware of all the support available, allowing her to make use of the Digital Hubs and digital skills sessions run across Kent. Carol was struggling using her laptop due to a physical condition in her hands, as well as the anxiety that being online was causing her. She says that now, she loves to write emails and order her shopping online, and that our service was “like someone threw her a life preserver”. Carol is receiving further support from one of the fantastic Digital Champion volunteers and couldn’t thank the service enough!

## Cost benefit

The results of analysis completed by The Good Things Foundation (2022) suggest digital inclusion projects operate at a cost benefit of £9.48, for every £1 invested in digital skills training, £9.48 is gained throughout the economy.

19,143



devices donated to the Device Recycling Scheme, providing a safe, secure, and environmentally friendly way for residents, businesses, charities, and other organisations to dispose of unwanted IT equipment. The value generated from this is enabling further digital inclusion support to be delivered.



17.25%

increase in residents using NHS online services



5.62%

increase in residents accessing government services online



16,761

residents supported to become more digitally included

Diverted over **32,000kg** from landfill



# Partnership Working



Collaborative efforts have been essential in providing support to households facing financial hardship. By partnering with district, borough and parish councils, as well as voluntary sector and public sector organisations we have been able to amplify the impact on residents by sharing expertise and ensuring funding is allocated effectively.



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

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## Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund, issued by the Department for Work and Pensions, has been distributed to KCC to manage schemes across Kent. 20% of this funding has been distributed to district and borough councils, enabling them to deliver impactful projects utilising their expertise, connections with residents, and knowledge of local issues.

**99,000**  
households

supported in round  
4 of the Fund  
through district and  
borough council  
initiatives.

## Parish Council Support Grant

Administered by the Kent Association of Local Council's (KALC), this scheme enabled parish and town councils to apply for funding to deliver local support and initiatives in their communities.

**£132,236.23**

provided to parish and town councils

**Over 30,000**

residents supported through local  
schemes and initiatives

Helping Hands Funding



**OVER £2m**

of funding to external partners

## Task and Finish Group

To enable this joined up approach, a multi-agency Task and Finish group was established and has continued to meet monthly to discuss challenges and activity around financial hardship support.

The group consists of partners from KCC, all district and borough councils, Medway Council, the voluntary sector, and other public sector organisations. The group discusses and establishes priorities which help to shape the projects undertaken by the Financial Hardship Programme.

## Refer Kent

The ReferKent system has been established to enable secure and effective referrals between professionals and support organisations, ensuring no one falls through the cracks when needing help.

### referKent



**1636**

referrals made



**303**

organisations  
onboard



**1444**

professional referrers  
using the system

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*“ReferKent is a fantastic resource for our organisation and our community. It is really simple to use and saves our advisers time: by identifying partners who can help and then making a quick referral, we can achieve the best outcomes for our clients. Alongside the obvious benefits for our clients, the practical evidence of partnership working, through both the ReferKent service and the online meetings, is wonderful for us and for our funders.”*

Green Doctors colleague

## Data Sharing

The data sharing workstream has used funding to enable district and borough councils to utilise two systems – Policy in Practice and Xantura – with the aim of improving the way they use data to identify and support residents in hardship.

Funding for the Xantura system has enabled participating districts to explore its use with homelessness prevention: the system utilises data to identify cohorts at risk of a particular crisis, enabling professionals to proactively support.

The Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) from Policy in Practice (PIP) has been commissioned to give councils the ability to analyse and examine datasets via one cloud-based dashboard, enabling targeted support to be applied. A report from PIP has projected a total of £16 million in increased benefits, cost avoidance and fund allocation will be achieved over the next 7 years due to the current outcomes of the system in Kent.



**£16 million**

in increased benefits

# Assessing Impact



Many councils in England have some form of financial hardship scheme. However evaluation of such schemes is limited and there are currently only a few of examples of councils using formal models and systematic measurement of the impacts to create reliable data on the relative costs and benefits. The Financial Hardship Programme in Kent has recognised the need to collect the right impact data and deliver effective analysis of impact. Whilst many benefits of the support outlined in this report clearly demonstrate impact, the overall achievement of reducing financial hardship in the county is harder to explicitly demonstrate. In an attempt to analyse this, the programme has sought external expertise to identify two measurable indicators of financial hardship:

## The number of mortgage and landlord repossessions

Source: Ministry of Justice

Kent has the highest number of mortgage and landlord repossessions among English county local authorities. In 2023, there were 764. That averages out at almost 15 evictions per week over the year. The most recent figure for the first quarter of 2024 was 183. If that figure were similar for the remaining three quarters of the year, that would represent a reduction of 32 (4%) for 2024 relative to 2023. The national trend amongst English national county authorities suggests a 15% increase over the same period.

## The number of households in temporary accommodation

(Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government)

Given the data for mortgage and landlord repossessions, it is no surprise that Kent also has relatively high numbers of families living in temporary accommodation. In 2022/23 Kent had the highest number of households living in temporary accommodation among English county local authorities. The most recent figure, for Q3 of 2023/24, is 2,146; that is the second highest amongst English county local authorities. The trend in Kent is slightly downwards, a reduction of 14 (1%) over twelve months, at a time when the national trend amongst English county authorities showed a 20% increase over the same period.

The two indicators of financial hardship described above were chosen because the indicators are included in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) model. The GMCA model is a unit cost database developed in 2012 as part of work under the Investment Agreement and Partnerships Exemplar project to produce a framework to assist local partners in reforming the way they deliver public services, it is widely used in the development of cost benefit analysis (CBA) for local authorities.

The GMCA model estimates the average cost of a complex eviction to be between £6,680 and £8,500 and the average cost of dealing with homelessness applications to be between £2,500 and £3,200. Using this model, we can arrive at the following calculated estimates of cost savings:

### **Mortgage and landlord repossessions**

- Reducing the numbers of repossessions by 4% over the year (32 cases) represents savings of between £214,000 and £272,000
- Taking into account that the national trend is projected to be around a 15% increase, the projected reduction for Kent is closer to 19%.
- Reducing the numbers of repossessions by 19% over the year (145 cases) represents savings of between £969,000 and £1,233,000.

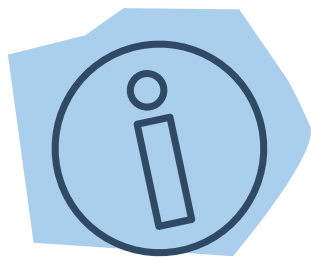
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### **Dealing with homelessness applications**

- Reducing the number of homelessness applications by 14 (1%) over twelve months represents savings of between £35,000 and £45,000
- Taking into account that the national trend is an annual increase of around 20% increase, the projected reduction for Kent is closer to 21%.
- Reducing the number of homelessness applications by 280 (20%) over twelve months represents savings of between £700,000 and £896,000

Whilst these figures do not show the whole picture of the impact Financial Hardship schemes can have, it represents the monetary value that can be brought back to the public purse by supporting individuals to not reach this extent of hardship. The Financial Hardship Programme endeavours to collect an array of data on the delivery and outcomes of projects to enable in depth evaluation moving forward.

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