ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14th January, 2025

10.00 am

Council Chamber

Kent County Council
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AGENDA

ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORT CABINET COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 January 2025 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

Ask for: **Ashlie Gash**
Telephone: **03000 413007**

Membership (16)

Conservative (12): 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 (and one vacancy)

Labour (2): Ms M Dawkins and Ms K Grehan

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr I S Chittenden

Green and Independent (2): Mr M Baldock and Mr M Hood

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 14/11/24 (Pages 1 - 8)

5 Draft Revenue Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025-28 Update, and Draft Capital Programme 2025-35 (Pages 9 - 44)

6 Verbal update by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

7 Performance Dashboard (Pages 45 - 54)

8 Energy Performance Certificates

9 24/00114 - Environment Policy Refresh - Key Decision (Pages 55 - 70)

<u>Motion to Exclude the Press and Public</u>

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.

<u>EXEMPT ITEMS</u>

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

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Monday, 6 January 2025

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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 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: Mr M Baldock (virtual)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1.   Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies were received from Mr Bond and Mr Smyth whom Ms Shulver was substituting.

2.   Declarations of Interest

(Item 3)

No declarations of interest were received.

3.   Minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2024

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held 19th September 2024 were a correct record and that a paper copy be signed by the Chair.

4.   Draft Budget

(item 5)

1. Mr Oakford introduced the budget report which included the following:
a) The budget report was created before the announcement of the government budget. It will be reviewed before January's Cabinet Committee.
b) The first quarter results showed an overspend of sixteen million pounds for Adult Social Care, which comes from savings they haven't been able to make and have therefore been bult into next year's budget. However, the rest of the council is well balanced.

c) Until the government fully fund social care, next year KCC is very close to only being able to provide statutory services.

d) In the past, budget from Highways has been insufficient due to it being redirected to Social Care. Support is being given to Cabinet Members and directors to try to stop this from continuing to happen.

2. Mr Baker added the following for transport:

a) Subsidised busses have been included in the budget to make bus transportation a real option for residents and to help children get to school.

b) Continued efforts will be made to secure external grants and to increase income where appropriate and ringfence it.

3. Mr Thomas added the following for the environment:

a) There has been an increase in prices, contracts and demands in waste.

b) There has been a removal of a previous savings target to review the number and operation of HWRC sites in the budget.

c) The only local decision choice is that they are right-sizing the budget for the HWRC.

4. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:

a) Mr. Thomas stated that the five hundred thousand allocated to the 25/26 budget was the right-size it and would be part of the baseline budget in future years.

b) Mr. Baker agreed with a Member that they did not want to rely on BSIP, so implementing a safety net would help ensure bus services continued.

c) Mr. Baker also explained that on-street parking was included in the budget because if the service was returned to KCC, 24 months' notice would be required. Discussions with district and borough councils would continue, but it was important to have the framework in place in the budget.

d) Mr. Thomas added context from a waste perspective, stating that the net budget for waste was ninety-three million pounds.

e) Mr. Oakford stated that no money was being saved from household waste sites in the budget and there were no plans to close any sites. The five hundred thousand was being put back into the base budget.

f) Mr. Baker confirmed there would be no changes to subsidised bus routes. He acknowledged the challenges with the 50% bus cap, aiming to make bus travel a viable choice.

g) Regarding on-street parking, Mr. Baker emphasised that financial and practical impacts needed consideration before any decisions could be made.

h) Mr. Oakford noted that the long-term budget could not be guaranteed. KCC was planning for the future based on current knowledge through the MTFP. More information would be available after the spending review and grant distribution details were shared. However, bus subsidies would remain as budgeted through the MTFP period, and future budgets could not be decided by the current administration.

RESOLVED to note the budget report

5. Verbal Updates by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director

(Item 6)

1. Mr Thomas provided an update on Waste and Recycling
2. Mr Baker provided an update on Highways and Transport
3. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:

a) Mr. Baker agreed with a Member about the congestion on the Dartford Bridge. KCC was working with National Highways to ensure that if the Lower Thames Crossing was approved, work could start promptly. He stated that the moving traffic defences were operational despite delays, and a report would be presented to the committee in the new year.

b) Regarding electric charging points, Mr. Baker mentioned that as demand increased, more solutions would be provided, likely using a mix of government and commercial funding.

4. Mr Jones provided an update on Environment and Transport
a) Mr Jones agreed with a Member that it is important to improve recycling rates and manage waste in a more sustainable way. Controlling contaminated waste will have a major benefit and that will come through education.

