

**ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 14th November, 2024**

**10.00 am**

**Council Chamber**







## AGENDA

### ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

Thursday, 14 November 2024 at 10.00 am  
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone.

Ask for: **Emily Kennedy**  
Telephone: **03000 419625**

#### Membership

Conservative:	Mr S Holden (Chairman), Mr N J Collor (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Bond, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Mr D Crow-Brown, Mr M Dendor, Mr A R Hills, Mr H Rayner, Mr D Robey and Mr A Sandhu, MBE
Labour:	Ms M Dawkins and Mr B H Lewis
Green and Independent:	Mr M Baldock and Mr M Hood
Liberal Democrat:	Mr I S Chittenden

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast announcement
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes  
To receive apologies for absence and notification of any substitutes present
- 3 Declarations of Interest
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2024 (Pages 1 - 8)
- 5 Draft Budget (Pages 9 - 44)
- 6 Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
- 7 Performance Dashboard (Pages 45 - 54)
- 8 24/00095 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028 (Pages 55 - 88)

- 9 24/00094 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Environment Plan (Pages 89 - 140)
- 10 Update on Kent's Plan Bee (Pages 141 - 146)
- 11 Better Buses Bill - Bus Franchising (Pages 147 - 152)
- 12 Road Closures- Update Report (Pages 153 - 162)
- 13 Work Programme (Pages 163 - 164)

**Motion to Exclude the Press and Public**

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

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

Benjamin Watts  
General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Wednesday, 6 November 2024**

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

MINUTES of a meeting of the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 19 September 2024.

PRESENT: Mr S Holden (Chairman), Mr N J Collor (Vice-Chairman), Mr T Bond, Mr C Broadley, Mr T Cannon, Mr I S Chittenden, Mr D Crow-Brown, Ms M Dawkins, Mr M Dendor, Mr A R Hills, Mr M A J Hood, Mr B H Lewis, Mr H Rayner and Mr D Robey

ALSO PRESENT:

IN ATTENDANCE:

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS****1. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 2)*

Apologies were received from Mr Sandhu.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

*(Item 3)*

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2024**

*(Item 4)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held 9 July 2024 were a correct record and that a paper copy be signed by the Chair.

**4. Cabinet Members and Corporate Director's Verbal Updates**

*(Item 5)*

1) Mr Baker said the processing and issuing of Kent Travel Saver passes had gone very well. The number of students applying for passes was similar to previous years despite the increase in cost to the user. Additional communications had been shared with schools and students on how to prepare for travel and giving details, where available, of alternative bus routes if a student misses their intended bus. Whilst all passes issued to schools' operators had been instructed to give a two-week grace period to allow students to travel whilst schools were distributing passes which did not always happen on day one.

Mr Baker attended a Parliamentary reception on 5 September organised by Julia Lopez, MP for Hornchurch and Upminster, Jim Dickinson, MP for Dartford, Logistics UK and National Highways to promote the importance to government on making a decision to proceed with the new Lower Thames Crossing. The Secretary of State

was due to make a decision on the Development Consent Order on 4 October. National Highways were running a series of public engagement events across Dartford and Gravesham between 20 September and 1 October to update the public on the progress of the scheme.

Mr Baker also attended a site visit at Galley Hill on 11 September, joining the local MPs for Dartford and Gravesham and the Minister of Future roads, Lilian Greenwood. Mr Baker highlighted the need for urgent government support to enable this major road to be reopened. On the day of the visit, Swanscombe High Street was also closed for repairs necessitated by the discovery of voids and a large washout area caused by further Thames Water leaks. Whilst Galley Hill remains closed, the High Street was a key access route for the community so the Minister was able to see for herself the huge impact on residents and road users due to the Galley Hill collapse.

The public consultation on Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5) continued until 8 October and Members were asked to encourage their constituents, district/borough councils, parish/town councils and other organisations to respond so that their views could be taken into account in the draft document that was to be brought back to full Council for adoption. Public exhibitions in town and village halls, libraries, gateways and shopping centres across the county had taken place and were to continue over the remaining weeks until early October. All Joint Transportation Advisory Boards had been sent a report on the LTP5 consultation, and where requested, officers were attending virtually. Briefings had also been offered to all district and borough councils. It was important to get KCC's transport priorities right in the statutory plan so that KCC could engage with the new government on how these essential schemes could be funded and delivered, hence the importance of this consultation.

The Examination of the Development Consent Order (DCO) for Gatwick's Northern Runway to enable two runway operations, concluded on 27 August. The Examining Authority were to provide a recommendation report to the Secretary of State by 27 November and a decision on whether to grant consent was due to be taken by 27 February 2025. KCC remained opposed to the application throughout the Examination due to the detrimental noise impacts in the west of the county and a lack of evidenced direct economic benefit to Kent.

KCC had produced an updated five year forward works programme covering planned works for most asset groups from 2024-25 to 2028-9, and all of the asset managers and their team members who had contributed were thanked. The programme had been published on the KCC website. It was a dynamic programme and subject to regular review so schemes could be changed or new schemes added during the year.

The Active Travel Interventions team held a popular engagement session with staff offering adult bicycle training, bespoke route planning and a 'Dr Bike' for ad-hoc repairs.

KCC also used the Swale Recycle Project to provide refurbished bicycles (refurbished by HMP Swaleside inmates) for staff. KCC were looking to do this at more large employers' sites in the future.

KCC's Capability Fund rating moved from 1 to 2. The capability ratings were used to calculate funding allocations to boost technical capability to deliver high quality

schemes. Higher rated authorities were eligible to access more funding, ensuring that investment was appropriate to the level of capability.

2) Mr Hills, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment gave an update on Mr Thomas's behalf. It was announced that after many years of dedication and hard work by the team, the new Sevenoaks Waste Transfer Station (WTS) was operational. The team held a launch event on 4 September 2024 with KCC's Chairman, Bryan Sweetland cutting the ribbon to commemorate the special occasion. Work started on the build in July 2023, with development secured through a new leasing arrangement with Darenth River Ballast Company. The new site replaced the old Waste Transfer Station building and was five times bigger. It was designed to enable the recycling of more waste streams collected kerbside by Sevenoaks District Council, and to accommodate government's future legislative requirements, including the collection of food waste. The Waste Transfer Station could take 60,500 tonnes of waste per year, boasts two weighbridges, and state of the art fire prevention and odour suppression systems. Trees and wildflowers had been planted along the riverbank next to the site. The site was also taking trade waste from local businesses.

Trade waste services had been re-introduced at the Dover facility to meet the growing needs of the commercial sector in the locality. Extensive planning and modifications were required at the site to enable the service to be offered by FCC Environment under contract to KCC. Materials that were to be accepted included bulky waste, green, paper and card and wood to be phased in at a later date.

There were further developments around the reuse offering at the Household Waste Recycling Centres. Following the success of the previous year's re-use pop up shops at a number of the HWRCs and in response to customer feedback, the team worked with the Provider FCC Environment to host pop up shops at Dover and Allington HWRCs in August and September 2024. Visitors to the HWRCs were pleased to see KCC promoting the reuse of goods and were thrilled to grab a bargain from the selection of high-quality items on offer. These popular events were a fantastic way to re-home pre-loved goods such as toys, electricals, homeware, garden and bric-a-brac items, which were all sourced from the onsite reuse containers. The pop-up shop at Allington HWRC comes ahead of the permanent reuse shop at the site, for which planning permission had been submitted, with the hope to open the shop by the end of the financial year. Together with the Resource Management and Circular Economy team, FCC Environment were leading on the procurement to find a Kent charity to run the shop in a partnership approach.

The Low Carbon Kent team took their next cohort of 12 learners through the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (known as IEMA) workforce and manager courses. Joining them were representatives from 10 different KCC teams, all keen to see how positive improvements could be made across the council. KCC's status as an accredited training centre was allowing the team to fully engage our partners and supply chains in sustainability skills and practical case studies. This was delivering co-benefits aplenty as we seek to embed better ways of working and justify the changes we all need to make both from the bottom up and top down of our organisations.

3) Following Mr Hill's update, Members asked questions and it was noted that:

- Districts made their own decisions about food waste but this was due to change, making it compulsory for district councils to do separate food waste collections.

4) Mr Jones said that the works to repair and refurbish the existing fans in Chestfield Tunnel were progressing. It was expected that this work would be completed by end of October. After testing and installation, the contraflow would be removed.

New fans for the tunnel were to be delivered when the new ventilation system is designed and procured in the 25/26 financial year, however this was subject to a key decision. The new ventilation system was to be installed in both tunnels.

Building on the Galley Hill update provided by Mr Baker, KCC's contractor had completed their investigation work and KCC was waiting for the report which it was hoped would identify the cause of the collapse. Consultants had been appointed to undertake a costed options analysis to provide to the Department for Transport (DfT). The report would show what needed to be done to reopen the road and the costs.

Work had continued with specialists to identify a solution to stabilise the bank on Road of Remembrance. The ground investigations work started on 9 September and are due to be completed 30 September. Once the investigations were completed, the data would give KCC the information required to begin the design which scoping work was being undertaken. KCC could not commit to an opening date until the design had been prepared.

Network Rail had informed KCC that they had been unable to complete essential repairs of the Kingsferry Bridge during the previous closure and required a further closure from Friday, 25 October until Sunday, 3 November. This had been scheduled during school half term in order to minimise disruption. There continued to be discussions about how to further minimise disruption, including looking at free recovery based on site, what other local highways activities could be stood down and how the Grovehurst scheme could be moved forward.

As reported at the recent All Member Briefing the latest implementation date for the Entry Exit System (EES) was 10 November. In response to concerns regarding long queues affecting tourist travel, the DfT was developing options for a couple of sites that could be available to hold tourists off the road network until the time for them to travel to the Port. The sites, and use of them had not been confirmed by Ministers. The Port of Dover and Eurotunnel were working hard to be ready for implementation.

It was reported that as of 3 September; KCC's contractors had delivered 208,849 square meterage of patching and filled 5,326. Work was to continue to be delivered into mid-October.

An application for planning permission had been submitted for a new transfer station to serve Folkestone and Hythe. The district council took the collected waste into Ashford Waste Transfer Station, along with Ashford Borough Council. As a result of housing growth including the Otterpool development and future legislative requirements, transfer station infrastructure was needed to serve the area to ensure sustainable waste disposal.



Since last year, the team had been avidly collecting mobility aid equipment at four of the HWRCs in Swanley, Dover, Allington and Tunbridge Wells. This was an ongoing partnership project between the Resource Management and Circular Economy team, Adult Social Care and Health teams along with the NHS and NRS Healthcare. Equipment such as crutches, wheelchairs, grab rails and rollators were placed in dedicated containers at the HWRCs and then repaired, if required, and cleaned before being reused in local communities. The project had proved to be such a success that it was being expanded to include Pepperhill and New Romney HWRCs.

The 'Nothing Wasted' recycling campaign had launched to encourage residents to recycle as much as possible at HWRCs. There was plenty of content on the Greener Kent Facebook page and there was a campaign on local radio and on the back of buses. The Engagement and Behaviour Change team had spent time at various HWRCs to create a positive campaign that put site staff and residents at the fore, sharing all the good practice seen to model and normalise recycling and reuse. Contractors were out with engagement stands on sites over the summer to continue having valuable conversations and changing behaviours on site. Many people had actively approached staff to ask if they could recycle anything more from their mixed bags of waste, rather than just taking them to the bays destined for incineration.

5) Further to questions from Members, it was noted that:

- Subject to the report received about the propagation of the defect on Galley Hill, Members were assured that the subsequent solution would be safe, viable and consider the long term use of the road.
- District and borough councils would need to be collecting paper and card, plastics, glass, metal, food waste and garden waste at kerbside by 31 March 2026. The development of the Sevenoaks Transfer Station was to get ahead of that date - with the amount that would be recycled countywide increasing and the amount being incinerated going down.
- There would not be requirements around how district and boroughs containerised waste, but food caddies would be separate. However, how KCC was able to process the waste collected by the district and borough was affected by how it was containerised.
- There were challenges around making HWRC accessible to pedestrians, particularly as all the sites were different.

## **5. Directorate Dashboard**

*(Item 6)*

*Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment &Transport was in attendance for this item*

1) Mr Jones introduced the report and said that it was second performance dashboard of the financial year, 2024-2025. There were 17 key performance indicators (KPIs); eleven were rated green, five were rated amber and one was rated red.

One of the amber indicators was within Highways & Transportation, and four within Environment & Circular Economy. The one KPI RAG rated red is HT14: Member enquiries completed within 20 working days. This indicator covered all enquiries from

MPs, councillors and other elected officials as well as enquiries from members of the public directed to Cabinet Members or members of senior management. Enquiries generally related to divisional matters, such as requests for information or feedback on works taking place in an area. Also received were many requests for changes to speed limits and road layouts.

With a significant number of enquiries coming from MPs, performance in June was affected by the pre-general election period (purdah) when it was not possible to correspond with MPs on enquiries they had raised regarding constituency matters. Where it was appropriate and constituent contact details were available, responses were sent directly to them instead.

Other Highways & Transportation indicators were mostly on or above target, despite the volume of work continuing to be above expectations across many areas. However, the number of new enquiries requiring further action was within expectations since the start of the financial year indicating an easing of demand. As for Environment and Circular Economy, although three of the Waste indicators were amber, there had been improved recycling rates at Household Waste Recycling Centres as volumes taken to the sites continued to increase, although they were still 29% below pre-pandemic levels.

2) Further to Members' questions, it was noted:

- Members were reminded to copy in the VIP email address for enquiries.
- More information was requested on the reuse and recycling of wood.

3) RESOLVED to note the Performance Dashboard.

## **6. 24/00086 - Highways Term Maintenance Contract 2026 Award** (Item 7)

*Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport, and Andrew Loosemore, Head of Highways, were in attendance for this item*

1) Mr Loosemore introduced the report.

2) In response to questions from Members, it was noted that:

- Any sub-contractor would need to be approved by KCC and it was expected that the contractor would self-deliver the majority of the work and their performance would be monitored at a more local level than previously, using service-based key performance indicators.
- Parish seminars had been scheduled and one of the matters for discussion would be the Highways Term Maintenance Contract.
- The Road Asset Renewal Contract was a contract for road surfacing which was subject to a separate procurement process to the Highways Term Maintenance Contract.

3) RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision as outlined in the recommendations in the report.

## **7. Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**

*(Item 8)*

*Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport; Katie Ireland, Safer Active Journeys Team Leader and Jamie Watson, Traffic Schemes Team Leader were in attendance for this item*

1) Ms Ireland introduced the report.

2) Further to questions from Members, it was noted:

- The Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan would help KCC's pre-engagement and consultation. There were instances of there being a small number of responses to a consultation on an ad hoc scheme but a strong response once the work had started on implementation of the scheme. The limitations of consultations were discussed.
- From lessons learned on the Herne Bay scheme, there would be earlier engagement with all relevant groups.
- It was recognised that there were challenges when retrofitting solutions to allow pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to safely use a route. There were also challenges presented to the success of schemes by enforcement issues.

3) RESOLVED to note the report.

## **8. Winter Service Policy**

*(Item 9)*

*Richard Emmett, Senior Highways Manager was in attendance for this item*

1) Mr Baker introduced the report and advised that there would be a meeting in the spring to discuss how the Winter Service Policy had been implemented.

2) Mr Emmett outlined the report.

3) Further to questions from Members, it was noted that:

- KCC worked with unparished areas and salt was still delivered if there was somewhere to store it safely.
- In the event of snow or a declared 'ice emergency', other routes, known as snow routes, such as villages not on a primary salting route, are also treated.

4) RESOLVED to note the report.

## **9. Road Closures Update**

*(Item 10)*

*Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport, and, Pauline Harmer, Senior Highways Manager, were in attendance for this item*

1) Mr Baker introduced the report.

2) Ms Harmer outlined the report.

3) Members asked questions, and it was noted that:

- Site notices for planned works have been updated to show that it is utility companies requiring the road closures.
- Residents were encouraged to access One Network which showed roadworks and traffic disruptions across the UK: [Causeway one.network Map | uk.one.network](#)
- Legislation meant utility companies had two hours from the start of emergency works to advise KCC.
- The use of Road Closure Inspectors meant that they were driving performance and ultimately safety. Performance issues, such as roads not being opened in a timely way after works appeared to have been completed, were also brought to the monthly meetings with the utility companies.
- It was queried whether data could be brought to Members to show whether the number of road closures was increasing over time.
- Concerns were raised about repeat closures of the same routes. It was clarified that full road closures were put in place for safety reasons.

4) Mr Rayner proposed, Mr Bond seconded the motion as follows:

a) This committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport that the permit scheme conditions referred to at paragraphs 2.7 and 2.8 be more stringently enforced in connection with the road closure work for its duration. The enhanced inspector regime should be used to ensure that when street works overrun their permitted duration, the maximum fine be levied to encourage utility companies and their contractors to make full use of the available hours to complete their works with alacrity during the permitted duration.

b) This committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport that he and officers look for the powers held by Transport for London, in connection with the degree of control that TfL exercises in connection with timing and duration of utility related road works, especially on major roads or red routes, with a view to KCC acquiring such powers for use in the equivalent major roads and junctions in Kent.

5) Upon being put to the vote, the motion was declared CARRIED.

## **10. Work Programme**

*(Item 11)*

The work programme was noted.

- (a) **FIELD**
- (b) **FIELD\_TITLE**

From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council  
Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services  
Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport  
Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024

Subject: **Draft Revenue Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025-28**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Summary:**

This report sets out key policy considerations within the administration's draft revenue budget proposals for 2025-26 (together with any full year consequences in subsequent years) for the Cabinet portfolios and directorates relevant to this committee for scrutiny. Unlike recent years this is a tailored report for each committee with the overall draft budget proposals contained within appendices and in particular choices about spending growth and savings/income. The draft proposals have been prepared before the Chancellor's Autumn Budget based on assumptions about future spending requirements, government grant settlement, and council tax referendum levels. These assumptions are likely to change but overall it is still likely that a balanced budget can only be achieved with significant savings and income generation as spending growth is likely to continue to exceed the funding available from the government settlement and local taxation.

**Recommendations:**

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- a) NOTE the administration's draft revenue budgets including responses to consultation
- b) SUGGEST any changes which should be made to the administration's draft budget proposals related to the Cabinet Committee's portfolio area before the draft is considered by Cabinet on 30th January 2025 and presented to Full County Council on 13th February 2025.

## **1. Background and Context**

1.1 The setting of the budget is a decision reserved for Full Council. The Council's Budget and Policy Framework requires that a draft budget is issued for consultation with the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees to allow for their comments to be considered before the final budget proposals are made to Full Council.

1.2 The Council is under a legal duty to set a balanced and sustainable budget within the resources available from local taxation and central government grants and to maintain adequate reserves. This duty applies to the final draft budget presented for Full Council approval at the annual budget meeting. The overall strategy for the budget is to ensure that the Council continues to plan for revenue and capital budgets which are affordable, reflect the Council's strategic priorities, allow the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and continue to maintain and improve the Council's financial resilience.

1.3 A MTFP covering the entirety of the resources available to the Council is the best way that resource prioritisation and allocation decisions can be considered and agreed in a way that provides a stable and considered approach to service delivery and takes into account relevant risks and uncertainty.

1.4 The administration's initial draft budget proposals have been prepared in advance of the government's Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2024 (announced 30th October 2024) and in the absence of a provisional local government finance settlement or detailed spending plans inherited from the previous government. This draft budget is based on an assumed grant settlement and council tax referendum limits.

1.5 The administration's draft budget 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 2024-25 budget. These two factors are covered in more depth in Appendix A. 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. The Adult Social Care challenge will be covered in more depth in the report for the relevant Cabinet Committee. These factors do not preclude scrutiny of the remainder of the Administration's draft budget plans. There is a balance to be struck between planning for what is currently known (which are the factors cited above) and the likelihood of an improvement in the financial position via any additional Government support or improved tax take, with the risk being managed through reserves.

1.6 This report focuses on the key policy considerations within the administration's draft budget proposals for each Cabinet portfolio in a timely manner in November. This is a more focussed report to address previous concerns that presenting the entire budget proposals for the whole Council does not allow for sufficient scrutiny on key service issues by individual Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees. To assist this, a summary of the 2025-26 proposals for the relevant Cabinet portfolio is included in this report, together with a more detailed table setting out the key policy considerations and accompanying narrative (in the next section of this report). An interactive dashboard is also provided to Members, enabling the details of all proposals to be examined and scrutinised.