6. Performance Dashboard
(Item 7)
1. Mr Thomas provided an update on the environment performance dashboard. Mr Wagner also added to the report.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:
a) Mr Thomas suggested that the reason for the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) waste tonnage figure rising, may be the challenges that collection authorities have had. He also stated that if food waste could be separated from the rest of household waste, significant savings could be made.

b) Mr Jones added that it is the mix of waste that is received in the centres that makes the difference, particularly the inert building materials. Also, problems with new suppliers have caused an increase of people using HWRCs.

c) In response to a question regarding how people are being incentivised to recycle, Mr Thomas explained that there has been a trial in Dover which has resulted in a 10% increase in the food collection rate. KCC are working to collaborate with other authorities and find the best system to improve overall practice. He also noted that simpler recycling is a new government requirement to which authorities will need to conform. Extended producer responsibility payments will be coming to both the disposer and collection authorities will bring more money into the system.

3. **RESOLVED to note the Performance Dashboard**

7. **24/00094 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Environment Plan**
(Item 8)

1. Mr Thomas presented the report, Helen Shulver, Head of Environment was also present.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:
a) Mr Thomas thanked Mr Hills, Mr Chittenden and Ms Dawkins for their support.

b) He urged the committee to include regular updates on the report in the work programme. The Kent Environment Strategy Cross Party Members Group was used to test ideas, and Members could bring questions there for more detail.

c) The strategy on Net Zero was scheduled for the January meeting.

d) Regarding match funding, Mr. Thomas stated it was a difficult time with limited capital programmes available. KCC was developing a Green Finance Strategy to support ongoing work, alongside funding through Council Tax and seeking sustainable, ethical investment.

e) Mr. Jones mentioned efforts to support green highways, including efficient supply chain management, influencing road users to make sustainable choices, and innovating new products and materials to reduce pollutants from highways.

f) Mr. Thomas agreed on the importance of partnership working, highlighting the framework for goals and strategies on page 24 of the plan. Helen Shulver added that more in-depth reports would be available to Members, and Officers were willing to share detailed information.

g) Mr. Thomas stated the aim was to have a cross-departmental support team rather than just a delivery team. He cited the example of carbon emissions from the KCC building, overseen by the director for infrastructure, with officers working alongside the director. More information would be in the report for the January meeting.

3. **RESOLVED to adopt and delegate the report**

8. **24/00095 - Adoption of the Kent County Council Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2025-2028**

    (Item 9)

1. Mr Thomas introduced the policy
2. Further to questions and comments from Members, it was noted that:

a) Mr. Thomas assured Members that the map of how KCC was achieving Net Zero would be presented to the committee in January. However, the costs and impacts were not part of the Adaptation Plan.

b) Regarding the environment plan, Mr. Thomas stated that his team worked with partners to support it and was happy to provide regular updates to Members, especially concerning water management.

3. **RESOLVED to adopt and delegate the report**

9. **Update on Kent's Plan Bee**
    (Item 10)
1. Mr Thomas presented the report
2. Further to questions and comments from members, it was noted that:
a) Helen Shulver commented that members could pledge their districts' participation in the scheme through the No Mow May website. The report included top performers, but figures from all participating districts could be shared with members

b) Mr. Thomas highlighted the Making Space for Nature strategy, which was being developed and would be presented to the committee in January. KCC was required to participate in this strategy along with 48 areas across the country, aiming to reverse decades of nature decline by prioritising species and habitats and mapping out the process.

c) In response to a discussion on signage for unmown areas, Mr. Thomas suggested that signs might be problematic for other departments but invited members to work towards having signage in their divisions.

d) Mr. Baker commented that the reporting system for informing Highways about verges needing to be left unmown, needed improvement. He added that the alternatives to current weed-killing chemicals were ineffective, leaving both those wanting weeds gone and those opposing chemical use unhappy. He suggested closer collaboration between Highways and the Environment Department to address this and other issues.