1.7 Separate appendices are included which set out:

- the key assumptions within the administration's overall initial draft budget (appendix A)
- how the proposals are consistent with the Council's strategic priorities and legal requirements (appendix B)
- a summary of the responses from the recent budget consultation (appendix C)
- a summary of the Administration's Draft Budget proposals (appendix D)
- a high-level summary of the overall MTFP covering 2025-28 (appendix E)
- a summary of the proposals for GET directorate for 2025-26 (appendix F)
- a detailed list of the key policy considerations for GET directorate (spending and savings proposals) (appendix G)
- an assessment of financial resilience (appendix H)

This provides the same level of background information as presented to Cabinet and Scrutiny committees in previous years. A more detailed report on the budget consultation, which closed on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024, is provided as a background document.

1.8 Following the November scrutiny process, a revised draft of the administration's final budget proposals will be published in January for further consideration prior to final approval at County Council in February 2025. This will include:

- resolution of the outstanding issues in this draft
- the outcome of the Chancellor's Autumn 2024 Budget and Local Government Finance Settlement for 2025-26
- the provisional council tax base information for council tax precepts
- any other updates since this initial draft

Wherever possible, draft key decisions will be presented for consideration by Cabinet Committees in principle (pending final budget approval) in January together with the opportunity for scrutiny of the key changes arising from the above points, with those draft key decisions that cannot be considered in January reported to the March round of meetings.

## 2. Key Policy Considerations

2.1 Medium Terms Financial Plan (MTFP) KCC overview – the draft budget proposals for KCC are shown in Appendix E in the usual format e.g. growth pressures (to be funded) as well as savings (efficiency, transformation policy) and income proposals (to be delivered/implemented).

2.2 Unavoidable Growth Pressures – a significant proportion of GET's growth pressures are linked to contracts and the inflationary **price** uplifts associated with commissioned services. There are also annual fluctuations in activity or **demography**, as well as **legislative** changes that need to be funded. All of these are deemed 'unavoidable' given current policy and/or contractual arrangements. **Service improvement** is the final category, which can relate to new services/initiatives, or improvements to existing services through changes in policy or service standards. The other growth pressure category is **pay**, and at this stage KCC holds the pay provision centrally, pending negotiations with the Unions and decision on the quantum. This gets allocated subsequent to County Council.

2.3 MTFP overview for this Committee – to allow more informed debate prior to the Full Council meeting in February 2025 (where the Budget is approved), Appendix F and Appendix G outline the high level overview of the growth pressures and savings/income proposals for the services within the remit of this Committee. They are split per Cabinet Member and also indicate where there is an element of choice (blue italic font).

Growth pressures, combined for both portfolios, equate to +£13.24m, with savings and income proposals of -£747k, meaning that the net budget requirement to be funded by KCC is +£12.81m e.g. a significant ask. The savings figure is actually a lot higher but there is £950k of realignments of budget within this figure (e.g. £500k HWRC Review).

KCC's is predominantly funded through Council Tax, Business Rates and general grant, so this is how the net budget requirement is funded e.g. growth pressures have to be

funded through growth in Council Tax and Business Rates, or found through new savings or additional income/grant.

2.4 Local Choices within the MTFP – the focus of the November Cabinet Committees is to outline and debate the policy choices with respect to both growth pressures and savings/income proposals. Those where a decision needs to be made and where there is ‘local choice’ in terms of funding the growth pressures, to which degree/standard, and in terms of savings/income, whether there is support to do progress the proposals.

In terms of any savings/income proposals that are not supported, a viable offsetting proposal would need to be identified as removing a saving/income proposal would cause an imbalance.

The table below outlines the key growth pressure and savings/income proposals for each portfolio where there is ‘local choice’ (only) with the two most significant issues for local choice being with regards to the Review of on-street parking (due to the long lead in time, and with further net income in later years) and the decision to fund the bus routes previously funded by Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) grant, which is assumed will not extend into 25/26 :

## SPENDING & SAVINGS PROPOSALS REQUIRING A DECISION - ROBERT THOMAS

Headline description	Brief description	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Base budget for context (£k) *		
		£k	£k	£k	Gross	Income	Net
<b>2025-26 POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS</b>							
Waste - Review Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	Review of the number and operation of HWRC sites - removal of prior year saving following decision to pause review.	500.0	0.0	0.0	10,569.6	0.0	10,569.6
		500.0	0.0	0.0			

\* The contextual gross & income budget information includes both core and externally funded but the budget proposal figures focus just on core funded



# SPENDING & SAVINGS PROPOSALS REQUIRING A DECISION

## - NEIL BAKER

Headline description	Brief description	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	Base budget for context (£k) *		
		£k	£k	£k	Gross	Income	Net
<b>2025-26 LOCAL CHOICE SPENDING PROPOSALS</b>							
Transport - Supported Bus Services	<p>During Autumn 2023, a number of local bus operators within Kent, gave notice that they intended to withdraw their local bus services. The vast majority of these services were school focused, carrying those holding a Kent Travel Saver or were provided with a season ticket by KCC.</p> <p>Using BSIP+ funding, KCC was able to secure the continuation of these services, at a significant cost, but that grant funding is due to end 31/3/24 and a decision to fund or cease the routes was needed</p>	1,867.0	1,073.0	147.0	16,619.3	-10,858.2	5,761.1
		1,867.0	1,073.0	147.0			
<b>2025-26 MIXTURE OF LOCAL CHOICE &amp; UNAVOIDABLE SPENDING PROPOSALS</b>							
Supported Bus Services Inflation	Provision for price inflation, which results from the re-tendering of supported bus services, which reflects increases in operating costs over the life of a contract.	421.0	432.0	445.0	16,619.3	-10,858.2	5,761.1
Kent Travel Saver	Provision for price inflation related to the Kent Travel Saver and Kent 16+ Travel Saver which is recovered through uplifting the charge for the pass - Kent Travel Saver	479.7	479.7	479.7	15,021.7	-9,946.2	5,075.5
		900.7	911.7	924.7			
<b>2025-26 POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS</b>							
Highways - On-street parking	Review of on-street parking, which may involve insourcing and the need to invoke a 24 month notice period if an alternative cannot be agreed with Districts (now unlikely). Current arrangement being reviewed to see if synergies may exist and cost savings to	0.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

be shared by KCC and its partners. (Decision needed in 2024-25 to enable net income target to be delivered from 2027-28)

0.0 0.0 -100.0

\* The contextual gross & income budget information includes both core and externally funded but the budget proposal figures focus just on core funded

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#### **Background documents**

Below are click-throughs to reports, more information, etc.  
Click on the item title to be taken to the relevant webpage.

- 1 [KCC's Budget webpage](#)
- 2 [KCC's Corporate Risk Register](#) (Governance and Audit Committee 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024)
- 3 [KCC's Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Programme](#) (Governance and Audit Committee 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024)
- 4 [KCC's approved 2024-25 Budget](#)
- 5 [2025-26 Budget Consultation \(Let's Talk Kent\)](#), which includes a report summarising the responses to the recent Budget Consultation
- 6 [Summary of budget engagement exercise with KCC management cohort \(known as T200\)](#)
- 7 [2024-25 Budget Monitoring Report](#) (Cabinet 26<sup>th</sup> September 2024 – item 5)
- 8 [Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy](#)
- 9 [Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Report](#)
- 10 [Member Budget Dashboards](#) (access restricted and available from 2pm on 30 October)

## Key Budget Assumptions

1.1	Current plan includes high-level assumptions for 2025-26 and 2026-27	The 2024-27 medium term financial plan (MTFP), presented to County Council in February 2024, was based on assumptions regarding the funding settlement, spending growth, savings and income, and contributions/drawdowns from reserves. These included a combination of corporate and directorate assumptions. At the time the plan was prepared the later years (2025-26 and 2026-27) it represented a high-level balanced position, and it was acknowledged that the full detail of some elements e.g. £19.8m of policy savings necessary to replace the use of one-offs to balance 2024-25 budget, would be developed for subsequent updates.
1.2	Initial update as at 30th September 2024 in advance of Chancellor's Autumn Budget 2024	The plans have been updated based on the latest available information as at end of September 2024. The timetable for updating the plan and publishing draft 2025-26 budget proposals for scrutiny was agreed before the announcement that Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Budget would be on 30 <sup>th</sup> October 2024. This date is too late to include the impact in the draft budget for scrutiny and any consequences will have to be included in the final draft budget in January. The Chancellor's Autumn statement is unlikely to have a significant impact on KCC spending or savings/income plans for 2025-26. It is more likely to impact on the funding settlement and the need to balance the budget from reserves and one-off measures.
1.3	Corporate assumptions for Business Rates, Council Tax and funding settlement	<p>On Council Tax income, the plans for each of the three MTFP years assume an increase of 5% (3% general referendum limit and 2% adult social care levy), alongside a taxbase increase of 1.5% plus an additional assumption from the introduction, from 1 April 2025, of 100% premiums on 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes. There are no assumed impacts from changes to discounts or premiums.</p> <p>On Business Rates, the plan assumes no growth in the taxbase.</p> <p>We have assumed that Government Grants which attracted an inflationary uplift in 2024-25 will continue to receive an inflationary uplift in each year, and we have based these increases on the Bank of England's forecasts.</p>
1.4	Corporate assumptions for spending growth	<p>Inflation is based on May 2024 Bank of England CPI forecasts</p> <p>Demand and cost drivers based on same methodology as 2024-25 assuming current trends continue.</p> <p>Pay costs are based on transition to the new pay strategy approved for April 2025 plus assumed pay award (which is subject to bargaining with the recognised trade unions) and maintaining the link to the Foundation Living wage for the lowest pay rate.</p>

1.5	Corporate assumptions for reserves	<p>Assumes general reserve is restored to 5% of net revenue.</p> <p>No assumed replenishment of reserves drawn down to balance 2023-24 outturn.</p> <p>Treatment of safety valve contributions is consistent with the latest external audit advice, which was received in April 2024, after the final 2024-25 budgeted position was reported to Cabinet on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The advice in March was to show these contributions as spending growth within the government and legislative category. The latest advice from our external auditors is to show these as contributions to reserves rather than spending increases. The impact of this latest advice means that our core funded spending growth in 2025-26 of £117.2m has been reduced by £15.1m to remove the 2024-25 contribution, and our contributions to reserves for 2025-26 includes the safety valve planned contribution £14.6m. Had this advice been received in time for the final 2024-27 plan, the core funded spending growth for 2025-26 forecast would have been £132.2m (as opposed to the £147.3 in the published plan) and contributions to reserves would have been £33.1m (as opposed to £18.5m in the published plan). To compare like with like, the movement between the original published plan for 2025-26 and this latest draft needs to be based on these revised calculations taking account of the latest guidance e.g. core funded spending growth has reduced from £132.2m to £117.2m.</p> <p>Priority over medium term needs to be given to restoring reserves closer to average for similar authorities as % of net revenue and to better reflect enhanced risks.</p>
1.6	£19.8m policy savings	<p>The 2024-25 budget was balanced by three one-offs (£9.1m from reserves, £7.7m from capital receipts and £2.0m from New Homes Bonus grant) which was acknowledged at the time must be replaced by sustainable and ongoing savings/income in subsequent years.</p> <p>The administration's draft budget includes £5.7m of additional policy proposals as part of this replacement impacting in 2025-26. These proposals are set out in detail in the papers for the Children's Young People &amp; Education Cabinet Committee, Growth, Economic Development &amp; Communities Cabinet Committee, and Policy &amp; Resources Cabinet Committee. Some of the policy options which were originally flagged for 2025-26 are now recommended not to be pursued until 2026-27 for contractual and legal reasons.</p> <p>The savings proposed for 2025-26 relate to removing subsidies from partner organisations where there is no statutory requirement or to secure full cost recovery through charges on discretionary services.</p>

		<p>This leaves a balance of £14.1m which is still to be agreed. At this stage this has been shown in the draft plan as a temporary loan from reserves in 2025-26 which must be replaced with sustainable and ongoing savings/income in 2026-27 to replace the use of reserves. The loan must be repaid, which will require further savings or alternative solutions, which at this stage is shown as an unresolved balance in the plan for 2026-27. Potential further savings are still being assessed and we will still be exploring all avenues to reduce the amount needed to be loaned from reserves in 2025-26.</p>
1.7	Adult Social Care	<p>The Adult Social care budget in recent years has included significant transformation, efficiency and policy savings, as well as income generation from client charges and health. The 2023-24 ASC directorate budget included £22.3m of new savings and income, and the 2024-25 ASC directorate budget included a further £53.2m of savings and income.</p> <p>Delivery of savings plans of this magnitude has proved to be challenging and some savings need to be rephased into subsequent years, whilst others have been deemed irrecoverable. This has contributed to an in-year overspend and, in the case of irrecoverable savings, require the base budget to be increased in subsequent years. Rollovers increase the in-year savings that need to be achieved in subsequent years.</p> <p>Savings of this magnitude are necessary to balance the significant year on increases in costs for and demands on adult social care services. These costs largely arise from annual increases in the fees paid to providers for care services for all clients, increased costs for the fees for new clients compared to average fees for existing clients (partly due to complexity and partly due to availability of placements), increasing numbers of clients or increases in hours per week to meet client needs.</p> <p>These costs have been increasing significantly in excess of the specific funding available through social care grants in the local government finance settlement and the adult social care council tax precept, as well as a pro rata share of general grants in the settlement and general council tax precept. In recent years the pace of growth and under delivery of savings has meant adult social care has accounted for an increasing share of the council's overall budget.</p> <p>The challenge is whether, over the medium term, spending on adult social care can be contained within the available specific, and share of general, funding available. Targets have been set for each year of the MTFP based on this principle. This is shown as a savings target in the 2025-26 budget plan. The targets for subsequent years are reflected as an adult social care "challenge" (reflecting the unpredictability of forecasts into later years of the</p>

		<p>plan).</p> <p>The 2025-26 ASCH draft budget shows a net total of savings and income proposals of £24.0m. This comprises of £38.7m new savings and income proposals, netted off by realignments to reflect delays or reductions to previous years' savings. A further £12.9m of savings from 2024-25 are forecast to be rolled forward for delivery in 2025-26. This forecast roll forward together with the £38.7m of new savings and income for 2025-26 described above would mean that the adult social care directorate would need to find over £50m of savings and income in a single year.</p> <p>At this stage the forecast irrecoverable savings from 2024-25 of £8.65m are shown as the adult social care challenge for 2025-26, whilst further options to recover the original savings plans and / or identify other alternatives are explored.</p>
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## Strategic Context

The setting of the budget is a decision reserved for Full Council. The Council's Budget and Policy Framework requires that a draft budget is issued for consultation with the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees to allow for their comments to be considered before the final budget proposals are made to Full Council.

The overall strategy for the budget is to ensure that the Council continues to plan for revenue and capital budgets which are affordable, reflect the Council's strategic priorities, allow the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and continue to maintain and improve the Council's financial resilience. This is consistent with the objectives set out in Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy. However, these aims are not always an easy combination and involves some difficult decisions about service levels and provision both for the forthcoming year and over the medium term. In reaching this balance it is essential that the Council has regard to bearing down on future spending growth (price uplifts, other non-inflation related cost increases, and demand increases), delivering efficiency & transformation savings, generating income to offset cost of services, and agreeing changes in policies to reduce current recurring spending and/or avoid future spending while making the necessary investments to support service improvement. In this context it is worth clarifying that savings relate to reducing current recurring spend whereas bearing down on future growth is cost avoidance, both amount to the same end outcome of reducing future spending from what it would otherwise have needed to be without action and intervention. The draft budget should be assessed against these aims recognising that the draft is based on assumptions which could subsequently change.

The Council is under a legal duty to set a balanced and sustainable budget within the resources available from local taxation and central government grants and to maintain adequate reserves. An MTFP covering the entirety of the resources available to the Council is the best way that resource prioritisation and allocation decisions can be considered and agreed in a way that provides a stable and considered approach to service delivery and takes into account relevant risks and uncertainty. At this stage the later years of MTFP is set out as a high-level plan showing the forecast strategic trajectory for changes in funding, spending, savings and income, and reserves with a focus for scrutiny on the detail for 2025-26 together with any full year impacts in subsequent years.

This first draft budget has been prepared in advance of the government's Autumn Budget and Spending Review 2024 (announced 30th October 2024) and in the absence of provisional local government finance settlement or detailed spending plans inherited from the previous government. This draft budget is based on an assumed grant settlement and council tax referendum limits. This means that funding forecasts for the forthcoming year are speculative, consequently planning has to be sufficiently flexible to respond accordingly. Even so, it is likely that 2025-26 and medium term to 2027-28 are likely to continue to be exceptionally challenging and will require real terms reductions if forecast spending continues to grow at a faster rate than available resources. The lack of a settlement does not prevent scrutiny of spending and savings plans at this stage and it likely that any changes in the settlement following the Autumn Budget 2024 will impact on one-off measures and reserves in the final draft budget rather than materially changing spending and savings plans.

As the Council develops its detailed proposals it must continue to keep under review those key financial assumptions which underpin the Council's MTFP particularly in the context of

wider public spending and geo-economic factors. Over the previous decade the Council had to become ever more dependent on locally raised sources of income through Council Tax and retained business rates, and it is only in recent years that additional central government funding has been made available to local authorities, primarily to address spending pressures in social care (albeit at a time when the national public sector deficit has been increasing). However, there is no certainty that this additional central government funding will be baselined for future years until the local government finance settlement is announced and multi-year settlements are reintroduced.

The administration's draft budget for 2025-26 (core funded) includes £117.2m (8.2% of 2024-25 approved budget) of forecast spending growth, funding is assumed to increase by £67.5m (4.7%). The £49.8m difference needs to be closed from savings, income and changes in reserves. At this stage the difference is not fully closed largely due to outstanding issues in adult social care which are still being resolved. Spending growth and savings/income are net and include new amounts for 2025-26 as well as some partially offsetting reversals of one-offs and realignment of current/previous plans. The vast majority of the spending growth (gross) is on adult social care (£67.3m, 10.8% increase), children's social care (£16.2m, 7.2% increase) and home to school transport (£16.9m, 17.7% increase). Spending pressures on these services are common across all upper tier councils. These services currently account for 71.0% of the 2024-25 budget (excluding non-attributable costs), the net increase in the 2025-26 draft budget for these services after savings and income (including assumed share of centrally held amounts, excluding unresolved issues) accounts for 83.3% of the overall net increase, as these three services continue to account for an ever increasing share of the Council's budget.

In the Council's submission to HM Treasury in advance of the Autumn 2024 budget we highlighted that this trend of spending growth exceeding the available funding from local taxation and central government cannot continue. We urged that either funding needs to increase to better reflect spending demands or the statutory requirements on councils need to be reduced as otherwise councils' role would be reduced to solely providing care services with no scope to provide community services which help make local places vibrant for residents and businesses. Council tax increases on their own cannot be expected to solve the shortfalls in funding.

In accordance with Financial Regulations, a medium-term capital programme and financing plan is prepared on an annual basis. Where capital estimates are included, funding must be secured and approved prior to any expenditure being incurred.

Setting the annual budget is one of the most significant decisions the County Council takes each year. It sets the County Council's share of council tax and the overall resource framework in which the Council operates. The administration's budget is the financial expression of the Council's strategic priorities. The budget gives delegated authority to manage the budget to Corporate Directors and Directors within the parameters set out in the Council's Constitution and Financial Regulations. Corporate Directors and Directors are accountable for spending decisions within delegated powers reporting to the Chief Executive, and these are monitored through the Council's budget monitoring arrangements regularly reported to Cabinet. The draft budget is developed, scrutinised and ultimately approved in compliance with the following six key considerations:



## *A) Strategic Priorities – Strategic Statement*

In 2022, KCC published [Framing Kent's Future](#) (FKF) the council's high-level strategic statement. It sets out the challenges and opportunities Kent is faced with and the actions the Council will prioritise to address them over the next four years, focussing on four key priorities. Since this strategy was approved there has been a significant shift in the financial and operating landscape.

KCC's Budget Recovery Strategy, [Securing Kent's Future](#), was agreed at a Cabinet meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023. This updated the Council's ambitions in light of the changed landscape and given the significance of adults and children's social care within the Council's budget, and that spending growth pressures on the Council's budget overwhelming (but not exclusively) come from social care, that the priority of delivering New Models of Care and Support within FKF must take precedence over the other priorities.

The 2024-25 budget was based on the revised strategic ambitions set out in Securing Kent's Future (SKF) approved by Cabinet in October 2023 which recognised the necessity of the ambition to deliver New Models of Care and Support which must take precedence over the other priorities. This creates an expectation that council services across all directorates must collectively prioritise delivering the new models of care and support objective as a collective enterprise. All of the net growth in the 2024-25 budget went into adult social care, children's care and home to school transport consistent with the revised prioritisation of the Council's strategic objectives.

This does not mean that the other objectives of Levelling Up Kent, Infrastructure for Communities, and Environmental Step Change are not still important and all work on these must stop. However, the scope of these other three objectives will have to be scaled back in terms of additional investment and funding, and management time and capacity that can reasonably be given to them. It also does not mean that we can ignore unavoidable spending in other areas of council activity but policy ambitions in these areas may have to be limited.

The administration's draft budget for 2025-26 continues to prioritise the objectives set out in SKF. All of the adult social care council tax precept is passed into social care spending (along with an appropriate share of the general precept and other general sources of funding). Other spending increases focus on unavoidable costs and all local choices are clearly linked to the Council's strategic objectives. All areas of discretionary spending have been explored for savings again linked to the Council's strategic objectives.

## *B) Best Value*

The Council has statutory Best Value duty to secure continuous improvement having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The latest guidance explicitly states that this covers delivering a balanced budget, providing statutory services, including adult social care and children's services, and securing value for money in all spending decisions. Those councils that cannot balance competing statutory duties, set a balanced budget, deliver statutory services, and secure value for money are not meeting their legal obligations under the Local Government Act 1999. The statutory Best Value duty must frame all financial, service and policy decisions and the council must pro-actively evidence the best value considerations, including budget preparation and approval.

### *C) Requirement to set a balanced budget*

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to consult on and ultimately set a legal budget and Council Tax precept for the forthcoming financial year, 2025-26. This requirement applies to the final draft budget presented for County Council approval. It does not apply to interim drafts. Whilst there is no legal requirement to set a balanced MTFP, this is considered good practice with an expectation that the financial strategy is based on a balanced plan in the medium term (albeit based in planning assumptions)

Setting the Council's revenue and capital budgets for the forthcoming year will be incredibly challenging due to the fiscal environment with the government's stated objective to adhere to limit the annual budget deficit (borrowing) and for overall debt both to be falling as percentage of GDP. These fiscal targets are likely to restrict the scope for increased central government funding for local government. The current year's budget was balanced through a significant level of planned savings, income and one-off use of reserves/capital receipts. Delivery of these savings is crucial to delivering a balanced outturn without further draw down from reserves. A similar scenario is predicted for 2025-26 and subsequent years with forecast spending growth exceeding the likely funding requiring further significant annual recurring savings and income to balance the budget. The scope for savings of the required magnitude is increasingly limited unless the statutory obligations are changed...

What is meant by 'balanced' is not defined in law and relies on the professional judgement of the Chief Financial Officer to ensure that the budget is robust and sustainable. A prudent definition of a balanced budget would be a financial plan based on sound assumptions which shows how planned spending and income equals the available funding for the forthcoming year. Plans can take into account deliverable cost savings and/or local income growth strategies as well as useable reserves.

The previous government had confirmed that the Statutory Override for the Dedicated Schools Grant deficits was extended for a further 3 years from 2023-24 to 2025-26. It is unclear at this stage whether the new government will provide a further extension. Under the Safety Valve agreement the Council has made budget provision for its contribution for 2024-25 and subsequent years in the MTFP for the duration of the agreement which together with planned actions to reduce the annual deficit and DfE contributions would see the accumulated DSG deficit cleared by 2027-28.

While there is no legal definition of a balanced budget, legislation does provide a description to illustrate when a budget is considered not to balance:

- where the increased uncertainty leads to budget overspends of a level which reduce reserves to unacceptably low levels, or
- where an authority demonstrates the characteristics of an insolvent organisation, such as an inability to pay creditors.

To avoid the risk of an unbalanced budget the Council has to be financially resilient. Good financial management is fundamental in establishing confidence in the budget and ensuring that savings plans are achievable, and the finances can withstand unexpected shocks.

The draft budget continues to include an assessment of financial risks. The 2025-26 budget also includes a new assessment of the financial resilience of the Council based on

latest CIPFA guidance on building financial resilience. Both of these measures show that the Council has some way to go to improve its financial resilience.

#### *D) Equalities Considerations*

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

To help meet its duty under the Equality Act the council undertakes equality impact assessments to analyse a proposed change to assess whether it has a disproportionate impact on persons who share a protected characteristic. As part of our budget setting process an equality impact assessment screening will be completed for each savings proposal to determine which proposals will require a full equality impact analysis (with mitigating actions set out against any equality risks) prior to a decision to implement being made.

The amounts for some savings can only be confirmed following consultation and completion of an equalities impact assessment. Consequently, amounts are only planned at the time the budget is approved and can change. Any changes will be reported through the in-year budget monitoring reports which will include separate and specific consideration of delivery of savings plans.

#### *E) Treasury Management Strategy*

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement will be included as an appendix to the report for approval by full Council in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. The Statement sets out the proposed strategy with regard to borrowing, the investment of cash balances and the associated monitoring arrangements.

The prudential indicators set out in the Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy will be based on the first three years of the 10 year Capital Programme.

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## Summary of Budget Consultation

The Council's 2025-26 budget public consultation ran from 13<sup>th</sup> June to 7<sup>th</sup> August 2024. It was hosted on the Council's Let's talk Kent website and can still be viewed via this link <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2025-26>.

In total, 2,389 people responded to the questionnaire, which is 8.8% lower than the response rate to last year's budget consultation. Responses were received from Kent residents, KCC staff, and a range of local businesses and organisations. 30% of respondents found out about the consultation via Facebook, and 25% via an email from Let's talk Kent or the Council's engagement and consultation team.

A supporting document was provided, which set out the background to the consultation including: key facts about Kent; KCC's strategic priorities; the financial challenges the council has had to address in recent years including areas of significant spending growth in particular in providing services for the most vulnerable residents; an overview of how the Council plans to spend the 2024-25 budget and how we are funded; and the 2025-26 financial challenge. The document included information on the council tax referendum principles, the assumed increases for 2025-26, and the impact on council tax bills. The document sets out the financial outlook for the forthcoming year and that difficult decisions will be needed to balance significant forecast spending increases with the forecast resources from council tax and central government settlement.

The consultation sought views on council tax proposals for both general council tax and the adult social care levy, and asked respondents to indicate their level of support for increases in line with, above (for general council tax only), or below the referendum level, or whether they are opposed to an increase. The consultation sought views on how services should be prioritised and savings should be made, by asking for levels of comfortableness with making spending reductions across the Council's different service areas, as well as which of these service areas to prioritise if there was only £1 of investment left to make. The consultation also sought views on some specific approaches to saving the Council money or generating more income and asked for any other suggestions on ways to make savings or increase income.

A detailed report setting out the responses received from the public consultation is included as a background document to this report along with feedback from engagement with VCSE sector. An exercise with KCC management cohort is reported separately from the public consultation.

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## Summary of Administration's Draft Budget Proposals

The administration's initial draft budget proposals are subject to Cabinet Committee scrutiny process in November. The estimates in the draft budget at this stage are early forecasts which can, and in all likelihood will, change in the final draft budget. This includes the estimates for local government finance settlement and local taxation the details of which had not been announced in time for the initial publication.

Following the scrutiny process the administration's final draft budget for approval will be considered by Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and by full County Council on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025. As required by the Council's Constitution and Financial Regulations, the final draft budget for County Council approval will be proposed by the Leader and published in a format recommended by the Corporate Director, Finance and agreed by the Leader.

The draft proposed ten-year capital spending plans for 2025-35 are being updated to reflect the recent monitoring position and are currently work in progress. The updated plans will also include the changes as detailed below, with the comprehensive refresh scheduled to be published in January:

- Roll overs from the 2023-24 outturn position,
- Addition of two fully funded bids: Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Landscaping and Manston to Haine Link Road,
- Addition of the invest to save proposal - Project Athena,
- To include pressures identified on Essella Road Rail Bridge and Tunnels

The presentation of the administration's draft revenue budget focuses on the key policy and strategic implications of the proposals, with much greater emphasis on the choices within each portfolio presented to the relevant Cabinet Committee for scrutiny. These choices are set out in the body of the report for each cabinet committee. In response to comments expressed by members the additional spending/savings/income have been put into context of the current budget. The full details of individual proposals can be examined through the member dashboard which is published alongside the reports. The dashboard provides a much more flexible tool to scrutinise proposals and includes a number of enhancements from last year (again including contextual budgets where there are choices) although until this process becomes fully embedded there will still be some variations in quality of information within the individual entries some fields.

The same high level overall council three-year plan is presented as an appendix for each committee. A separate appendix shows the individual elements for 2025-26 for the relevant directorate and Cabinet portfolios using the same spending and saving categories as the high level plan. The definitions for these categories are set out later in this appendix. The high level three-year plan shows KCC core funded and externally funded spending saving/income separately and individual directorate/portfolio appendix for 2025-26 shows just core funded.

It is not feasible or appropriate to produce a key service presentation in the initial draft budget for scrutiny as the scrutiny process needs to focus on the proposed changes from the approved budgets for 2024-25 before more detailed delivery plans are completed and these plans will inform the key service budgets for 2025-26.

Additional proposed spending growth includes the impact of decisions and activities already being delivered in the current year not included in the current base budget and

known future contractual obligations. It also includes forecasts for future cost or activity changes for the forthcoming year, or changes in Council policy. These are set out in fuller detail in dashboards including an explanation of the reasons for the change, key impacts and risks, dependencies and sensitivities.

The savings and income options in the tables in the reports and dashboards follow a similar pattern with amounts for the full year effect of 2024-25 plans; new savings and income for 2025-26 from the original 2024-27 MTFP (albeit updated); savings/income from the application of existing policies; new savings/income that do not require any changes in policy; and those that require policy changes presented as policy savings, efficiency/transformation savings, income or financing savings. Given the scale of the savings, enhanced detailed delivery plans will be required and monitored.

The table below sets out the high-level equation for changes in forecast spending for 2025-26 (growth, savings, income and net contributions to reserves) compared to forecast changes in funding. This shows the net balance still to be resolved of £11.4m, which includes the £8.65m ASC challenge from irrecoverable savings and small £2.8m remaining balance which is considered acceptable within tolerances at this stage.

Table – Net Change in Spending and Funding

Change in Net Spending	Core Funded	External Funded	Change in Net Funding	Core Funded
Change in forecast spending	+£117.2m	+12.6m	Estimated change in Social Care grants	-£5.3m
Proposed savings from spending reductions and future cost avoidance	-£34.5m	-£0.1m	Estimated change in other government grants	+£4.7m
Proposed changes in income	-£7.1m	-	Estimated change in council tax base	+£16.0m
Assumed changes in specific government grants	-	+£7.4m	Assumed increase in general council tax charge	+£28.5m
Base transfer between core and external	-£0.8m	+£0.8m	Assumed increase in ASC council tax charge	+£19.0m
Proposed net change in reserves	+£4.1m	-£20.8m	Estimated change in retained business rates	+£2.7m
			Estimated change in CT & BR collection fund balances	+£1.8m
<b>Sub Total - Total Change in Net Spending</b>	<b>+£78.9m</b>	<b>£0m</b>	<b>Sub Total – Total Change in Net Funding</b>	<b>+£67.5m</b>
Balance to be resolved including ASC challenge	-£11.4m	-		
<b>Total Change in Net Spending</b>	<b>+£67.5m</b>	<b>£0m</b>	<b>Total Change in Net Funding</b>	<b>+£67.5m</b>

Pressures arising from Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) impact upon both the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the General Fund. Pressures on DSG are addressed primarily by the Safety Valve mechanism, whereby Department for Education (up to £140m) and local authority (up to £82.3m) both provide a substantial contribution to resolve the accumulated deficit in return for improvements to the SEND system to bring annual recurring spending back to within the level of DSG high needs grant. Pressures on the General Fund are reflected primarily on the number of requests to assess, produce



and then annually review Education & Health Care Plans (EHCP) and the associated increased SEND home to school transport costs. There is already substantial work being undertaken to manage down this financial pressure and additional work will focus on identifying and reviewing changes to existing policy and practice so that we are meeting statutory minimum requirements, but ceasing discretionary services where they are not cost effective and only issuing EHCPs where they are necessary, and needs cannot be met by other means.

The additional assumed core funded spending growth (i.e. excluding the changes arising from external funding) of £117.2m for 2025-26 is set out in detail in the member dashboard and where there are local choices or a mixture of choice and unavoidable detailed in the tables in individual reports. It has been subdivided into the following categories:

Net base budget changes £11.2m	Changes to reflect full year effect of cost and activity spending variations in the current year's monitoring forecast compared to approved budget. These adjustments are necessary to ensure the draft budget is based on a robust and sustainable basis. The net base changes include both increases and reductions. The net base changes do not include variations on savings delivery as these are included as positive amounts within the savings section.
Demand and Cost drivers £71.2m	Forecast estimates for future non-inflationary cost and demand increases such as increased population & eligible clients, additional care hours, increased costs for new placements (complexity and availability of placements), increased journey lengths and vehicle occupancy, etc. across a range of services most significantly in adult social care, integrated children's services, home to school transport and waste tonnage.
Price uplifts £34.0m	Obligatory and negotiated price increases on contracted services, including full year effect of planned mid-year uplifts in current year, forecast future price uplifts. Also includes provision for price uplifts on contracts due for retender.
Pay £12.1m	Additional net cost of assumed Kent Scheme pay award that is subject to local bargaining with the recognised trade unions, transition to new Kent pay structure and increase to lower pay scales in line with Foundation Living Wage after savings from appointing new staff lower in pay ranges.
Service Strategies & Improvements £4.2m	Other assumed spending increases to deliver strategic priorities and/or service improvements and outcomes including most significantly replacing grant funding that has temporarily supported maintaining bus services, investment leading to increased divided from trading companies, mobilisation costs for new contracts
Government & Legislative -£15.5m	Additional spending to meet compliance with legislative and regulatory changes and, most significantly, a change in accounting treatment for the local authority contribution to High Needs Safety Valve which needs to be treated as contribution to reserve rather than revenue spending pressure.

The proposed savings, income and future cost increase avoidance of £41.6m for 2025-26 is set out in detail in the member dashboard and where there are local policy choices or transformation detailed in the tables in individual reports. It has been subdivided into the following categories:

Policy Savings -£8.1m	Comprises of £16.0m of new savings including £5.7m policy choices towards the £19.8m requirement to replace one off savings and £10.3m from full year effect of previous policy choices or policy choices which were already identified for 2025-26 in the original 2024-27 plan. New savings are partially offset by £7.9m realignment to reflect of previous savings now deemed unachievable.
Transformation Savings -£36.9m	Savings aimed at achieving improved or the same outcomes at less cost comprising £43.6m of new, or continuing, proposals and £6.7m partially offset from removing unachieved savings from previous years (part of the £8.65m irrecoverable ASCH savings from 2024-25, with the remainder being shown as reversals in policy and efficiency savings). The new proposals include the 2025-26 target for ASCH to contain spending growth within the available share of specific and general funding available. New proposals also include £10.3m transformation from cost avoidance on home to school transport, and £2.1m staffing through the Securing Kent's Future (SKF) objectives.
Efficiency Savings +£1.4m	Comprises £2.8m of proposals which are more than offset by £4.2m realignment for unachieved savings from previous years. This includes rephasing of savings previously identified for 2025-26 in the original 2024-25 budget plan, full year effect of 2024-25 savings and new proposals for 2025-26.
Financing +£9.0m	Comprises £1.5m of savings from the review of amounts set aside for debt repayment (MRP) and reduced base budget. These are more than offset by £7.7m removal of one-off use of capital receipts to support the costs of transformation activity in 2024-25 and £2.8m reduction in investment returns
Income Generation -£7.1m	Comprises £10m increased income from fees and charges for council services from applying existing policies on fee uplifts (including contributions from other bodies), application of full cost recovery policy and new income generation proposals. Partially offset by £2.9m reversal of one-off additional divided income in 2024-25 and removal of project grant income.

## APPENDIX E - High Level 2025-28 Revenue Plan and Financing

2024-25				2025-26			INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES					
Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s		Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s
			Original base budget	1,429,506.8	0.0	1,429,506.8	1,496,958.2	0.0	1,496,958.2	1,566,679.1	0.0	1,566,679.1
			internal base adjustments	-836.6	836.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1,315,610.6		1,315,610.6	Revised Base	1,428,670.2	836.6	1,429,506.8	1,496,958.2	0.0	1,496,958.2	1,566,679.1	0.0	1,566,679.1
			<b>SPENDING</b>									
31,721.5		31,721.5	Base Budget Changes	11,242.8	-744.1	10,498.7	-100.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
35.0		35.0	Reduction in Grant Funding	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10,798.4	505.1	11,303.5	Pay	12,112.5	626.9	12,739.4	12,340.2	0.0	12,340.2	11,901.7	0.0	11,901.7
49,568.4	1,695.6	51,264.0	Prices	33,987.2	1,944.4	35,931.6	28,618.5	0.0	28,618.5	21,216.2	0.0	21,216.2
85,349.7	284.7	85,634.4	Demand & Cost Drivers - Cost	48,209.4	0.0	48,209.4	46,631.1	0.0	46,631.1	46,631.1	0.0	46,631.1
		0.0	Demand & Cost Drivers - Demand	22,983.5	24,150.3	47,133.8	23,014.5	-15,600.0	7,414.5	22,968.7	-14,200.0	8,768.7
16,393.1	-10,327.3	6,065.8	Government & Legislative	-15,548.0	-13,687.9	-29,235.9	192.0	0.0	192.0	3,212.0	-1,898.1	1,313.9
15,712.2	-1,538.8	14,173.4	Service Strategies & Improvements	4,217.4	269.2	4,486.6	7,187.4	-836.5	6,350.9	173.9	-4,142.2	-3,968.3
109,578.3	-9,380.7	200,197.6	<b>TOTAL SPENDING</b>	<b>117,204.8</b>	<b>12,558.8</b>	<b>129,763.6</b>	<b>117,883.7</b>	<b>-16,436.5</b>	<b>101,447.2</b>	<b>106,103.6</b>	<b>-20,240.3</b>	<b>85,863.3</b>
			<b>MEMORANDUM:</b>									
			Unavoidable	20,004.6	887.6	20,892.2						
			Local Choice	2,612.9	423.8	3,036.7						
			Mixture of both	95,311.1	26,273.4	121,584.5						
			Removal of temporary changes	-723.8	-15,026.0	-15,749.8						
				<b>117,204.8</b>	<b>12,558.8</b>	<b>129,763.6</b>						
			<b>SAVINGS, INCOME &amp; GRANT</b>									
-36,454.8		-36,454.8	Transformation - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	-32,375.9	0.0	-32,375.9	-10,788.7	0.0	-10,788.7	-10,300.0	0.0	-10,300.0
2,068.7		2,068.7	Transformation - Service Transformation	-4,500.0	0.0	-4,500.0	-1,900.0	0.0	-1,900.0	-400.0	0.0	-400.0
-16,195.0		-16,195.0	Efficiency	1,412.0	-65.0	1,347.0	-3,963.5	0.0	-3,963.5	-151.0	0.0	-151.0
-15,406.6	-281.3	-15,687.9	Income	-7,097.1	0.0	-7,097.1	-5,870.6	0.0	-5,870.6	-6,052.8	0.0	-6,052.8
-10,967.6		-10,967.6	Financing	9,022.0	0.0	9,022.0	-767.7	0.0	-767.7	-2,166.3	0.0	-2,166.3
-11,910.2	-9.2	-11,919.4	Policy	-8,094.1	0.0	-8,094.1	-17,078.1	0.0	-17,078.1	-9,586.0	0.0	-9,586.0
-88,865.5	-290.5	-89,156.0	<b>TOTAL SAVINGS &amp; INCOME</b>	<b>-41,633.1</b>	<b>-65.0</b>	<b>-41,698.1</b>	<b>-40,368.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-40,368.6</b>	<b>-28,656.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-28,656.1</b>
	7,210.7	7,210.7	Increases in Grants and Contributions	0.0	7,435.8	7,435.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-8,729.7	-8,729.7
-88,865.5	6,920.2	-81,945.3	<b>TOTAL SAVINGS, INCOME &amp; GRANT</b>	<b>-41,633.1</b>	<b>7,370.8</b>	<b>-34,262.3</b>	<b>-40,368.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-40,368.6</b>	<b>-28,656.1</b>	<b>-8,729.7</b>	<b>-37,385.8</b>