3. **RESOLVED to note the report**

10. **Better Buses Bill - Bus Franchising**

    (Item 11)

1. Mr Baker introduced the report. Mr Lightowler presented the report virtually.
2. Members highlighted the following points:
   a) Franchising the bus service would give the council more control over its operation.
   b) Isolated rural communities and children using the home from school service need to be supported with more bus routes.

   c) The biggest issue was encouraging people to use public transport.

   d) There was nothing to lose by trying a bespoke bus model for Kent following consultations aligned with the local plan

   e) A major obstacle was getting the routes right.

   f) It was noted that taxpayers had to pay for buses that weren't being used.

   g) It was important to make bus usage an attractive and practical option compared to cars. Currently, bus services were unreliable, expensive, and often did not connect train services to rural areas

   h) A member expressed reservations about the council running buses, questioning the justification for taxpayers' money and noting that if corporate companies were struggling, the council would too.

   i) Mr. Baker added that this had not become law yet, and details were still unclear. A major question was about funding. It was agreed that a broader vision was needed beyond just buses, emphasizing the importance of reliability and giving school children positive experiences on buses.

   j) Mr. Baker mentioned that this issue tied into a wider devolution debate, questioning whether transport for Kent could work as a separate agency, similar to Kent Fire Authority, rather than being part of the council. With ringfenced funding, planning ahead would be easier, routes could be established, and infrastructure for buses would be in place. He agreed with a member's recommendation to explore this further. There was a disparity between public perception of KCC's responsibilities and those of bus companies. The benefits of franchising needed to be weighed, as it was a big project that could go wrong but would be excellent if successful.

   k) Mr. Baker concluded by agreeing that conversations should continue, following the process through parliament, and seeing what funding KCC received at the end.

   l) Mr. Lightowler added that franchising might offer opportunities to work with other authorities and give KCC better control, but funding remained an issue

   m) A member suggested that the committee recommend further exploration of the franchise model to the cabinet and officers, which was agreed.

3. **RESOLVED Members agreed to note the report once more information on bus franchising had been circulated.**

11. Road Closures – Update report

(Item 12)

1. Mr. Baker introduced the report, highlighting that utility companies had overstepped their boundaries under the Roads and Street Works Act. They had significant power to access their equipment, and the regulators' broad definition of an emergency allowed them to justify emergency works easily. To regain control over the highways, Mr. Baker asked the Director of Highways to expedite publishing a legal framework for taking action against utility companies if evidence showed they were breaching regulations. If KCC found that utility companies were abusing the permit application process, they needed the ability to take legal action.

2. Pauline Harmer presented the update report to members.

3. Further to questions and comments from members, it was noted that:

a) No utility companies had been prosecuted in the last year.

b) Mr. Baker stated that KCC was restricted by law regarding road sign content. Recently, the utility company's name was moved higher up, but KCC's logo remained prominent. Pauline Harmer added that if KCC did the work, its name was in bold, whereas if a utility company did the work, its name was in bold and KCC's name was smaller underneath.

c) Mr. Jones commented on road sign clarity, directing members to the One Network website for information on permits and road closures. He noted the balance between informing road users and avoiding sign clutter

d) Regarding Kent Highways signage, Mr. Jones mentioned that their works were for longer periods, while KCC road works were shorter. Mr. Baker added that in an ideal world with unlimited funds, LCD screens could signal exact road closures and durations.

e) Mr. Jones highlighted the Kent Corridor Coordination Group's efforts to coordinate road works, though emergency works often disrupted plans and road users' journeys.

f) Mr. Robey concluded that KCC needed to find ways to fix roads more efficiently and quickly, noting that the extra cost of these road works might fall back on KCC.

12. Work Programme
(Item 13)
1. A member asked for the item Climate Change Adaption meeting to be changed to Environment and Climate Change Adaption meeting.

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 Highway and Transport

Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 14th January 2025

Subject: **Draft Revenue Budget 2025-26 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2025-28 Update, and Draft Capital Programme 2025-35**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary: This report sets out for further consideration the material changes to the administration's draft revenue budget proposals for 2025-26 from those presented to committees in November for the Cabinet portfolios and directorates relevant to this committee. As with the November report this is a tailored report for each committee.

The update includes the following information relevant to the Cabinet Committee's portfolio(s):
- Full year effect of variances reported in quarter two 2024-25 budget monitoring report;
- Latest projections for price indices applied for contractual price uplifts;
- Latest activity/demand/cost trends;
- Spending and income arising from Autumn 2024 Budget statement, Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) and departmental grant announcements;
- Updated savings and income forecasts, including further progress on £19.8m policy savings to replace one-offs in 2024-25

Appendices to the report set out the draft capital programme and significant changes to the revenue budget since the draft published in November.

The administration's final 2025-26 draft budget, 2025-28 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and Capital Programme 2025-35 will be published in full for Cabinet endorsement on 30th January. This will need to show a balanced revenue position for 2025-26 and fully funded capital programme.