2024-25				2025-26			INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES					
Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s		Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	2026-27			2027-28		
						Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	
<b>RESERVES</b>												
27,481.5		27,481.5	Contributions to Reserves	30,040.9	14,200.0	44,240.9	38,695.2	14,200.0	52,895.2	33,900.0	34,300.0	68,200.0
-24,739.6		-24,739.6	Removal of prior year Contributions	-26,524.8	-10,640.0	-37,164.8	-30,040.9	-14,200.0	-44,240.9	-38,695.2	-14,200.0	-52,895.2
-14,877.4	-1,350.5	-16,227.9	Drawdowns from Reserves	-14,255.2	-25,598.1	-39,853.3	0.0	-9,161.6	-9,161.6	0.0	-291.6	-291.6
5,318.9	3,811.0	9,129.9	Removal of prior year Drawdowns	14,877.4	1,271.9	16,149.3	14,255.2	25,598.1	39,853.3	0.0	9,161.6	9,161.6
-6,816.6	2,460.5	-4,356.1	<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>4,138.3</b>	<b>-20,766.2</b>	<b>-16,627.9</b>	<b>22,909.5</b>	<b>16,436.5</b>	<b>39,346.0</b>	<b>-4,795.2</b>	<b>28,970.0</b>	<b>24,174.8</b>
113,896.2	0.0	113,896.2	<b>NET CHANGE</b>	<b>79,710.0</b>	<b>-836.6</b>	<b>78,873.4</b>	<b>100,424.6</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>100,424.6</b>	<b>72,652.3</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>72,652.3</b>
			UNRESOLVED BALANCE	-2,771.5	0.0	-2,771.5	-13,503.7	0.0	-13,503.7	16,566.3	0.0	16,566.3
			ADULT SOCIAL CARE FUNDING UNRESOLVED BALANCE	-8,650.5		-8,650.5	-17,200.0		-17,200.0	-15,300.0		-15,300.0
<b>1,429,506.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,429,506.8</b>	<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>1,496,958.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,496,958.2</b>	<b>1,566,679.1</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,566,679.1</b>	<b>1,640,597.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>1,640,597.7</b>
<b>MEMORANDUM:</b>												
<b>The net impact on our reserves balances is:</b>												
27,481.5	0.0	<b>27,481.5</b>	Contributions to Reserves	30,040.9	14,200.0	<b>44,240.9</b>	38,695.2	14,200.0	<b>52,895.2</b>	33,900.0	34,300.0	<b>68,200.0</b>
-14,877.4	-1,350.5	<b>-16,227.9</b>	Drawdowns from Reserves	-14,255.2	-25,598.1	<b>-39,853.3</b>	0.0	-9,161.6	<b>-9,161.6</b>	0.0	-291.6	<b>-291.6</b>
<b>12,604.1</b>	<b>-1,350.5</b>	<b>11,253.6</b>	<b>Net movement in Reserves</b>	<b>15,785.7</b>	<b>-11,398.1</b>	<b>4,387.6</b>	<b>38,695.2</b>	<b>5,038.4</b>	<b>43,733.6</b>	<b>33,900.0</b>	<b>34,008.4</b>	<b>67,908.4</b>

2024-25			2025-26			INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES					
Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s
<b>Funding per the Local Government Finance Settlement &amp; Local Taxation</b>											
	11,806.0				12,195.6			12,390.8			12,564.2
	117,046.1				117,046.1			117,046.1			117,046.1
	26,969.4				21,703.9			21,703.9			21,703.9
	11,686.6				11,686.6			11,686.6			11,686.6
	1,311.9				1,311.9			1,311.9			1,311.9
	147,382.5				152,092.1			154,308.4			156,468.7
	50,014.7				50,014.7			50,014.7			50,014.7
	51,080.2				52,712.5			53,480.6			54,229.4
	2,058.5				0.0			0.0			0.0
	3,544.6				3,544.6			3,544.6			3,544.6
	65,740.7				68,463.6			69,392.1			70,297.0
	2,682.8				0.0			0.0			0.0
	800,320.3				842,537.0			885,560.8			931,219.7
	135,347.0				156,649.6			179,238.6			203,510.9
	2,515.5				7,000.0			7,000.0			7,000.0
	<b>1,429,506.8</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>			<b>1,496,958.2</b>			<b>1,566,679.1</b>			<b>1,640,597.7</b>

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## APPENDIX F - GET DIRECTORATE (CORE ONLY)

### PROPOSED 2025-26 BUDGET CHANGES BY CABINET MEMBER

	GET	Environment & Transport			Growth, Economic Development & Communities		
		Neil Baker	Robert Thomas	TOTAL	Clair Bell	Derek Murphy	TOTAL
	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s
Original base budget	201,737.2						
internal base adjustments	-404.8						
<b>Revised Base</b>	<b>201,332.4</b>						
<b>SPENDING</b>							
Base Budget Changes	4,899.3	2,684.5	2,253.6	<b>4,938.1</b>	-38.8	0.0	<b>-38.8</b>
Pay	-122.6	-96.6	-15.4	<b>-112.0</b>	-10.6	0.0	<b>-10.6</b>
Prices	5,709.0	2,501.7	2,956.2	<b>5,457.9</b>	251.1	0.0	<b>251.1</b>
Demand & Cost Drivers - Cost	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Demand & Cost Drivers - Demand	1,057.0	27.5	1,079.5	<b>1,107.0</b>	0.0	-50.0	<b>-50.0</b>
Government & Legislative	-488.0	-500.0	0.0	<b>-500.0</b>	12.0	0.0	<b>12.0</b>
Service Strategies & Improvements	2,302.0	1,852.0	500.0	<b>2,352.0</b>	0.0	-50.0	<b>-50.0</b>
<b>TOTAL SPENDING</b>	<b>13,356.7</b>	<b>6,469.1</b>	<b>6,773.9</b>	<b>13,243.0</b>	<b>213.7</b>	<b>-100.0</b>	<b>113.7</b>
<i>MEMORANDUM:</i>							
<i>Unavoidable</i>	<i>12,436.5</i>	<i>5,324.5</i>	<i>6,789.3</i>	<i>12,113.8</i>	<i>322.7</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>322.7</i>
<i>Local Choice</i>	<i>1,822.0</i>	<i>1,867.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>1,867.0</i>	<i>-45.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>-45.0</i>
<i>Mixture of both</i>	<i>900.7</i>	<i>900.7</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>900.7</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>
<i>Removal of temporary changes</i>	<i>-1,802.5</i>	<i>-1,623.1</i>	<i>-15.4</i>	<i>-1,638.5</i>	<i>-64.0</i>	<i>-100.0</i>	<i>-164.0</i>
	<b>13,356.7</b>	<b>6,469.1</b>	<b>6,773.9</b>	<b>13,243.0</b>	<b>213.7</b>	<b>-100.0</b>	<b>113.7</b>
<b>SAVINGS, INCOME &amp; GRANT</b>							
Transformation - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Transformation - Service Transformation	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Efficiency	450.0	0.0	450.0	<b>450.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Income	-2,275.0	-1,576.7	-120.0	<b>-1,696.7</b>	-578.3	0.0	<b>-578.3</b>
Financing	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Policy	452.5	0.0	500.0	<b>500.0</b>	38.0	-85.5	<b>-47.5</b>
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS &amp; INCOME</b>	<b>-1,372.5</b>	<b>-1,576.7</b>	<b>830.0</b>	<b>-746.7</b>	<b>-540.3</b>	<b>-85.5</b>	<b>-625.8</b>
Increases in Grants and Contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS, INCOME &amp; GRANT</b>	<b>-1,372.5</b>	<b>-1,576.7</b>	<b>830.0</b>	<b>-746.7</b>	<b>-540.3</b>	<b>-85.5</b>	<b>-625.8</b>
<b>RESERVES</b>							
Contributions to Reserves	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Removal of prior year Contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Drawdowns from Reserves	-160.0	-160.0	0.0	<b>-160.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	475.0	475.0	0.0	<b>475.0</b>	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>315.0</b>	<b>315.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>315.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>
<b>NET CHANGE</b>	<b>12,299.2</b>	<b>5,207.4</b>	<b>7,603.9</b>	<b>12,811.3</b>	<b>-326.6</b>	<b>-185.5</b>	<b>-512.1</b>
<b>PROPOSED NET BUDGET</b>	<b>213,631.6</b>						

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# APPENDIX G - SPENDING & SAVINGS PROPOSALS REQUIRING A DECISION - GET DIRECTORATE (CORE ONLY)

Directorate Reference	Cabinet Member	Headline description	Brief description	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	MTFP Category	Base budget for context (£k) *			what is budget figure based on
				£k	£k	£k		Gross	Income	Net	
<b>2025-26 LOCAL CHOICE SPENDING PROPOSALS</b>											
Continuation of previously BSIP+ funded routes	Neil Baker	Transport - Supported Bus Services	During Autumn 2023, a number of local bus operators within Kent, gave notice that they intended to withdraw their local bus services. The vast majority of these services were school focused, carrying those holding a Kent Travel Saver or were provided with a season ticket by KCC.  Using BSIP+ funding, KCC was able to secure the continuation of these services, at a significant cost, but that grant funding is due to end 31/3/24 and a decision to fund or cease the routes was needed	1,867.0	1,073.0	147.0	Service Strategies & Improvements	16,619.3	-10,858.2	5,761.1	supported buses core service
<b>TOTAL NEIL BAKER</b>				<b>1,867.0</b>	<b>1,073.0</b>	<b>147.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL LOCAL CHOICE SPENDING PROPOSALS - ENVIRONMENT &amp; TRANSPORT</b>				<b>1,867.0</b>	<b>1,073.0</b>	<b>147.0</b>					
Income from Trading Stds Checked service	Clair Bell	Trading Standards	Increased income from Trading Standards Checked service, previously delayed due to economic climate.	-45.0	0.0	0.0	Base Budget Changes	92.0	-115.0	-23.0	Trading Standards checked scheme cost centre (2RB44261)
<b>TOTAL CLAIR BELL</b>				<b>-45.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL LOCAL CHOICE SPENDING PROPOSALS - GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>				<b>-45.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL LOCAL CHOICE SPENDING PROPOSALS - GET DIRECTORATE</b>				<b>1,822.0</b>	<b>1,073.0</b>	<b>147.0</b>					
<b>2025-26 MIXTURE OF LOCAL CHOICE &amp; UNAVOIDABLE SPENDING PROPOSALS</b>											
Subsidised buses inflationary uplift	Neil Baker	Supported Bus Services Inflation	Provision for price inflation, which results from the re-tendering of supported bus services, which reflects increases in operating costs over the life of a contract.	421.0	432.0	445.0	Prices	16,619.3	-10,858.2	5,761.1	supported bus services core service
KTS - inflationary uplift (offset by income)	Neil Baker	Kent Travel Saver	Provision for price inflation related to the Kent Travel Saver and Kent 16+ Travel Saver which is recovered through uplifting the charge for the pass - Kent Travel Saver	479.7	479.7	479.7	Prices	15,021.7	-9,946.2	5,075.5	KTS core service
<b>TOTAL NEIL BAKER</b>				<b>900.7</b>	<b>911.7</b>	<b>924.7</b>					
<b>TOTAL MIXTURE OF LOCAL CHOICE &amp; UNAVOIDABLE SPENDING PROPOSALS - ENVIRONMENT &amp; TRANSPORT</b>				<b>900.7</b>	<b>911.7</b>	<b>924.7</b>					
<b>TOTAL MIXTURE OF LOCAL CHOICE &amp; UNAVOIDABLE SPENDING PROPOSALS - GET DIRECTORATE</b>				<b>900.7</b>	<b>911.7</b>	<b>924.7</b>					

Directorate Reference	Cabinet Member	Headline description	Brief description	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	MTFP Category	Base budget for context (£k) *			what is budget figure based on
				£k	£k	£k		Gross	Income	Net	
<b>2025-26 POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS</b>											
HWRC Sites review	Robert Thomas	Waste - Review Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	Review of the number and operation of HWRC sites - removal of prior year saving following decision to pause review.	500.0	0.0	0.0	Policy	10,569.6	0.0	10,569.6	HWRC service code (7WG)
<b>TOTAL ROBERT THOMAS</b>				<b>500.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>					
Review of on-street parking	Neil Baker	Highways - On-street parking	Review of on-street parking, which may involve insourcing and the need to invoke a 24 month notice period if an alternative cannot be agreed with Districts (now unlikely). Current arrangement being reviewed to see if synergies may exist and cost savings to be shared by KCC and its partners. (Decision needed in 2024-25 to enable net	0.0	0.0	-100.0	Policy	0.0	0.0	0.0	New service so there is no current contextual budget
<b>TOTAL NEIL BAKER</b>				<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-100.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS - ENVIRONMENT &amp; TRANSPORT</b>				<b>500.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-100.0</b>					
Review of Community Warden Service	Clair Bell	Community Wardens	Review of Community Warden Service to deliver a £1m saving which has resulted in an overall reduction in wardens This is the residual budget once pension liabilities expire	-10.0	0.0	-57.0	Policy	1,709.2	0.0	1,709.2	Wardens service code (2CB)
Trading Standards staffing review	Clair Bell	Trading Standards staffing	Reversal of previous one-off delay to recruiting food qualified officer.	48.0	0.0	0.0	Policy	4,122.8	-573.8	3,549.0	Trading Standards service code (2RB)
<b>TOTAL CLAIR BELL</b>				<b>38.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-57.0</b>					
List A Cyclopark - Open Spaces	Derek Murphy	Regeneration & Economic Development - Cyclopark	A reduction in the KCC contribution to the operational costs of the Cyclopark sports and community facility in Gravesend. The park is owned by KCC and operated on KCC's behalf by the Cyclopark charitable trust.	-12.5	-35.0	0.0	Policy	155.6	-30.6	125.0	Open Spaces service code (8EM)
List A Produced in Kent - Rural Economy	Derek Murphy	Regeneration & Economic Development - Produced in Kent	Reduction of KCC funding to support the operational costs of Produced in Kent, the county's food & drink sector business membership organisation and promotional agency.	-58.0	0.0	0.0	Policy	108.4	0.0	108.4	PiNK project code (N756)
List A Regen & ED - Support for Business	Derek Murphy	Regeneration & Economic Development - Support for Business	Reduction in the budget for the Straits Committee whilst continuing to meet the committees commitments	-15.0	0.0	0.0	Policy	130.0	-15.0	115.0	Support for Business service code (8EJ)
<b>TOTAL DEREK MURPHY</b>				<b>-85.5</b>	<b>-35.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS - GROWTH, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &amp; COMMUNITIES</b>				<b>-47.5</b>	<b>-35.0</b>	<b>-57.0</b>					
<b>TOTAL POLICY &amp; TRANSFORMATION SAVINGS PROPOSALS - GET DIRECTORATE</b>				<b>452.5</b>	<b>-35.0</b>	<b>-157.0</b>					

\* The contextual gross & income budget information includes both core and externally funded but the budget proposal figures focus just on core funded

## Building Financial Resilience

Financial resilience describes the ability of the authority to remain viable, stable and effective in the medium to long term in the face of pressures from growing demand, tightening funding and an increasingly complex and unpredictable financial environment.

The following table sets out the key 'symptoms' of financial stress identified by CIPFA and assesses the current position of the County Council against each indicator. Overall, the prognosis is that there has been a recent deterioration in resilience which needs to be reversed in particular on the delivery of savings and managing spending within approved budgets.

Symptom	KCC Assessment
Running down reserves/a rapid decline in reserves	<p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>The council maintained a relatively stable level of usable revenue reserves between April 2016 to March 2018 of approx. £0.2bn (excluding schools and capital reserves) with small net movements between years. This comprised general reserve of around £0.037bn (3% of net revenue) and earmarked reserves of between £0.159bn to £0.166bn</p>
Score 6/10	
Scope for Improvement - Moderate	<p>Over the period April 2018 to March 2020 usable revenue reserves increased to £0.224bn at end of 2018-19 and £0.271bn end of 2019-20, although £0.037bn of the earmarked reserves in 2019-20 was the unspent balance of first tranche of Covid-19 emergency grant (general reserves remained around £0.037bn and all the increases were in earmarked reserves).</p> <p>There was a more rapid increase in usable revenue reserves in 2020-21 (largely due to underspends during lockdown and timing differences between the receipt of Covid-19 grants and spending, and impact of business rates reliefs/compensation for local taxation losses coming through from collection authorities) Usable revenue reserves at the end of 2020-21 were £0.398bn (of which general remained £0.037bn, earmarked reserves increased to £0.272bn, and Covid-19 reserves were £0.088bn).</p> <p>There was a further increase in total usable revenue reserves at end of 2021-22 up to £0.408bn. Most of the increase was in general reserve which was increased to £0.056bn (5% of net revenue) in line with agreed strategy to strengthen reserves due to heightened risks, with smaller increase in earmarked to £0.277bn, and small reduction in Covid-19 reserves to £0.075bn.</p> <p>This pattern of stable then increasing reserves over the period 2016-22 was despite between £0.009bn and £0.022bn drawn down each year to smooth delivery of revenue budget savings (£0.074bn over 6 years).</p> <p>In 2022-23 there was an overall reduction in usable revenue reserves to £0.391bn (£0.037bn general, £0.271bn earmarked, £0.047bn Covid-19 and £0.036bn in new partnership reserve from the excess safety valve contributions). The reductions included £0.047bn draw down from general reserves and earmarked reserves to balance 2022-23 outturn.</p> <p>In 2023-24 there was a further reduction in total usable reserves to</p>

	<p>£0.358bn (£0.043bn general, £0.268bn earmarked, £0.0.10bn Covid-19 and £0.036bn Safety Valve partnership reserve). The small increase in the general reserve reflected the overall increase in 2023-24 budget to maintain the reserve as % of net revenue but did not include any movement to restore the reserve to 5% of net revenue following the draw down in 2022-23. 2023-24 included a review of reserves to ensure balances in individual categories remained appropriate. This included transfer of £0.048bn from other earmarked reserves into the smoothing category which was partially drawn on by £0.012bn to balance the 2023-24 outturn.</p> <p>Quarter 1 monitoring for 2024-25 shows further forecast overspends which if not reduced or mitigated would require a third year of draw down. This would further reduce resilience from reserves.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusions</u></b>  <b>Two successive years of drawdowns from reserves to balance overspends represents a reduction in financial resilience (with only a partial restoration of reserves included in future medium term financial plans).</b></p> <p><b>The Council's reserves have been deemed as adequate in the short-term by S151 officer pending those restoration plans being delivered in future budgets. In particular, the general reserve needs to be restored to 5% of net revenue within the 2025-28 MTFP.</b></p> <p><b>A small amount of smoothing within the annual revenue budget to reflect timing differences between spending and savings plans is considered acceptable provided these are replaced and replenished in future years through a balanced medium term financial plan.</b></p>
<p>A failure to plan and deliver savings in service provision to ensure the council lives within its resources</p> <p>Score 4/10</p> <p>Scope for Improvement - High</p>	<p><b><u>Evidence</u></b>  The council has planned (and largely delivered) £0.883bn of savings and income since 2011-12 (up to 2023-24). The council has delivered a balanced outturn with a small surplus each year since 2000-01 up to 2021-22 (22 years) including throughout the years when government funding was reducing and spending demands were still increasing. This demonstrated that in the past savings were sustainable.</p> <p>The approved budget for 2022-23 included £33.9m of savings and income (3% of net budget) in order to balance spending growth (£93.0m) with increase in funding from core grants and local taxation (£59.1m). Separate savings monitoring was re-introduced in 2022-23 following suspension of previous monitoring arrangements during Covid-19.</p> <p>The 2022-23 outturn was the first year in 23 years that the authority ended the year with a significant overspend (£44.4m before rollover). This overspend was partly due to under delivery of savings but more materially was due to un-forecast increases in costs compared to when the budget was set particularly in adult social care, children in care and home to school transport. These unbudgeted costs increases have been a more material factor than under delivery of savings (although if they had been forecast would have increased the savings requirement which itself may not have been deliverable).</p>

The approved budget for 2023-24 included £54.8m of savings and income (4.6% of net budget) to balance spending growth (£178.9m) and increase in funding (£124.1m). The higher spending growth included the full year effect of forecast overspend in 2022-23 and the impact of the rapid increase in inflation during 2022-23.

The 2023-24 outturn showed an overspend of £9.6m before rollover. This was significantly lower than had been forecast earlier in the year following agreement of revised strategic ambitions in Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy. These ambitions included reducing the 2023-24 overspend, focuses on ambitions for new models of care (addressing the unsustainable increases in sending in adults, children's and home to school transport), scope of the council's strategic ambitions and transforming the operating model of the council through Chief Executive model. Stringent spending controls were introduced in 2023-24 with the objective of reducing the overspend. As in 2023-24 the overspend arose from a combination of unbudgeted costs and under delivery/rephasing of savings.

The approved budget for 2024-25 includes £89.2m of savings and income (6.8% of net budget) to balance spending growth (£203.1m) and increased funding (£113.9m). The increased spending growth included revised approach to demand and cost drivers as well price uplifts (linked to inflation) and full year effect of 2023-24. Initial monitoring for 2024-25 shows further forecast underspends again from combination of unbudgeted spend and savings delivery. Under delivery of savings is now largest contributor to forecast overspends.

Savings planning and monitoring has been enhanced with greater emphasis on more detailed monitoring of progress on the most significant savings. Enhanced monitoring will not in itself ensure improved delivery performance, especially in the short-term.

### **Conclusions**

**The significant increase in the savings requirement over the last 3 years is cause for serious concern and is unsustainable. This savings requirement is driven by ever increasing gap between forecast spending growth and increase in available resources from core government grants and local taxation. This gap needs to be resolved either from reducing spending expectations and / or increased funding if resilience is to be improved.**

**The increased under delivery of savings indicates a lack of capacity within the organisation and that savings are put forward with over optimistic timescales (or inadequate resources to ensure delivery) and in some instances were not sustainable. This combination is weakening financial resilience.**

**As identified in Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy addressing these unsustainable growth increases that are leading to structural deficit are key to restoring financial resilience.**

<p>Shortening medium term financial planning horizons perhaps from three or four years to two or even one</p> <p>Score 7/10</p> <p>Scope for Improvement - Moderate</p>	<p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>The council has traditionally produced a three year medium term financial plan (MTFP). This plan sets out forecast resources from central government and local taxation with spending forecasts balanced by savings, income generation and use of smoothing reserves.</p> <p>Generally funding forecasts have been robust (other than in 2016-17 when changes in the distribution of core grants were made with no prior consultation or notification) and tax yields have remained buoyant (other than a dip in 2021-22 due to delays in housebuilding, earnings losses leading to higher council tax reduction discounts and collection losses during Covid-19 lockdowns).</p> <p>Spending forecasts for later years of the plan have tended to be underestimated (albeit compensated through the inclusion of “emerging issues” contingency based on experience and risk assessment).</p> <p>Up until 2017 the three-year MTFP was a separate publication from the annual budget (albeit produced alongside the annual budget). Since 2018 the plan has been produced as a single slimmed down document within a single publication with the annual budget.</p> <p>A one-year plan was published in 2020-21 recognising the one-year settlement and the absence of spending plans following the December 2019 general election. The further one-year settlement for 2021-22 also impacted on the ability to produce a full three-year plan although a number of medium-term scenarios were set out based on the trajectory of the pandemic (similar to the trajectories used by Office for Budget Responsibility).</p> <p>High-level three year plans were produced in 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 although experience has proved that these have been less robust and susceptible to the un-forecast spending trends experienced in these years. Funding forecasts have continued to be speculative in the absence of multi-year settlements. Council tax base estimates have proved to be extremely reliable although business rates have been more volatile.</p> <p><u>Conclusions</u></p> <p><b>Medium term plans are still considered to be reasonable even if for forecasts for the later years are less reliable, as a broad indicator of direction of travel rather than a detailed plan. Plans should be less speculative if multi-year settlements are re-introduced.</b></p> <p><b>Draft budget proposals need to be made available for scrutiny and savings planning earlier (even if these have to be based on less up to date forecasts). The preplanning of savings needs to recognise lead-in times of 6 to 9 months from initial concept to final approval.</b></p> <p><b>Medium term plans will need to consider alternative potential scenarios for future plans reflecting the volatile and uncertain circumstances.</b></p>
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<p>A lack of firm objectives for savings – greater “still to be found” gaps in savings plans</p> <p>Score 5/10</p> <p>Scope for Improvement – Good</p>	<p>It has been common that in later years of the plan there have been balancing “savings still to be found” and those savings that were identified have often lacked detailed plans, especially in later years and plans were held and maintained locally within directorates and services.</p> <p>Even where plans are detailed there have been evidence that some savings have subsequently not been implemented following further scrutiny. Greater emphasis needs to be placed on identifying consequences, risks, sensitivities, opportunities and actions in the early planning stages before plans are presented for scrutiny.</p> <p><b><u>Conclusions</u></b>  <b>Changes have been introduced to maintain a comprehensive central database of all savings plans over the three years which contain information about impacts, risks, dependencies, sensitivities as well as forecast financials, timescales and staffing. This database is backed up with detailed delivery plans.</b></p>
<p>A growing tendency for directorates to have unplanned overspends and/or carry forward undelivered savings into the following year</p> <p>Score 4/10</p> <p>Scope for Improvement - High</p>	<p><u>Evidence</u></p> <p>The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on budgets in 2020-21 with savings undeliverable in the immediate aftermath albeit offset by significant underspends due to impact of lockdowns.</p> <p>2021-22 budget was delivered although there were early signs of underlying unbudgeted growth trends which were largely disguised by ongoing Covid-19 impacts and availability of additional Covid 19 grants.</p> <p>Significant and material overspends were reported in 2022-23. These had been partly anticipated and mitigated through the creation of a budget risk reserve and strengthening of general reserves in 2021-22, and the transfer of insecure funding into reserves in 2022-23 budget. The enhanced risks following the Russian invasion of Ukraine after 2022-23 budget had been set were reported to Cabinet on 31<sup>st</sup> March together with further strengthening of reserves from final local government finance settlement and final notification of retained share of business rates.</p> <p>The full consequences of global and national circumstances in 2022-23 could never have been fully foreseen when the budget was set, and it was acknowledged that reserves were only adequate and not as generous as other comparable councils. Initially work in 2022-23 focussed on verifying the forecasts rather than immediate remedial action on the basis that these were expected to be short-term temporary consequences.</p> <p>The 2023-24 budget included unprecedented levels of growth including the full year impact of 2022-23 overspends, historically high levels of inflation and other cost driver growth as best could be forecast at the time. This still proved insufficient and further unplanned overspends were reported in 2023-24 due to a combination of unbudgeted growth and under delivery of savings.</p> <p>“Securing Kent’s Future – Budget Recovery Strategy” was agreed in October 2023. This strategy includes immediate actions with the objective of bringing spending into balance in 2023-24 through spending reductions across the whole council for the remainder of the year and actions</p>

expected to have impacts in 2024-25 and over the medium term to reduce the structural deficits in the areas of overspend. The plan recognises it may take time to reduce spending in key areas in adults and children's and thus further savings from contracts coming up for renewal and other areas of activity outside adults and children's in the interim.

SKF and the imposition of spending controls on uncommitted spending resulted in a reduction in the overspend by year end 2023-24 although within this there were still significant overspends in Adult Social Care and Children and Young People due to combination of unbudgeted growth and under delivery of savings.

Early forecasts for 2024-25 identify overspends in Adult Social Care and Growth Environment and Transport Directorates. Again these arise from a combination of unbudgeted growth and increasingly under delivery or rephasing of savings. Some savings included in the budget have subsequently been challenged and not agreed following publication of detailed options (including withdrawing consultation. Budget plans did not include alternative mitigations or any contingency to allow for variations from the original plan.

### **Conclusions**

**Failure to deliver to budgets is becoming a significant concern. Failure to deliver budget has multiple impacts in that it either requires "right-sizing" in future budgets (increasing spending growth), roll forward of savings (increasing the in-year savings requirement in future years to an extent that there may be inadequate capacity) and is a drain on reserves.**

**Table: Usable Revenue Reserves Balances**

	<b>ACTUALS</b>								
	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
General	-36,404	-36,671	-36,903	-37,054	-37,183	-37,075	-56,188	-36,918	-43,030
Earmarked*	-163,914	-159,357	-155,319	-180,424	-190,656	-261,165	-259,933	-254,219	-251,339
Covid	0	0	0	0	-37,307	-88,209	-75,122	-47,100	-10,000
Public Health	-1,988	-3,825	-3,634	-6,036	-5,877	-11,126	-16,817	-16,899	-16,984
Safety Valve	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-36,263	-36,263
<b>Totals</b>	<b>-202,306</b>	<b>-199,852</b>	<b>-195,856</b>	<b>-223,514</b>	<b>-271,023</b>	<b>-397,575</b>	<b>-408,060</b>	<b>-391,398</b>	<b>-357,616</b>



From: Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation  
Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment  
Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 November 2024

Subject: Performance Dashboard

Classification: Unrestricted

**Summary:**

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee Performance Dashboard shows performance against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This is the third dashboard for 2024/25 and includes data up to August 2024.

Thirteen of the seventeen KPIs achieved target for latest performance and are RAG rated Green (two more than the last report). Four KPIs are below target but did achieve the floor standard and are RAG rated Amber (one fewer than the last report). No KPIs are below floor standard for latest performance (there was one in the last report).

**Recommendation(s):**

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the Performance Dashboard.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. Part of the role of Cabinet Committees is to review the performance of the functions of the Council that fall within the remit of the Committee. To support this role, Performance Dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the third report for the 2024/25 financial year.

**2. Performance Dashboard**

- 2.1. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance against target for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for 2024/25. The current Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee Performance Dashboard is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2. The current Dashboard provides results up to the end of August 2024.
- 2.3. KPIs are presented with RAG (Red/Amber/Green) ratings to show progress against targets. Details of how the ratings are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

- 2.4. Seven of the eight KPIs in Highways & Transportation achieved target for latest month performance and are RAG rated Green. One KPI is below target but above floor standard and is RAG rated Amber, this is Member enquiries completed within 20 working days.
- 2.5. Six of the nine indicators for Environment and Circular Economy were above target and are RAG rated Green. The other three KPIs are all RAG rated Amber; two relate to municipal and Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) recycled and composted waste, and the other is Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days. It is worth noting that the KPI for Waste recycled and composted at HWRCs has moved above target for the first time since July 2022.

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

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the Performance Dashboard.

### **4. Contact details**

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# **Environment and Transport Performance Dashboard**

## **Financial Year 2024/25**

### **Results up to August 2024**

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Produced by Kent Analytics



## Guidance Notes

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

### RAG RATINGS

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

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

### Activity Indicators

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

**Key Performance Indicators Summary**

Highways & Transportation	Monthly RAG	YTD RAG
HT01 : Reported potholes repaired in 28 calendar days (routine works not programmed)	GREEN	GREEN
HT02 : Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days	GREEN	GREEN
HT08 : Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	GREEN	GREEN
HT12 : Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	GREEN	GREEN
HT14 : Member enquiries completed within 20 working days	AMBER	AMBER
DT01 : Percentage of public enquiries for Highways Maintenance completed online	GREEN	GREEN
DT03 : Percentage of concessionary bus pass applications completed online	GREEN	GREEN
DT04 : Percentage of speed awareness courses booking completed online	GREEN	GREEN

Environment & Circular Economy	RAG
WM01 : Municipal waste recycled and composted	AMBER
WM02 : Municipal waste converted to energy	GREEN
WM01 + WM02 : Municipal waste diverted from landfill	GREEN
WM03 : Waste recycled and composted at HWRCs	GREEN
WM04 : Percentage of HWRC waste recycled and wood converted to energy at biomass facility	AMBER
WM08 : Overall score for mystery shopper assessment of HWRCs	GREEN
WM10 : Customer satisfaction with HWRCs	GREEN
EW2 : Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools)	GREEN
EW1 : Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days	AMBER

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<b>Division</b>	<b>Corporate Director</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Highways &amp; Transportation</b>	<b>Simon Jones</b>	<b>Neil Baker</b>

### Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Month RAG	Year to Date	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Yr
HT01	Reported potholes repaired in 28 calendar days	94%	97%	98%	96%	GREEN	95%	GREEN	90%	80%	89%
HT02	Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days	88%	90%	94%	90%	GREEN	90%	GREEN	90%	80%	86%
HT08	Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	99%	99%	99%	100%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	98%	95%	94%
HT12	Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	92%	96%	89%	92%	GREEN	93%	GREEN	90%	80%	94%
HT14	Member Enquiries completed within 20 working days*	79%	74%	62%	77%	AMBER	75%	AMBER	85%	75%	61%
DT01	Percentage of public enquiries for Highways Maintenance completed online	70%	67%	64%	64%	GREEN	69%	GREEN	60%	55%	69%
DT03	Percentage of concessionary bus pass applications completed online	77%	72%	75%	80%	GREEN	77%	GREEN	75%	65%	77%
DT04	Percentage of speed awareness courses bookings completed online	92%	90%	90%	91%	GREEN	91%	GREEN	85%	75%	89%

\* This area of work is under a centralised team within the Deputy Chief Executive's Department who work closely with the Highways & Transportation Division. It covers all enquiries from MPs, Councillors and other elected officials as well as enquiries from members of the public directed to Cabinet Members or members of senior management. Enquiries generally relate to constituency matters, such as requests for information or feedback on works taking place in an area. We also receive many requests for changes to speed limits and road layouts.

HT14 – With a significant number of enquiries coming from MPs, performance in June and July was affected by the pre-general election period (purdah) when it is not possible to correspond with MPs on enquiries they had raised regarding constituency matters. Where it was appropriate and constituent contact details were available, responses were sent directly to them instead. Performance improved substantially in August when this was no longer an issue.

## Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Year to Date	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper   Lower	
HT01b	Potholes due to be repaired (arising from routine faults reported)	3,327	2,870	1,659	1,242	1,129	<b>10,227</b>	<b>Above</b>	6,150	4,350
HT02b	Routine faults reported by the public due for completion	8,868	6,249	5,011	5,624	4,803	<b>30,555</b>	<b>Above</b>	24,600	19,000
HT06	Number of new enquiries requiring further action (total new faults)	8,247	7,403	7,279	7,306	5,688	<b>35,923</b>	Yes	40,600	33,900
HT07	Work in Progress (active enquiries/jobs) - end of month snapshot	11,621	10,875	9,976	8,077	<b>6,299</b>	N/a	Yes	6,700	5,500
HT08b	Emergency incidents attended	241	204	141	135	108	<b>829</b>	Yes	1,040	760
HT13	Streetwork permits issued	13,022	12,755	11,724	12,406	11,041	<b>60,948</b>	Yes	69,400	56,900

HT01b - We continued to see above expected demand in these areas mainly due to unseasonable weather events. Temperatures in the Summer were below the average with some periods of heavier than expected rainfall.

HT02b – Although above expectations for the year since April, for the month of August on its own, reported faults were within the expected range, reflecting the easing of demand generated from new enquiries.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Corporate Director</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>	<b>Simon Jones</b>	<b>Rob Thomas</b>

**Key Performance Indicators - Rolling 12 months except WM08 (Quarterly) and WM10 (Half-yearly)**

Ref	Indicator description	Aug-23	Nov-23	Feb-24	May-24	Aug-24	RAG	Target	Floor
WM01	Municipal waste* recycled and composted	42%	42%	42%	42%	<b>43%</b>	AMBER	50%	42%
WM02	Municipal waste* converted to energy	57%	58%	57%	57%	<b>56%</b>	GREEN	49%	44%
01+02	Municipal waste diverted from landfill	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%	99.7%	<b>99.2%</b>	GREEN	99%	95%
WM03	Waste recycled and composted at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	44%	45%	46%	47%	<b>51%</b>	GREEN	50%	42%
WM04	Percentage HWRC waste recycled/composted & wood converted to energy at biomass facility	66%	66%	65%	65%	<b>66%</b>	AMBER	70%	65%
WM08	Overall score for mystery shopper assessment of Household Waste Recycling Centres	96%	97%	98%	98%	<b>97%</b>	GREEN	97%	90%
WM10	Customer satisfaction with HWRCs	No Survey	<b>Dec-23</b> 96%	No Survey	<b>Jun-24</b> <b>96%</b>	No Survey	GREEN	95%	90%

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

WM01 – The KPI improved slightly to 43% due to improved recycling rates at HWRCs. The 50% target for this KPI is within the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Strategy agreed by the Kent Resource Partnership. The requirements of simpler recycling come into place in March 2026, and it is anticipated that recycling rates will gradually increase as all Waste Collection Authorities must comply.

WM03 & WM04 – HWRC recycling rates continue to improve as volumes brought in continue to increase. This includes an increase in inert recyclable materials (e.g. hardcore / DIY waste), now that charges to bring this material have been dropped, and an increase in wood recycling which previously all went for conversion to energy.



<b>Division</b>	<b>Corporate Director</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>	<b>Simon Jones</b>	<b>Rob Thomas</b>

**Activity Indicators (Rolling 12 months)**

Ref	Indicator description	Aug-23	Nov-23	Feb-24	May-24	Aug-24	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper   Lower	
WM05	Waste tonnage collected by District Councils	561,068	559,662	560,819	558,937	<b>561,212</b>	Yes	570,000	550,000
WM06	Waste tonnage collected at HWRCs	99,115	102,250	103,017	106,586	<b>109,205</b>	Yes	110,000	90,000
05+06	Total waste tonnage collected	660,183	661,912	663,836	665,523	<b>670,417</b>	Yes	680,000	640,000
WM07	Waste tonnage converted to energy at Allington Waste to Energy Plant	324,655	326,977	328,261	329,459	<b>331,310</b>	Yes	340,000	320,000
WM09	Wood Tonnage converted to energy at Biomass Facility	21,500	20,839	20,246	19,306	<b>15,784</b>	Below	25,000	21,000

WM09 – Whilst this figure is lower than expected, the reduction is positive as more wood has been recycled rather than converted to energy, which has been possible due to the types of wood waste received. Recycling is above energy recovery in the Waste Hierarchy.

<b>Division</b>	<b>Corporate Director</b>	<b>Cabinet Member</b>
<b>Environment &amp; Circular Economy</b>	<b>Simon Jones</b>	<b>Rob Thomas</b>

**Key Performance Indicator** (rolling 12-month total, reported one Quarter in arrears)

Ref	Indicator description	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	RAG	Target	Floor
EW2	Greenhouse Gas emissions from KCC estate (excluding schools) in tonnes	13,550	12,637	11,773	11,477	11,251	10,985	GREEN	11,024	12,126

EW2 – The greenhouse gas emission target for Quarter 1 has been met with a total of 10,985 tCO2e of greenhouse gas emissions compared with the target of 11,024 tCO2e. Electricity generated by KCC’s Bowerhouse II, and Kings Hill solar farms are having a very positive impact on offsetting KCC’s emissions and overall emissions currently remain ahead of the target. KCC and our traded companies still need to continue to progress the reduction of estate and vehicle emissions to ensure we remain on track to meet our Net Zero 2030 target.

**Key Performance Indicators** (monthly)

Ref	Indicator description	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	YTD 24/25	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
EW1	Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days	87%	92%	85%	95%	92%	89%	AMBER	90%	80%

EW1 – Performance has improved since additional staffing resources were introduced in mid-April and with a further resource increase in June, performance is expected to continue to improve as the year progresses.