Recommendations:
The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to:
a) NOTE the update to administration's draft revenue budget proposals
b) NOTE and COMMENT on draft capital programme
c) Propose, to the Executive, any changes which should be made to the administration's draft budget proposals related to the Cabinet Committee's portfolio area before the final 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 Constitution requires that a draft Budget is issued for consideration to Cabinet Committees and the Scrutiny Committee to allow for their comments and any recommendations 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 purpose of the budget is to ensure that the Council continues to plan for revenue and capital spending which is affordable, reflects the Council's strategic priorities, allows the Council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and continues to maintain and improve the Council's financial resilience.

1.3 A 3-year 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 updated draft revenue budget 2025-26 proposals are now balanced, in principle, pending Cabinet endorsement. This includes resolution of the £11.4m unresolved balances in the November draft. The resolution comes from a mix of updated spending growth, updated savings and income plans, and increased/new grants in the PLGFS and other departmental grants. The timing of the £19.8m policy savings required to replace the use of one-offs to balance 2024-25 budget remains an issue for 2025-26, although this is now proposed to be resolved through a combination of funding qualifying revenue expenditure from capital receipts and extension of New Homes Bonus grant, with significantly less required from a loan from reserves.

1.5 The plans for 2026-27 and 2027-28 in the MTFP continue to be indicative based upon a set of assumptions for spending/savings & income, and funding. The plans for 2026-27 and 2027-28 are broadly balanced albeit at a high-level at this stage pending further detail of reforms to local authority funding and multi-year settlement. The illustrative plans set out the possible trajectory based upon current policy assumptions, although other scenarios are possible. 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 (including update and reform of current methodologies) or improved tax returns, with the risk being managed through reserves.

1.6 The draft Capital Programme has been prepared on the basis that only fully funded projects are included, with a separate schedule of potential projects which could be considered for inclusion in future programmes once funding has been secured. The programme is based on the presumption that there will be no new borrowing to fund new schemes. The plan includes the rephasing of projects as result of 2023-24 outturn as well as new fully funded schemes, invest to save projects, and resolution

of outstanding funding on essential commitments arising since the original programme was published.

1.7 This report focuses on the key policy considerations within the administration's draft budget proposals (updated revenue plans and capital programme) for each Cabinet portfolio. This focussed report allows Cabinet Committees to specifically consider the parts of the Budget that fall within their remit.   The Scrutiny Committee will receive the budget proposals for the whole Council as the role of the Scrutiny Committee is to review and challenge the overall budget. This January round of meetings includes key decisions for consideration that will give effect to the 2025-2026 budget, pending Council approval of the budget in February.

1.8 An updated interactive dashboard is also available via the link at point 10 of background documents to Members, enabling the details of revenue proposals to be examined and scrutinised, including a new dashboard covering the £19.8m required savings to replace one-off used to balance 2024-25 budget.

1.9 Separate appendices are included which set out:

- High Level Summary of draft capital programme 2025-35 (Appendix A)
- Detail of capital programme 2025-35 for Growth, Environment and Transport directorate (Appendix B)
- Potential Capital Projects (Appendix C)
- An updated high-level summary of the administration's draft revenue plans 2025-28 (Appendix D)
- a summary of the updated revenue plan for Growth, Environment and Transport (GET) directorate for 2025-26 (Appendix E)
- Budget risk register (Appendix F)

1.10 These, together with the previous reports in November, provide the same level of background information as presented to Cabinet Committees and the Scrutiny Committee in previous years.

1.11 Following consideration of updated revenue plans and draft capital programme, a revised draft of the administration's final budget proposals will be published for Cabinet endorsement at the meeting on 30 January 2025 (including consideration of issues raised and alternative proposals raised at Cabinet Committees and the Scrutiny Committee) prior to final approval at County Council in February 2025.

2.   Key Policy Considerations for Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee

Updated Revenue Proposals

2.1.1 **Prices** - There were increases/decreases to the growth pressure for Waste prices (+£43k) and Highways prices (-£253k) following the latest inflation indices being published.

2.1.2 **Extended Producer Responsibility** (EPR) – EPR is one of the new pieces of legislation that comes into effect in 25/26 and aims to divert the cost of disposal of certain packaging away from local authorities and on to the manufacturer. As a result, it was recently announced that KCC would receive a guaranteed £13.3m of income as a contribution towards the current cost of disposal of packaging.