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

**To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 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: **None**

Future Pathway of report: **County Council**

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):** The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 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 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):

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 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 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 1: Proposed Record of Decision

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

Appendix 3: Kent & Medway Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment 2019

Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment

## 10. Contact details

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[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



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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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  - 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>

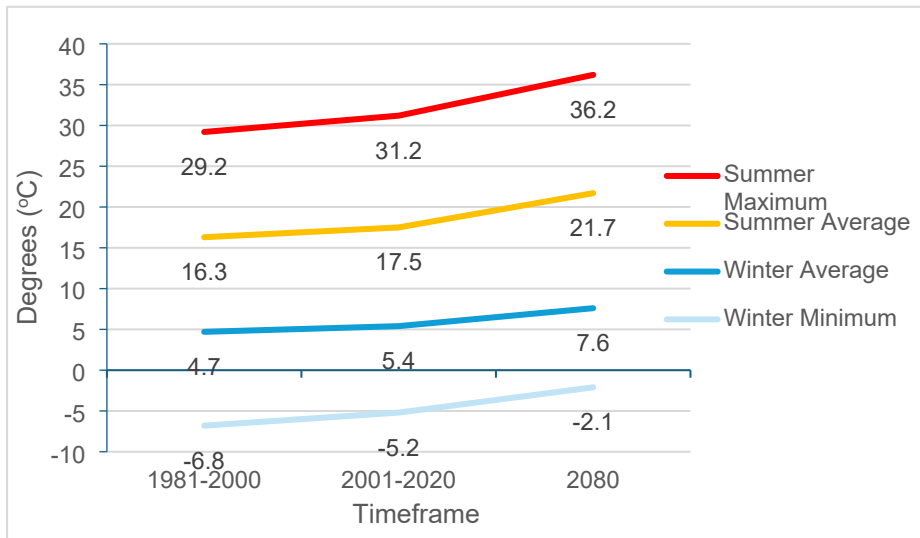
<sup>6</sup> KCC. 23 May 2019. 145. Motions for Time Limited Debate – Climate Emergency: <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=91285>

- 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:



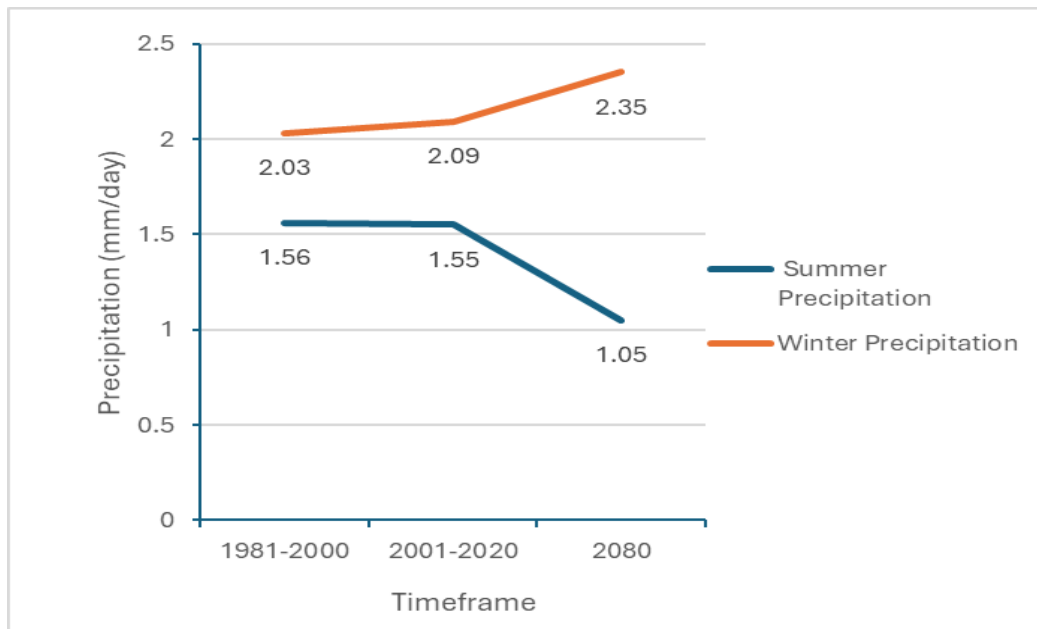
Temperature	Change (°C)
Summer Maximum	+7 (+6.2 - +8.2)
Summer Average	+4.2 (+3.7 - +5.0)
Winter Minimum	+4.7 (+3.5 - +6.1)
Winter Average	+2.9 (+2.1 - +3.5)
Annual Average	+3.4 (+3.0 - +4.0)

<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)

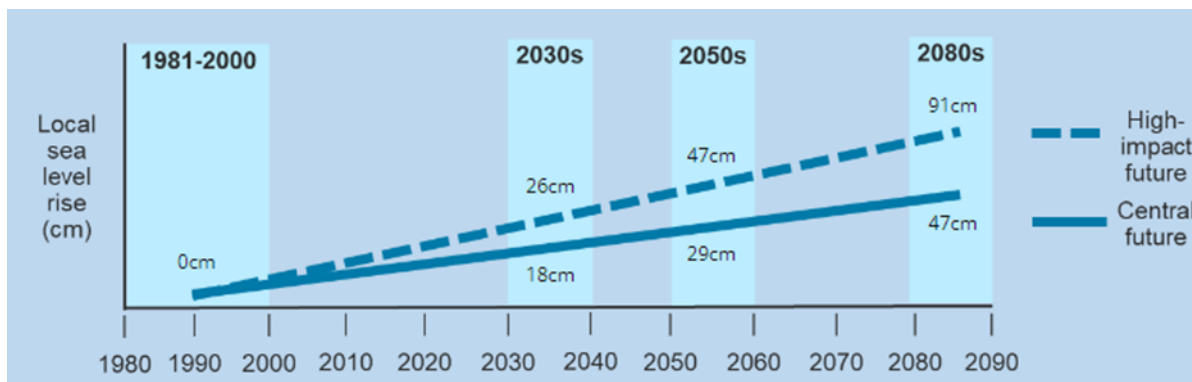
<sup>8</sup> IPCC. 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Glossary: [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGIII\\_Annex-I.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/repor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

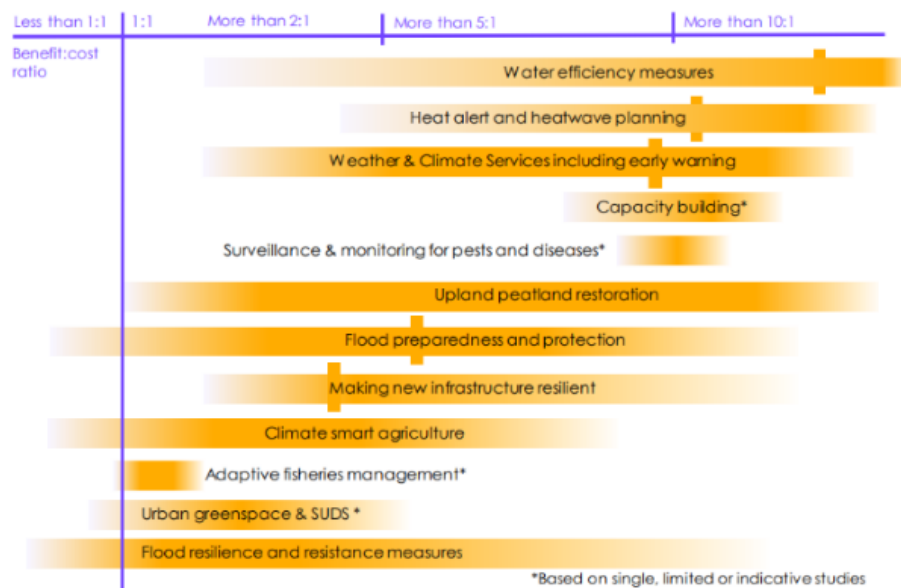


Figure 1. Benefit-cost ratios of adaptation measures included in the UK Government's Third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3).

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.

<b>Objective 2: Integrate climate change adaptation into KCC's decision-making and service delivery</b>			
<b>Create action plans to address risks identified during risk assessments</b>	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.	All divisions	Quantity of service-level action plans created.
<b>Embed climate change adaptation into decision-making activity</b>	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.	Environment and Circular Economy	Quantity of future key decisions with climate change adaptation considered.
<b>Embed justified and proportionate contractual requirements for climate adaptation into commissioning and procurement frameworks</b>	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.	Environment and Circular Economy, Commercial and Procurement	Justified and proportionate contractual requirements and supporting guidance for procurement and commissioning staff. Quantity of awarded contracts with climate risk considered.
<b>Explore implementing enhanced proactive maintenance and continuing improvement in Kent's Highways Asset Management Plan</b>	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.	Highways and Transport	Percentage change in Highways maintenance budget invested in preservation over renewal.



<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)

# 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

## 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

**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 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

**Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions**

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

**Are there negative impacts for age?**

Yes

**Details of negative impacts for Age**

Any resources provided digitally via the KCC website may not reach certain age groups due digital inaccessibility.

**Mitigating Actions for Age**

Non-digital copies to be provided to users that cannot access digital resources online, upon request.

**Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age**

David Bennett

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

**Are there negative impacts for Disability?**

Yes

**Details of Negative Impacts for Disability**

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.

**Mitigating actions for Disability**

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.

**Responsible Officer for Disability**

David Bennett

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

**Are there negative impacts for Sex**

No

**Details of negative impacts for Sex**

Not Applicable

**Mitigating actions for Sex**

Not Applicable

<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: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 14 November 2024**

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

Key decision: 24/00094 **Yes** - *Adoption of a new major strategy*

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: **None**

Future Pathway of report: **Cabinet**

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):** The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 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 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.
  - 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
- 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):

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 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 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: Environment Plan v5 Appendix 1 Environmental Achievements

Appendix 3:Environment Plan v5 Appendix 2 Governance Structure for the Environment Plan  
Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment

## 9 Contact details

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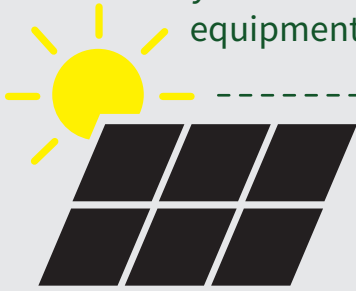
# Environment Achievements in 2023/24

## 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**

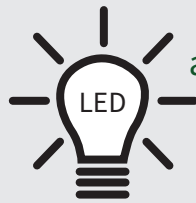
**Opened 2nd Solar park** near Kings Hill which will generate enough renewable energy for **750 homes**



**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

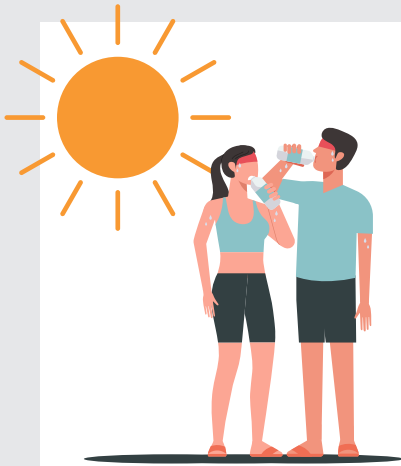
Developed **KCC's 1st** organisational **climate change adaptation plan**

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



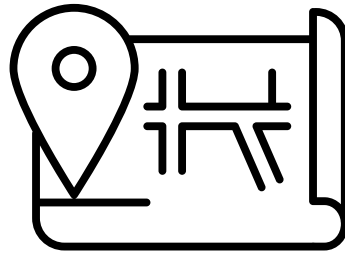
Shaped **national guidance** for local authorities participating in the **Adaptation Reporting Power pilot**





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**

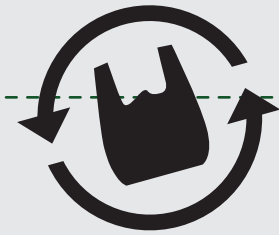
**96%** satisfaction with recycling centres and award-winning online booking system



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

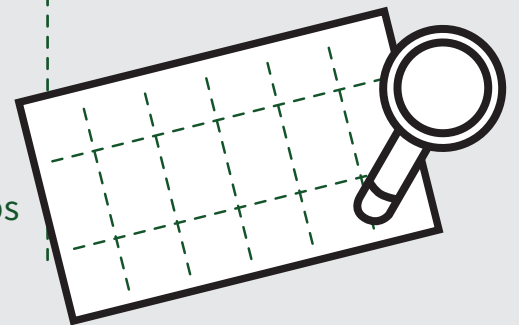


**VAPE recycling introduced** enabling capture of vapes in residual waste and avoidance of fires at recycling centres

 **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



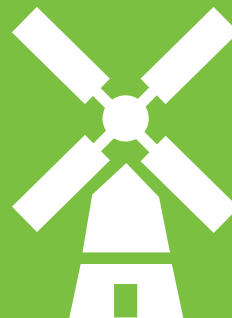
**Discovery of the sea god**

**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**

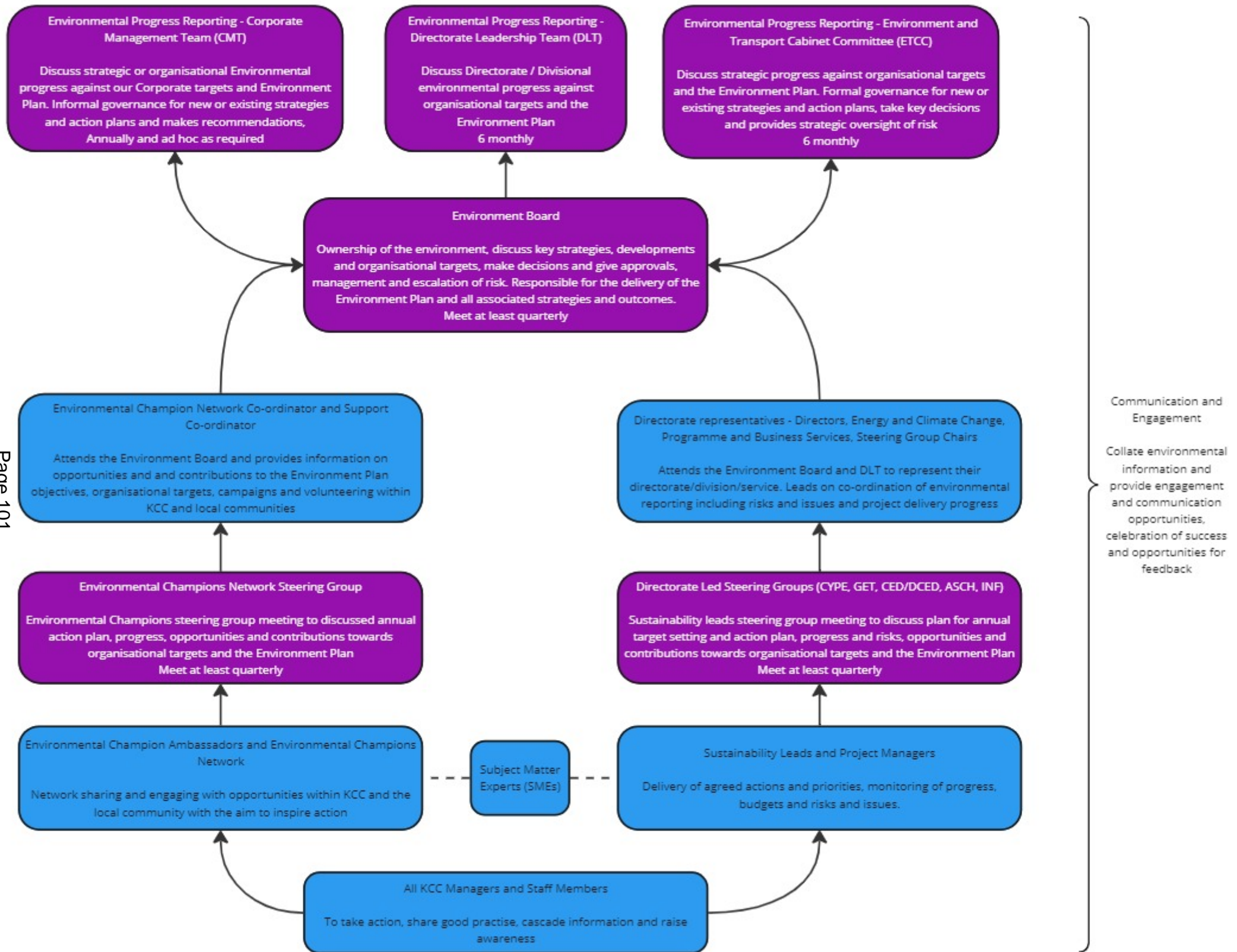


**2 windmills restored** to their former glory, others maintained and **2,322** respondents to windmills consultation



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# 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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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.

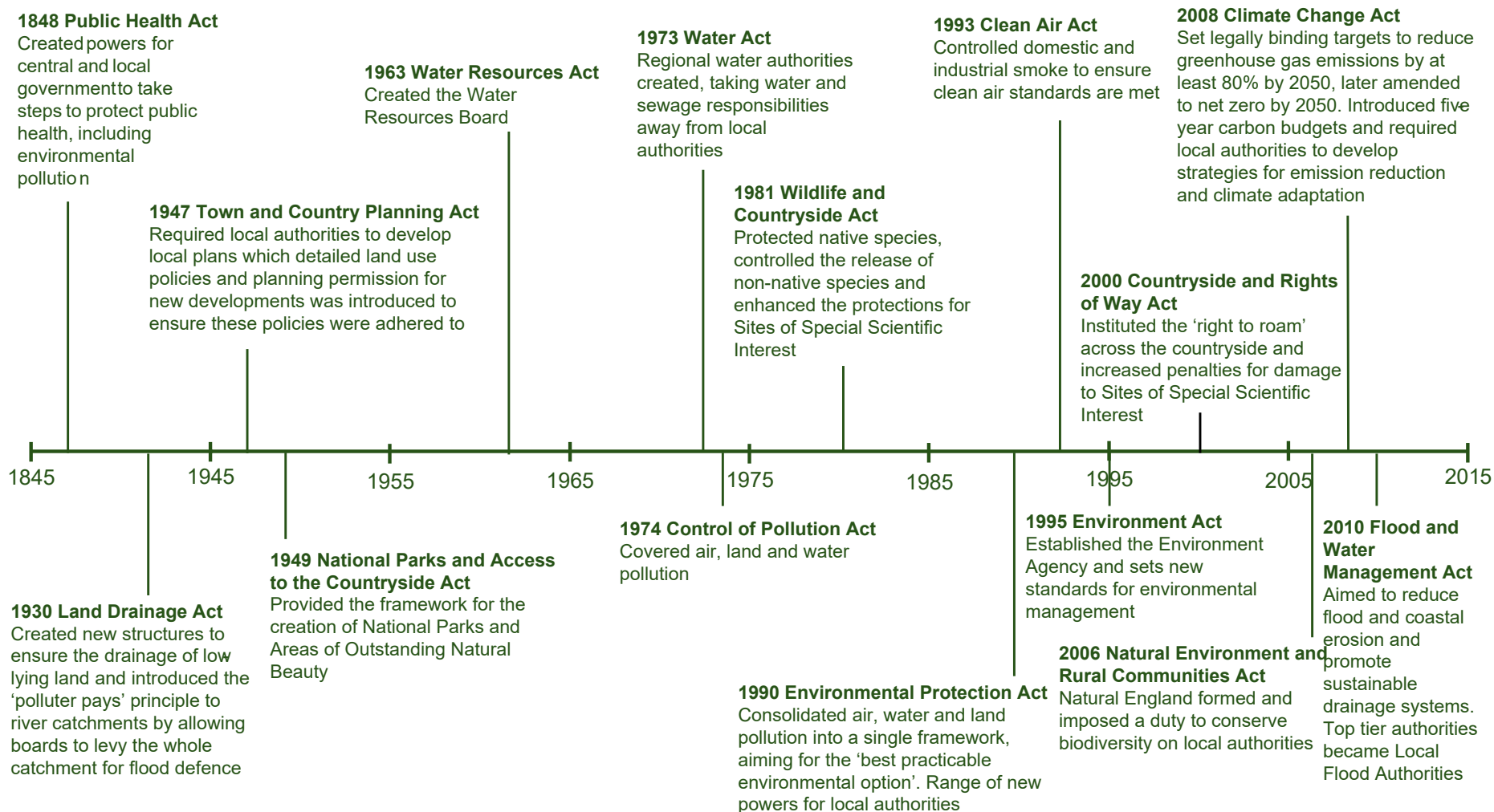
However, despite these significant efforts, Kent's environment continues to face unprecedented challenges. Climate change is bringing warmer seasons, more extreme weather patterns leading to flooding and drought and coastal erosion from rising sea levels. Air and water pollution from traffic and industrial 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.



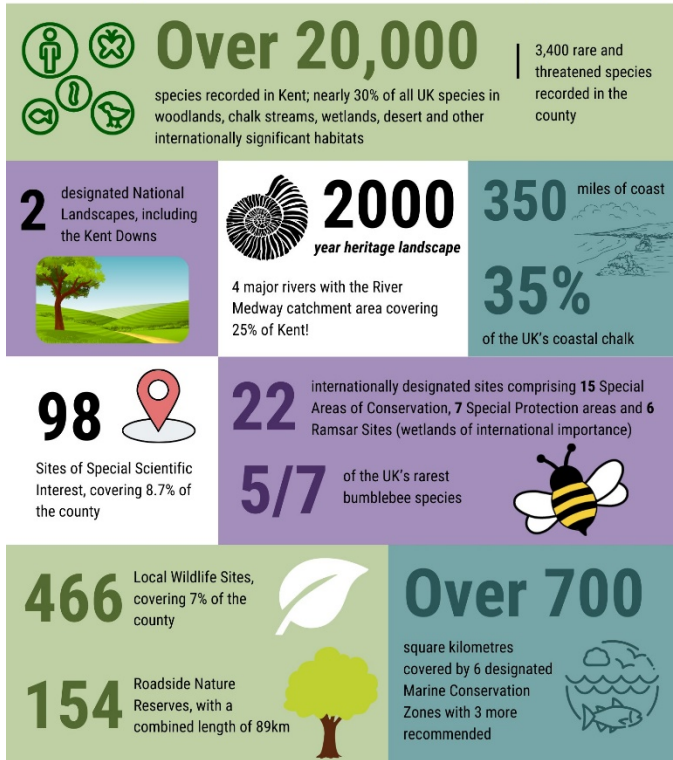
The pace of legislative change accelerated significantly between the Environmental Protection Act in 1990 and the Flood and Water Act in 2010, in response to international commissions and treaties, pan-national directives and national issues. With this acceleration has increasingly come additional powers,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

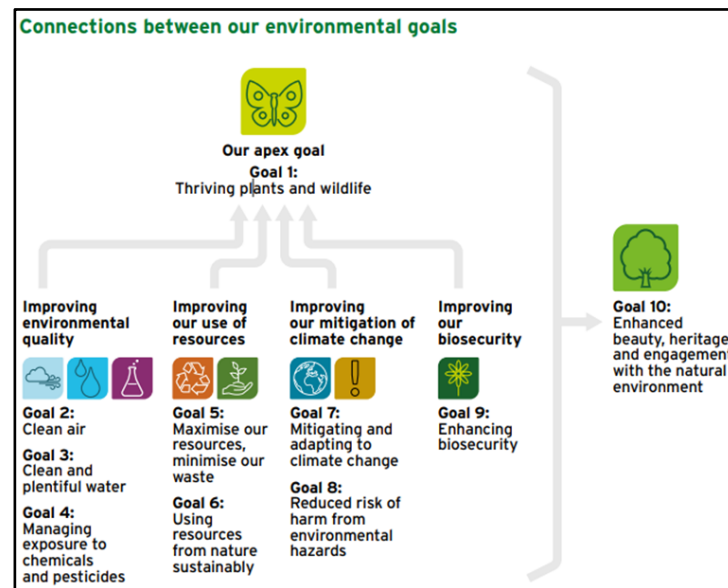


Figure 1 – the 10 environmental goals contained in the 25-year Environment Plan

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

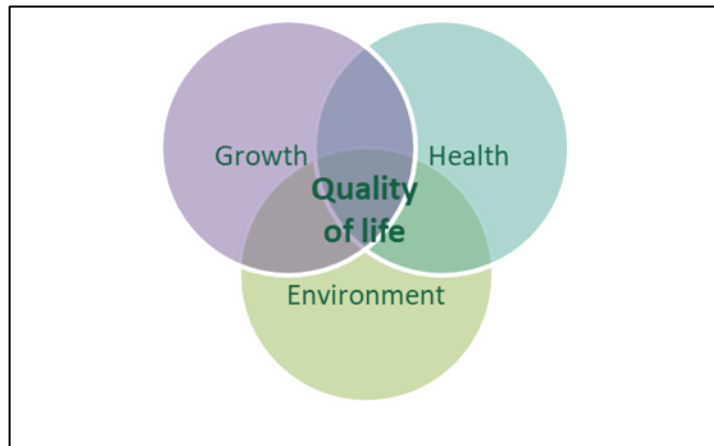
Following the Green Finance Strategy, the government released the [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#), the first revision of the UK's 25-Year Environment Plan. This delivery plan outlines how the government will collaborate with landowners, communities and businesses to achieve environmental goals. 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.



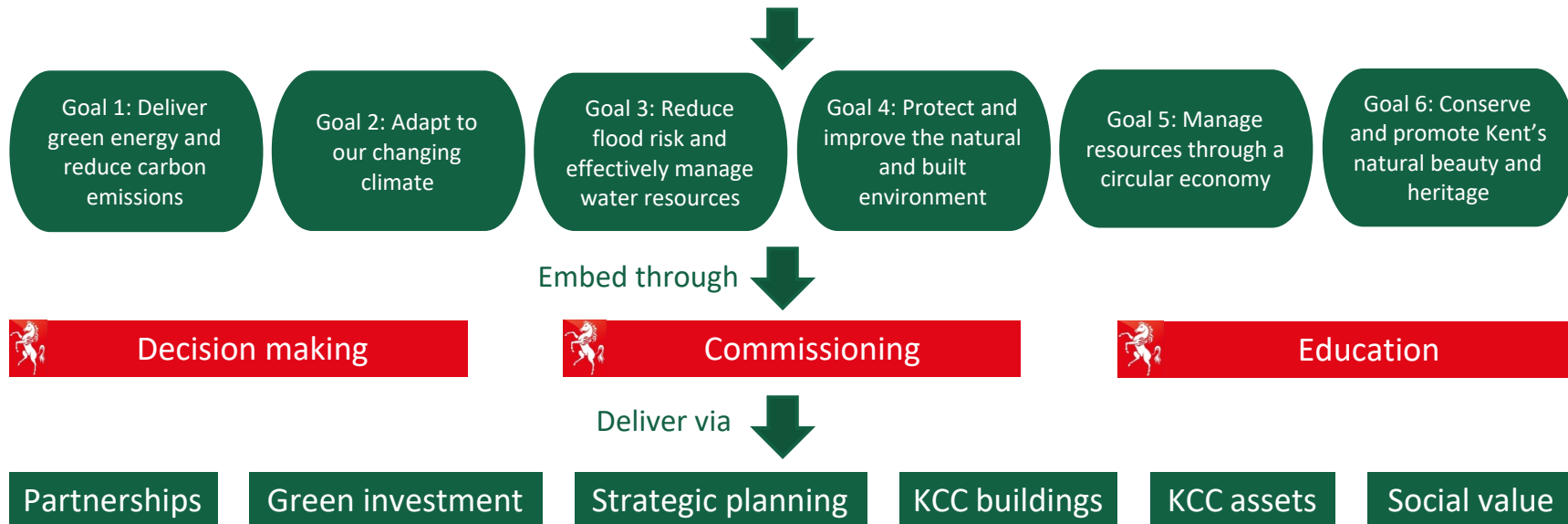
Much like the government's approach, our environment plan recognises the interconnected principles of environment, growth and health. By integrating these principles, the plan aims to align with existing and new strategies, leading to outcomes that are more sustainable, affordable and equitable. By working 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



Page 114

#### 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.

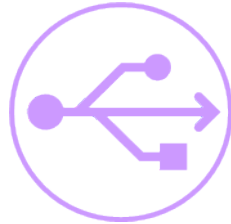
Goal 1



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

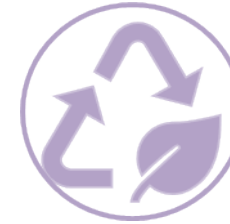
Goal 4



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

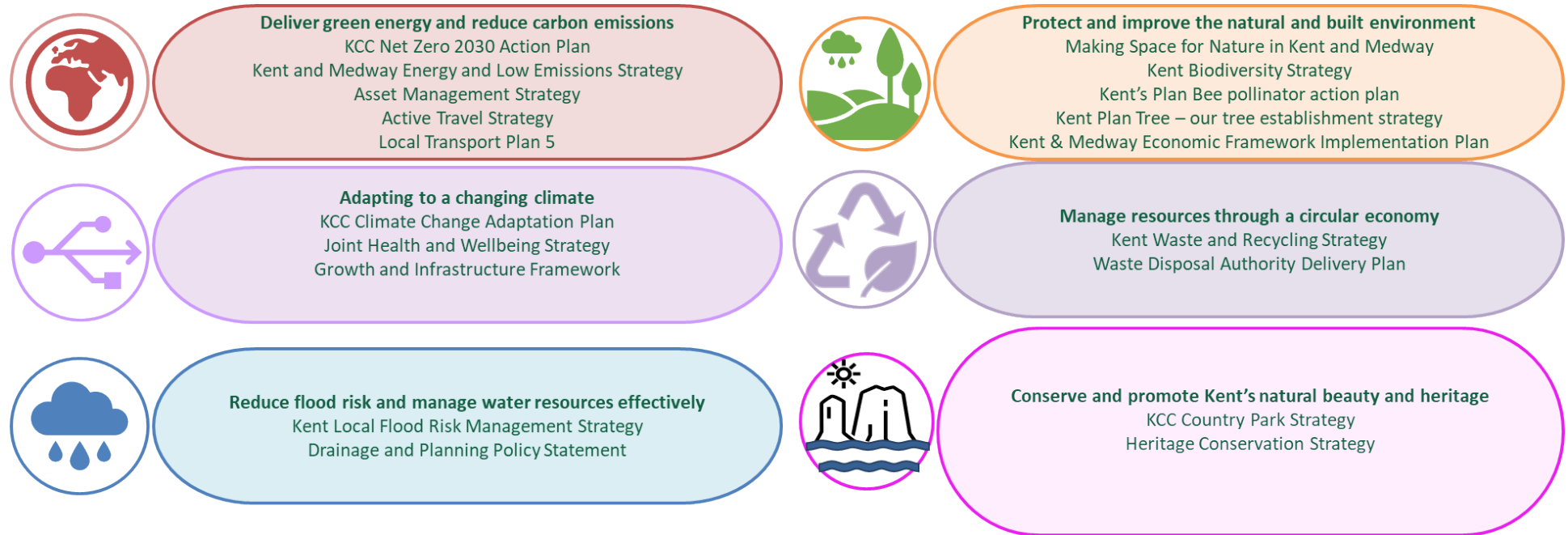


Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage

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





# 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

## 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 of Growth Environment and Transport**

**To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee**

**Subject: Update on Kent's Plan Bee**

Key decision: No

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: N/A

Electoral Division: County-wide

**Summary:** Kent's Plan Bee is the County Council's pollinator action plan. It sets out the contribution we can make in helping to address the decline of pollinator species. This report provides an update to members and an overview of the plans for future work.

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note and make comment on the content of this paper and its appendices.

## **1. Introduction to Kent's Plan Bee**

- 1.1 In July 2019, Kent County Council adopted Kent's Plan Bee<sup>1</sup>, our pollinator action plan, which sets out the contribution the County Council can make in helping to slow and reverse the decline of pollinators in Kent.
- 1.2 The Plan responded to the National Pollinator Strategy for England and the call to local authorities to use their regulatory powers and other functions to deliver, inform and engage others to participate in work that will benefit pollinators. The Plan recognised that the County Council, with its wide-ranging responsibilities, services and land holdings, was well placed to make a significant contribution directly through changes to its land management activities, but also provide leadership on this issue within the county, in order to safeguard our native pollinators.
- 1.3 Consequently, Plan Bee set out to:
  - Make the county council a community leader in action for pollinators, leading the way in its own operations and property and by supporting others.

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<sup>1</sup> [Kent's Plan Bee pollinator action plan - Kent County Council](#)

- Ensure that pollinators' needs are always considered throughout Kent County Council's work and services.
- Put the conservation of pollinators and their habitats at the heart of the council's land management and planning.
- Make Kent County Council a significant contributor to the recovery of pollinator populations which will support biodiversity and the need of the county's agriculture.

1.4 In November 2022, Kent County Council republished the Plan with updated objectives, reflecting the achievements to date and how the Council would build on these:

- Manage the land it owns, controls and influences in a way which benefits pollinators' habitat and forage.
- Work with partners across the county to better protect pollinators and improve the habitats on which they rely.
- Raise awareness of the importance of pollinators and the need to safeguard these vital insects, mobilising the people of Kent to take their own action within communities, workplaces, schools and homes.
- Monitor and evaluate its action for pollinators, so that we understand the impact of our efforts and direct continued action and resources to where they are most needed.

1.5 Kent's Plan Bee began as a member led initiative by Sean Holden who now chairs a cross-party member group which, together with the Cabinet Member for Environment, oversees this work.

1.6 Kent's Plan Bee is a cross-Council collaborative effort, relying on the actions of services with the greatest opportunities to assist our pollinators. In particular, the highway soft landscape team, facilities management, household waste recycling centres and country parks.

1.7 The delivery of Plan Bee is supported by officers from the Natural Environment and Coast Team within the Environment and Circular Economy Division (GET). Central to this is the, now, long-standing secondment from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, providing expert input to ensure our efforts are best informed and directed.

1.8 During 2024, a new officer was recruited by the Trust who would work for Plan Bee on a full-time basis. Whilst this resulted in a six-month hiatus to some of the initiatives, work did still progress where this was possible. The details of this and plans for the coming year are outlined in this report to Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee.

## **2. No Mow May 2024**

2.1 Plantlife runs the No Mow May campaign to encourage people to stop mowing for a month and to allow naturally occurring wildflowers to bloom. A lawn with long grasses and wildflowers provides food for pollinators, tackles pollution, reduces urban heat extremes and locks away carbon below ground.

- 2.2 Since 2022, Kent County Council (KCC) has promoted the campaign and encouraged both our own estate and the public to take part. The Council has also conducted surveys of Kent's residents and organisations to find out who is taking part, where they are based, and why they decided to stop mowing.
- 2.3 This year we received 324 pledges from residents and organisations seeing a 19% increase from 2023. It is estimated that 141,841m<sup>2</sup> land was pledged for No Mow May, with Canterbury once again remaining the top pledger and Folkstone and Hythe once again pledging the greatest area of lawn.
- 2.4 The main motivation for participation remained “growing more flowers for pollinators” for another year and was selected by 90% of participants. Other reasons chosen included wildflowers aesthetic beauty and practical reasons. The balance of ecological consciousness and visual appeal underscores the campaigns multifaceted impact.
- 2.5 This year, participants went beyond lawn maintenance and created wildlife zones and grew wildflower pots and planters. Additional actions such as these contribute to a more comprehensive ecological impact beyond the confines of lawns. Furthermore, 80% of participants had previously engaged in No Mow May campaigns - this high retention rate is positive for achieving sustained ecological benefits.

	2024	2023	2022
<b>Residents participating</b>	307	252	324
<b>Organisations participating</b>	15	8	16
<b>Total participants</b>	324	272	340
<b>Change from previous year</b>	19% increase	20% reduction	n/a
<hr/>			
<b>Areas pledged</b>	141,841m <sup>2</sup> (543 tennis courts)	131,510m <sup>2</sup> (503 tennis courts)	129,865m <sup>2</sup> (497 tennis courts)
<b>Change from previous year</b>	7.8% increase	1.2% increase	n/a
<hr/>			
<b>District with most pledges</b>	Canterbury	Canterbury	Canterbury
<b>District with greatest area</b>	Folkstone & Hythe	Sevenoaks	Folkstone & Hythe

- 2.6 Various Kent County Council departments actively participated in No Mow May this year. These departments included country parks, waste and recycling, KCC estates, and highways. Collectively, they preserved approximately 300 hectares of wildflower-rich grassland.

- 2.7 Notably, six country parks contributed 565,500m<sup>2</sup> of wildflower meadows and grasslands, allowing diverse wildlife to thrive. Kent Highways left more than 450km of road verges in rural and urban areas unmown through May. The soft landscape team within highways also monitored pollinators on specific unmown verges, aiming to understand the benefits of not mowing for pollinators and local wildlife.
- 2.8 There was also positive involvement from 36 Kent County Council estate-owned sites, including offices, libraries, and education centres.
- 2.9 The No Mow May campaign has witnessed a notable uptake in engagement, reflecting the growing commitment of the council, residents and organisations to pollinator conservation.

### **3. Public engagement 2024**

- 3.1 Since 2021, Kent's Plan Bee has engaged with the public through its Facebook page. The page now has 1,939 followers, with reach this year exceeding 56,000 people. Interaction peaked in May during the No Mow May campaign.
- 3.2 The Facebook page raises awareness of action that can be taken to help pollinators and also promotes what the authority is doing itself to deliver against Plan Bee's objectives.

### **4. Rare bumblebee sighting**

- 4.1 As mentioned above, Kent Highways have been undertaking monitoring of verges. Over the summer this survey had a confirmed recording of the Shrill Carder Bee on one of the Plan Bee conservation verges on Thompsett Way, Queenborough. This was the first recording sighting of this species on this verge.

The Shrill Carder Bee one of the country's rarest bumblebees with only a few scattered and isolated populations – with North Kent being one of these five sites. This record shows that action taken by Highways to extend pollinator habitat and forage, and use these as networks for the insects, through conservation verges does indeed deliver positive outcomes.

### **5. Work plan for 2024-25 and onwards**

- 5.1 With the Plan Bee officer now in post and working on a full-time basis, delivery under the action plan can continue.
- 5.2 A key element of the workplan for the next year is the introduction of monitoring and evaluation activity so that we are able to measure the impact of our actions.

Highways have already commenced work on this, but a wider programme of annual pollinator surveys will be established. Surveys will be set up at selected sites across County Council owned and managed land, to monitor the effect of land management practices on pollinator numbers and provide an indicator of the impact of Plan Bee.

This will not only boost the national survey effort but will also identify which of our own measures are most effective in boosting pollinator numbers. We will look to Kent County Council's Environmental Champions network and staff working at the chosen sites for volunteers in the first instance, and full training and support will be made available. We also hope Kent Members will sign up to assist.

- 5.3 Work will also resume on the Kent Pollinator Pledge - a self-guiding toolkit with advice that enables the development of action to support pollinators. In the first instance this will be designed for, and promoted to, the county's parish and town councils and community groups, but over the years specific guidance for new target audiences, such as schools, businesses, farmers etc, will be added

It is hoped that this will create a network of activity across the county and, through the pledges, we can monitor what is actually being done at the local level.

- 5.4 The Plan Bee officer will continue to identify opportunities across the Council's soft estate to improve habitat for pollinators and will support services in designing and implementing management changes. They will also continue to work collaboratively across the county with partners to support strategic project work for the benefit of pollinators and encourage the uptake of pollinator action plans at the district level.

## **6. Financial Implications**

- 6.1 Kent's Plan Bee sets out the County Council's intentions for how services and functions can be delivered for the benefit of pollinators. It is recognised that any changes must not place undue or new financial burdens on the authority.

- 6.2 Resources required for delivery of the work programme largely relate to staff time (including the secondment costs) – these are already identified within existing revenue budgets.

## **7. Legal implications**

- 7.1 No legal implications relating to this work programme have been identified.

## **8. Equalities implications**

- 8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed for Kent's Plan Bee and was published at the time of the decision to adopt the Plan.

This identified that there will be limited negative impact from the Pollinator Action Plan and these impacts can be reduced or avoided all together with appropriate management.

## **9. Other corporate implications**

- 9.1 No other corporate implications have been identified.

## **10. Governance**

10.1 This is a paper for briefing purposes only.

## 11. Conclusions

- 11.1 Plan Bee is now in its fifth year as a formal action plan. Services continue to amend their approaches to management for the benefit of pollinators and, anecdotally, we are seeing the results of this.
- 11.2 The introduction of a more structured and coordinated approach to monitoring pollinators and the results of our actions, will provide us with a more complete understanding of where efforts would best be targeted and built on.

## 12. Recommendation(s):

- 12.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to note and make comment on the content of this paper and its appendices.

## 13. Contact details

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From: Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport  
Phil Lightowler, Head of Public Transport

To: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 November 2024**

Subject: **Better Buses Bill – Bus Franchising**

**For Information**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** None

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

**Electoral Division:** Countywide

**Summary:**

Under the Buses Act 2017, the ability of (Transport Co-ordinating local Authorities) TCAs to take back control of their local bus networks, closing down the commercial bus network, was provided through bus franchising. However, due to complexity and cost, this ability in the first place was only provided to (Mayal Combined Authorities) MCAs. However, the new government plan to widen this ability to franchise, to all TCA. The new government, taking account of the time and cost to produce franchising assessments, is to streamline the process and in its guidance provide TCAs with more franchising models, in the hope this reduces time taken and cost.

However, moving to a bus franchise does require careful consideration by a TCA, as the expectation will be in the wider public domain that such a franchise will deliver an improved network, compared to current and that significant investment will flow into it. Therefore before embarking on such a process, the benefits have to be clear and the long term funding to support such a network needs to be in place.

It should also be noted that even with a streamlined process and funding in place, a franchising assessment . implementation of a franchise is a project that could take 2-5 years to fully deliver.

Officers will monitor the Better Buses Bill and the 26-29 Spending Review to see if conditions exist for a franchise case, which would deliver an improved network compared to the present EP scheme. Currently there are no defined plans for franchising in Kent, however, should the conditions exist for a franchise network, then officers will bring forward proposals.

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to note and make comment on the content of the report.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper has been produced for information only and outlines plans by the new government, to change aspects of the 2017 Buses Bill, with the aim to improve the access to bus franchising for all transport co-ordinating (TCA) local authorities.
- 1.2 This short paper outlines what bus franchising is, how it was applied in the Buses Bill 2017, the revisions to process planned in the forthcoming Better Buses Bill and the current position in respect to KCC.