For 26/27 onwards, the £13.3m is not guaranteed and will be based on actual tonnes/costs, so will present some in-year risk in terms of forecasting.

As EPR is merely about reimbursing the cost of disposal (districts/boroughs have also received allocations for collection costs), there is no incentive mechanism to improve recycling rates and therefore reduce costs further so a further change is that £1.3m of the £13.3m is shown as a growth pressure with a view to driving behaviour change of Kent's residents (to recycle more, co-mingle less), enable more partnership working with Waste Collection Authorities (WCA) as well as reconfiguration of some of our sites to enable the different waste streams proposed as part of Simpler Recycling legislation to be accepted and processed.

The net £12m (£13.3m income, less £1.3m behaviour change growth pressure) is to be held in an earmarked reserve, until full clarity of any expectations for this money is known.

Whilst this money is positive news, the other new piece of legislation is the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) whereby a new levy will be placed on Energy for Waste (EfW) plants (the facility in Allington) and which presents a future cost pressure. This has been estimated at between £12-17m pa and is effective from January 2028 so an important part of driving behaviour change is not only to save money on the current budget by recycling more and/or diverting waste to lower cost disposal methods but also cost avoidance as fewer tonnes going to the EfW plant will mean that future unfunded ETS pressure will reduce.

2.1.3 **Highways operations & reactive maintenance** – in the past two quarters there have been exponential increases in the number of pothole, drainage and general customer enquiries within the highways service which has led to an increase in the level of reactive maintenance (+£1.8m).

This is as a result of sustained increase in rainfall, more traffic on Kent's roads and due to fixed capital funding over the past 5+ years when inflation was in double digits (RPIx 12.2%, BCIS 29%) meaning these fixed budgets buy less year-on-year, so the entire network is deteriorating and therefore more reactive pressures and defects are occurring.

KCC generally spends c£60-65m pa on Highways Asset Management (within Capital) and this is funded £25m pa from KCC borrowing and the balance from Department for Transport (DfT) core/block grant funding. This is in contrast to asset mngt principles indicating a spend in excess of £170m pa would be necessary to maintain/manage the network in a "steady state".

As the level of investment is both fixed (not inflated) and is significantly below this £170m pa figure, the backlog increases, more Category 1 defects occur, fewer capital schemes/interventions are commissioned and more reactive repairs/maintenance spend is required

2.1.4 **Bus Services Improvement Plan** (BSIP+) funded routes – it was expected that BSIP / BSIP+ grant would not continue into 25/26 and as a result, there were 51 routes that the BSIP+ grant (and Local Transport Fund – LTF – before it) used to fund that was shown as a new growth pressure e.g. instead of being grant funded,

the proposal was for this to be base funded from the Council's general funding streams (Council Tax, Business Rates and un-ringfenced general grants).

Following the November Cabinet Committees, KCC was provisionally awarded some £23m of BSIP grant (£10m revenue, £13m capital) and the draft budget now shows that these 51 routes (full year cost of £2.8m) are to be again funded by BSIP grant.

The grant is therefore replacing that growth pressure demand of general funding. This represents a pro rata reduction of -£1.9m in 25/26, with the full year effect benefit being shown in 26/27.

<u>Changes between current capital programme and draft programme 2025-35</u>

2.2.1   No new schemes have been added since the November Committees, barring some low level fully grant funded Highways schemes.

2.2.2   Some welcome news following the Chancellor's provisional announcement on 30th October, is that KCC received confirmation just before the Christmas break that Kent has been awarded an additional £14.3m (of £500m nationally) of Local Highways Maintenance funding for 25/26.

It must be noted that this is a similar figure to what the previous Network North announcement was trying to achieve, which was an additional £130m (for Kent) over the 10 years spending cycle (but with no confirmed indication of profile or conditions), although this recent announcement is for 25/26 only at this stage. Any future allocations are subject to the outcome of the Spending Review, which is due to be finalised in late Spring 2025.

How this additional funding is to be allocated is yet to be determined, but it will reflect the whole network approach, and 25% of the allocation is withheld/contingent on Local Highways Authorities demonstrating both additionality in spend as well as meeting certain criteria aimed at driving best practice, securing best value and driving innovation. A future update on this matter will be forthcoming at a future committee but it is welcome news of both this additional funding *and* that the block maintenance grant continues at 24/25 levels. It is with regret that such grant funding continues to not be uplifted for inflation annually (as we have seen double digit inflation in Highways over the past number of years) but it is positive news that the block maintenance grants are fixed/confirmed for 25/26.