## **2. Bus Franchising - Background**

- 2.1 The Buses Act of 2017, alongside a number of changes to the de-regulated bus market, introduced the ability of designated authorities, having due regard to a set out process, to franchise all or part of their local bus network.
- 2.2 Bus franchising is where a local bus network, defined geographically, sees the de-regulated bus network switched off. This means that commercial bus operators are not allowed to provide buses services commercially. Only the designated local authority can provide such services, and it may choose to do this by contracting operations to a commercial bus provider i.e. to franchise.
- 2.3 The bus network in London, operates on this principle, with Transport for London planning, promoting, and delivering the bus network, through a range of contractors.
- 2.4 In a franchised bus network, the local authority is the controller of the network, so is able to define routes, frequencies, vehicle types, brand, stops, customer service policy, vehicle standards and fares. It has overall control of the network.
- 2.5 Depending on the approach to franchising, an element of risk can be apportioned to the contracted providers of the franchised network, or the local authority can take the full financial risk of providing the network. In the case of London (and now Manchester), the financial risk remains with Transport for London. Operational/Service risk is apportioned to the contracted providers, through a service performance delivery regime.
- 2.6 A franchised network, even where an element of financial risk is apportioned to the contract providers, is one where the expectation of the users/community is that the local authority contracting will deliver significant improvements to the local bus network, above and beyond what could be achieved through a bus enhanced partnership. Therefore, the body undertaking the franchise must have a funding/revenue regime, where it can be sure that it can finance its network plans, otherwise the cost will fall on the local taxpayer.
- 2.7 To gain approval to move to a franchised network, it must demonstrate that it will deliver a better network than the de-regulated market and that it has tried all avenues to get operators to improve outcomes.
- 2.8 Therefore in the Buses Act 2017, the power to franchise was only made available to mayoral combined authorities (MCA), on the basis that they would



have the financial resources to deliver such a network, and that by being mayoral led this would link to local mayoral priorities (as voted upon) and would cover large geographical areas.

- 2.9 To date, only Transport for Greater Manchester has progressed to implementation of the powers and are currently delivering this new network. It should be noted that in delivering this new network, they were supported by large settlements from national government, for example BSIP and sustainable cities.
- 2.10 Other authorities looking to franchise are Merseyside, South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire, Peterborough & Cambridge and the Northeast. At this moment in time, none of these are at implementation stage.
- 2.11 To date, outside of London, delivery of franchising has been slow, with Manchester the only authority now delivering its own franchise network. The assessment process has been cumbersome, complex and has required significant investment, running into multi-millions, with many consultants required to deliver a franchise proposal and so that it can meet approval. It has then required significant national funding to deliver the planned improvements.

### **3. Better Buses Bill – Revisions to Franchising**

- 3.1 On the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024, the new government announced that through a Better Buses Bill, they would be making changes, so that Bus Franchising would be open to all local authorities, that they were changing guidance on franchising, providing a range of franchising models for authorities and were changing legislation, so that current funding for bus services provided by government could be delegated to local authorities more easily.
- 3.2 In respect to franchising, the major change is that franchising will not solely be available to mayoral combined authorities, but available to all authorities who are Transport Co-ordinating Authorities i.e. counties/unitaries (but not district/town councils).
- 3.3 Under the current arrangement, an MCA, before it can access its franchising powers has to apply to the SoS for approval to access these powers and then approval to undertake a franchising assessment. Under the Better Buses Bill, as well as the powers being available to all TCAs, the only requirement on an authority in respect to the SoS will be to seek approval to undertake a franchising assessment. The Bill also sets out the considerations the SoS will need to consider, in approving such a request:
  - *that the LTA has a clear vision for improving buses – and what this is.*
  - *that the LTA has identified the kind of franchising it wants to pursue.*
  - *that the LTA has a plan for how it intends to develop the franchising assessment and has identified, after discussion with DfT officials what support is required from DfT.*
  - *that a particular office holder (for example the Leader of the Council or the portfolio holder for transport) is responsible for the development of the scheme.*

- 3.4 If approval is granted under the Better Buses Bill, the assessment process is to be streamlined. Currently those undertaking a franchise assessment, are required to consider a “do nothing option,” which compares the franchise proposed against the de-regulated market. However, this will be revised, so that the do-nothing option, is now compared to the Enhanced Partnership in force in that area. This change recognises that all authorities in England, may now have an EP in force.
- 3.5 The franchise assessment process/business case will be streamlined (with further detail yet to be developed), which is aimed at reducing the cost of preparing a franchise, reducing the time taken and is designed to be easier to understand.
- 3.6 As now, bus operators will be able to bring forward proposals for enhancements to the EP, which they believe will deliver the same outcomes as the authority’s franchise proposal. However, unlike at present, the operator proposal will be time limited, and should an authority withdraw its franchise proposal based on the operator proposal, the operators must deliver their proposal.
- 3.7 Revisions are being made to franchising guidance, so that a range of franchising options are available for local authority consideration. These will range from arrangements such as London/Manchester, to a “franchising light” model such as Jersey. This reflects that the cost of franchising, based on current model, is too expensive for a significant number of authorities, when considering the resources required to prepare the franchise assessment and that national funding may not be available for forward delivery/implementation of the network improvements.
- 3.8 The Better Buses Bill will also introduce requirements on authorities, that as part of franchising proposals, they need to consider the security of passengers, particularly women and girls and that they also must take account of bus driver welfare.

#### **4. KCC Considerations**

- 4.1 Even with changes to bus franchising, the franchising of a network is a long-term commitment and should KCC wish to pursue this option in the future, it will have to assure itself that it has the financial resources to first prepare a franchising assessment and then subsequently deliver a network. The Better Buses Bill will reduce the cost of the assessment process, but it will still be a significant cost and involve significant consultant time.
- 4.2 It will need to determine the type of franchised arrangements it would be seeking, based on affordability and outcomes. The preferred arrangements may not meet the expectation of the public/members, so it will be necessary to balance user expectation compared to an affordable network.
- 4.3 In developing a franchise proposal, there will be a considerable period of time required to identify what a franchised network could deliver compared to the

current EP, what it would cost to enhance the network and how such enhancements would increase the revenue available to the franchise, so how to make it financially sustainable. Any proposal would require public consultation and key decisions, potentially a full county council decision, given its financial impact to the authority and the long-term nature.

- 4.4 Having undertaken such work and subject to approval, an application to the SoS could be made.
- 4.5 Should the SoS approve, then the operators would have a right to bring forward their own proposals to enhance the EP and KCC would have to give careful consideration to these. If these proposals were found to provide the same outcome, then the franchising proposal would need to be withdrawn.
- 4.6 This means that any franchising proposal requires significant officer/consultant/governance time, it is not something that could be delivered in a compressed/accelerated timeline. It is estimated that from deciding to move forward on a franchising assessment, through gaining SoS approval and associated governance that implementation would not commence for at least two to five years.
- 4.7 Once started, a franchise arrangement will represent a multi-year commitment, and it is not something reversed quickly. As such it should be seen as a significant and a long-term operation.

## **5. Current Position - Franchising**

- 5.1 Officers currently have no defined plans for the franchising of Kent's local bus network.
- 5.2 However, officers will review in detail the Better Buses Bill when it is brought forward, to determine the processes/costs need to bring forward a franchise. Officers will review the outcome of the 2026-29 Spending Review and the impact on bus service funding.
- 5.3 Should there be potential for an improved bus network in Kent, which could not be delivered by the current EP and taking due regard to the considerations set out above, then officers could bring to members a franchising options proposal.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 Under the Buses Act 2017, the ability of TCAs to take back control of their local bus networks, closing down the commercial bus network, was provided through bus franchising. However, due to complexity and cost, this ability in the first place was only provided to MCAs. However, the new government plan to widen this ability to franchise, to all TCA.
- 6.2 The new government, taking account of the time and cost to produce franchising assessments, is to streamline the process and in its guidance provide TCAs with more franchising models, in the hope this reduces time taken and cost.

- 6.3 However, moving to a bus franchise does require careful consideration by a TCA, as the expectation will be in the wider public that such a franchise will deliver an improved network, compared to current and that significant investment will flow into it. Therefore before embarking on such a process, the benefits have to be clear and the long term funding to support such a network needs to be in place.
- 6.4 It should also be noted that even with a streamlined process and funding in place, a franchising assessment and implementation of a franchise is a project that could take two to five years to fully deliver.
- 6.5 It should also be noted that once a franchise network is in place, it is not easy or quick to return to a commercial market.
- 6.6 Officers will monitor the Better Buses Bill and the 2026-29 Spending Review to see if conditions exist for a franchise case, which would deliver an improved network compared to the present EP scheme. Currently there are no defined plans for franchising in Kent, however, should the conditions exist for a franchise network, then officers will bring forward proposals.

**7. Recommendation(s):**

- 7.1 Members are asked to note and make comment on the content of the report.

**8. Contact details.**

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**From:** Neil Baker Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport  
 Haroona Chughtai Director of Highways and Transportation

**To:** Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee Meeting – 14  
 November 2024

**Subject:** Road Closures– Update Report

**Key decision:** No

**Classification:** Unrestricted

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

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

**Electoral Division:** All Districts.

**Summary:** This report updates the committee on the recommendation and questions raised at the last ETCC on 19 September 2024.

**Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the details of this report and actions being taken regarding Temporary Road Closures across the County.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 An update report detailing the progress of the recruitment of the Street Works Road Closure Inspectors and the current performance/actions to date was presented to ETCC on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024.
- 1.2 The debate at ETCC on 19<sup>th</sup> September raised the need for clarify of signage (who is responsible for the road works), the need for stringent enforcement of permits/road closures, the need for maximum fees to be levied for over runs, live time updates when Inspectors have visited sites and direct contact with the Inspectors. And whether emergency closures by utilities are really an emergency or an abuse of the system

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The works promoters are responsible for road works and it is their responsibility to ensure their sites are safe and signed correctly. Street Work Teams arrange the road space to carry out the works. FPNs will be issued against work promoters if/when signs are left on site.

**2.2 Application of S74 charges**

KCC Street Works Inspectors carry out daily inspections of numerous sites across the county. Where we find sites still in progress after the permit has

expired an occupancy inspection will be carried out and an over run warning issued to the works promoter. Once the site has been cleared the final over run charge is calculated and issued to the promoter.

KCC street works teams will look to apply the maximum charges where applicable. Legislation sets out the maximum daily charges that can be applied but the expectation is that an authority must be fair and reasonable. For example, it is not reasonable to apply a £5000 charge for 1 x sign left out.

### **Works within the carriageway charges**

Item	Description of Street	Amount (£) (each of first three days)	Amount (£) (each subsequent day)
1	Traffic-sensitive or protected street not in road categories 2, 3 or 4.	5,000	10,000
2	Other street not in road categories 2, 3 or 4.	2,500	2,500
3	Traffic-sensitive or protected street in road category 2.	3,000	8,000
4	Other street in road category 2.	2,000	2,000
5	Traffic-sensitive or protected street in road category 3 or 4.	750	750
6	Other street in road category 3 or 4.	250	250

*[Categories of road are based on how busy they are and the busier the road the greater the reinstatement specification that is required for that road. Roads are measured in **Million Standard Axels( MSA)** which is the average volume of large vehicles that use that road in a particular year. So for example our most traffic sensitive roads are a Type 1 = so the busier the road the greater the S74 charge as impact will be greater]*

### **Works within the Footway/verge charges**

Item	Description of street	Amount (£)
1.	Street not in road category 2, 3 or 4.	2,500
2.	Street in road category 2.	2,000
3.	Street in road category 3 or 4.	250

The maximum charges are applicable where the most disruption and inconvenience is caused. Application of charges and discounts in Kent are as follows –

- Works in progress Road Obstructed and causing delay (Traffic Control still in situ) = Full Charge
- Works in progress, Footway Obstructed and no safe alternative for Pedestrians = Full Charge
- Works incomplete but **not** causing obstruction = Up to half charge
- Works completed with signage left behind but no obstruction of road or footway = up to half charge
- Within legislation where there are five items of barrier or signage left on site with no obstruction to traffic or pedestrians then a £100 mitigated charge is applicable. *Year to date 2024/25, 23% of S74s have been issued within this category.*

In 2023/24 £410,000 was paid in S74 over run charges by work promoters.

### 2.3 Application of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)

A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) will be given where certain notifications are not received in a timely manner, where works are being carried out in breach of permit conditions or where works are being undertaken without a valid permit.

An FPN gives the contractor the opportunity to discharge any criminal liability for an offence by paying a penalty. This allows for resolution of minor infringements, without resorting to taking the matter to the Magistrates' Court, which can be both timely and costly to all parties involved.

The Street Works team permitting system allows us to easily monitor and issue FPNs where applicable and area inspectors will pick up FPNs for breach of conditions whilst carrying out their routine inspections.

In 2023/24 £248,000 was paid in FPN charges.

### 2.4 The objectives of FPNs are –

- Encourage accurate and timely permit information
- Improve the coordination of works
- Ensure compliance with permit conditions
- Improve data quality for all promoters
- Contribute to the wider aims of the TMA, including minimizing disruption arising from road and street works, by providing accurate and timely data to facilitate the coordination of works

Fixed Penalty Offences: A FPN will be issued for the following offences –

- Late works start – to be received within two hours of works commencing
- Late works stop – to be received within two hours of the site being clear
- Late or incorrect registration – to be received within ten days of reinstatement (both interim and permanent)
- Working in breach of permit conditions – may include but not limited to:
  - No courtesy board on display
  - Incorrect permit number displayed on site
  - Failure to manually control temporary lights where requested in permit conditions

- Not using the traffic management indicated on the permit
- Footway closed but permit does not indicate a footway closure
- Working outside of the times indicated in the permit conditions

The table below summarises the FPN offence codes –

Offence	Brief description	Full FPN £	Discount FPN amount £
Section 70 (6)	failure to give notice of completion of reinstatement. Correct reinstatement details must be registered within 10 days of the reinstatement being completed. Incorrect & Late registration will attract an FPN	£120	£80
Section 74 (7B)	Late notification of Start and stop notices	£120	£80
Regulation 19	working without permit a valid permit. Or working outside the dates agreed on the permit	£500	£300
Regulation 20	Breach of permit conditions	£120	£80

The fees can be reduced as shown in the last column if paid within 29 days.

- 2.5 As the Highways Authority, KCC, through its Streetworks Team, administers the process (for a fee) whilst also seeking to mitigate the impact of the proposed works and coordinate it with other prevailing/competing works.
- 2.6 It is important to note that when a works promoter meets the conditions of the permit, *KCC has no ability to refuse or reject the application and **as such the opportunity to reduce permits remains very limited especially during programmes of significant infrastructure modernisation which are stipulated by national regulators, such as broadband roll out.***
- 2.7 Between April 2024 and September 2024, there were a total of 4,461 emergency closures, which collectively amounted to 13,977 days. This results in an average duration of three days per closure. The number of KCC works closures during this period was 2,436 which collectively amounted to 4,893 days. This results in an average duration of two days. This information will continue to be provided in future reports to allow a comparison of average closure durations



- 2.8 Where planned closures are to be implemented as part of the permit application, advanced warning signs will be requested, as will formal and continued consultation and community engagement and this will include public meetings (on larger schemes) and letter drops to affected residents and businesses. Liaison with bus operators and other transport providers is required and any impact to local schools and businesses will also need notification and engagement. In some instances, we will request that additional signage is made up advising that “Business is Open as usual”. All this is to be undertaken by the works promoter.
- 2.9 Whilst KCC have no control on whether a road needs to be closed, utility companies are bound by the Safety Code when deciding to close a road.
- 2.10 KCC will be notified of an emergency road closure within two hours of the works having begun. If starting after 4.30pm we will be notified within t hours of the start of the next day (by 10.00am). Kent has no control over these emergency works and quite often Members and/or the Public will be aware of works before the Street Work teams. For emergency closures s14(2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 s14 requires the restrictions/prohibitions come into force without delay. When using this power it is not possible to give advance notice to anyone.
- 2.11 KCC Street Work teams challenge utilities when they deem the works as emergencies but we cannot refuse them access; these are not our works and we are not qualified to determine whether the works are emergency or not.
- 2.12 All utility companies have a legal right to access and maintain their plant.
- 2.13 The Road Closure Inspectors will complete an onsite inspection report using Street Manager, and this is sent directly to the works promoter. The works promoter will receive this within minutes of the Inspector sending it and for high risk sites a call will also be made to the promoter if there is no one on site. Each site attended by an Inspector will have a report completed and submitted.
- 2.14 There is no evidence of work promoters abusing the term “emergency” but other local authorities have raised concerns of this, particularly concerning broadband works where the definition of urgent is possibly being abused.

We have been advised that clarification as to what constitutes an immediate urgent permit is being discussed with DfT imminently.

- 2.15 Any issue within the highway is to be reported using our website [www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwayfaults) and the enquiry will be assigned to relevant officer/team to ensure the matter is dealt with timely. We do not promote the use of individual names and numbers as this will not assist if the officer is absent. If the matter is urgent, please phone us on 03000 418181 or out of hours on 03000 419191

### **3. The future**

- 3.1 SEHAUC (South East Highway Authorities and Utilities Committee) working group is to be set up to look at traffic management and how both utilities and Highway Authorities can better manager their work sites, with specific focus on road closures.
- 3.2 UKPN are trialling innovative traffic management software that helps them to determine whether a road closure is actually required or not. The initial results look promising which should feed into them reducing the number of closures for certain types of works.
- 3.3 Innovation is being trialled where intelligent temporary traffic lights, with CCTV on site. This has the ability for lights to be managed remotely from a control room so as soon as delay builds up a controller can intervene and amend the timings on the lights remotely which will improve and reduce delays in and around the area.
- 3.4 Innovation where push notification to social media (using location services) will advise the travelling public of upcoming works to allow the public to make informed decisions on their journeys, initial trials on high impact traffic sensitive sites. This is in the very early stages of trial.
- 3.5 Authorities in the South East are pushing DfT to challenge the current level of fines and inspection charges particularly around the lack of inflationary rises for permit fees and Fixed Penalty Notices etc.

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

- 4.1 The charge for processing a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) to external organisations has been increased from £710 to £910 for 2024/25 and this includes all legal administrative and advertising costs.

#### **5. Legal implications**

- 5.1 Temporary road closures require a legal notice to be published and this is done in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992.
- 5.2 Statutory guidance on safety is published in the Safety at Street Works and Road Works Code of practice

#### **6. Equalities implications**

- 6.1 Not applicable as this report is for information and has no effect on policy or service standards.

#### **7. Background Documents**

- 7.1 Link to KCC web site for a Road Closure Application [Apply to close a road - Kent County Council](#)

## 8. Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to note the details of this report and actions being taken regarding Temporary Road Closures across the County.

## 9. Contact details

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**Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – Draft Agenda and Work Programme (Updated 6 November 2024)**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cabinet Committee to receive item</b>
Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director	At each meeting
Performance Dashboard	At each meeting
Work Programme	At each meeting
Draft Budget	Annual
<b>Biosecurity and Tree Health Report</b>	<b>Annual (January)</b>
Corporate Risk Register	Annual (March)
Winter Service Policy	Annual (September)
Environment Agency - Presentation	Bi-Annual
Southern Water - Presentation	Bi-Annual

<b>14 January 2025</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
Page 1 of 3	Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director	At each meeting
	Performance Dashboard	At each meeting
	Work Programme	At each meeting
	Energy Performance Certificates	Added at agenda setting on 3 October
	On-street pavement parking (arrangements with district and boroughs)	Added at agenda setting 7 August
	Environment Agency presentation regarding river pollution	TBC - added at agenda setting 7 August

<b>25 February 2025</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Additional Comments</b>
	Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director	At each meeting
	Performance Dashboard	At each meeting
	Work Programme	At each meeting
	Corporate Risk Register	Presented by Mark Scrivener
	Winter Service Progress Report	Added at agenda setting on 3 October 2024
	Electric Vehicle Charging Update	Added at agenda setting on 3 October 2024

Countryside Management Partnerships SLA Renewal

24 June 2025		
No.	Item	Additional Comments
	Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director	At each meeting
	Performance Dashboard	At each meeting
	Work Programme	At each meeting

Items for Consideration that have not yet been allocated to a meeting	
Highways and Transportation fault reporting and enquiry form - Update	Requested at ETCC on 19 January 2023
A review of highway aspects of planning applications - Report	Requested at ETCC on 7 March 2023 For information
Climate Change Adaptation Plan	
Annual Report on water supply	
Met Office update on projections for climate change	Requested at agenda setting meeting on 7 August 2024
Thames Crossing report	Added at agenda setting meeting on 3 October 2024