<u>Key decisions required</u>

2.3   There are no new key decisions to be taken or are required as part of the new proposals over and above those that are brought to this committee anyway e.g. confirming Highways and Transportation prices for the forthcoming year or which are considered elsewhere in the committee agenda already (e.g. BSIP).

3.   Contact details

<u>Report Authors:</u>

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Background documents

1   KCC's Budget webpage
2   KCC's Corporate Risk Register (Governance and Audit Committee 16th May 2024)
3   KCC's Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Programme (Governance and Audit Committee 19th March 2024)
4   KCC's approved 2024-25 Budget
5   Q2 Budget monitoring Report Cabinet Paper
6   Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy
7   Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Report
8   Dashboard – Dashboard

APPENDIX A - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 TO 2034-35

ROW REF	Directorate	Dir	Total Cost	Prior Years Spend	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Adult Social Care & Health	ASCH	7,003	3,939	549	515	250	250
2	Children, Young People & Education	CYPE	565,619	162,244	97,113	105,761	53,338	27,325
3	Growth, Environment & Transport	GET	1,278,892	376,870	149,701	146,431	111,087	81,163
4	Chief Executive's Department	CED	3,973	1,634	-1,655	3,994	0	0
5	Deputy Chief Executive's Department	DCED	142,475	44,419	27,746	17,932	11,533	3,945
6	**Total Cash Limit**		**1,997,962**	**589,106**	**273,454**	**274,633**	**176,208**	**112,683**
	Funded By:							
7	Borrowing		441,100	74,485	45,168	85,577	47,705	23,165
8	Property Enterprise Fund (PEF) 2		369	369				
9	Grants		1,107,270	351,956	143,509	110,169	77,192	65,353
10	Developer Contributions		184,067	45,322	34,435	56,608	33,685	10,521
11	Other External Funding e.g. Arts Council, District Contributions etc.		27,182	12,969	11,124	3,089		
12	Revenue Contributions to Capital		85,401	16,146	13,685	6,155	6,528	6,333
13	Capital Receipts		42,315	16,711	16,124	4,446	484	650
14	Recycled Loan Repayments		110,258	71,148	9,409	8,589	10,614	6,661
15	**Total Finance**		**1,997,962**	**589,106**	**273,454**	**274,633**	**176,208**	**112,683**

APPENDIX A - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 TO 2034-35

ROW REF	Directorate	Dir	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Adult Social Care & Health	ASCH	250	250	250	250	250	250
2	Children, Young People & Education	CYPE	22,338	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500
3	Growth, Environment & Transport	GET	71,965	68,167	68,087	68,107	70,922	66,392
4	Chief Executive's Department	CED	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Deputy Chief Executive's Department	DCED	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150
6	**Total Cash Limit**		**100,703**	**94,067**	**93,987**	**94,007**	**96,822**	**92,292**
	Funded By:							
7	Borrowing		25,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
8	Property Enterprise Fund (PEF) 2							
9	Grants		61,622	59,143	59,165	59,187	62,002	57,972
10	Developer Contributions		3,406	90				
11	Other External Funding e.g. Arts Council, District Contributions etc.							
12	Revenue Contributions to Capital		6,188	6,184	6,172	6,170	6,170	5,670
13	Capital Receipts		650	650	650	650	650	650
14	Recycled Loan Repayments		3,837					
15	**Total Finance**		**100,703**	**94,067**	**93,987**	**94,007**	**96,822**	**92,292**

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	Growth & Communities							
1	Country Parks Access and Development	Improvements and adaptations to country parks	756		126	70	70	70
2	Public Rights of Way (PROW)	Structural improvements of public rights of way	10,804		2,221	1,383	900	900
3	Public Sports Facilities Improvement	Capital grants for new provision/refurbishment of sports facilities and projects in the community	750		75	75	75	75
4	Village Halls and Community Centres	Capital Grants for improvements and adaptations to village halls and community centres	793		118	75	75	75
	Transportation							
5	Highways Asset Management/Annual Maintenance [1] [2]	Maintaining Kent's roads	603,372		55,100	61,496	61,320	61,320
6	Integrated Transport Schemes [1] [2]	Improvements to road safety	39,941		4,373	3,952	3,952	3,952
7	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, Land Compensation Act (LCA) Part 1	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, LCA Part 1	93		80	13	0	0
8	**Total Rolling Programmes [3]**		**656,509**		**62,093**	**67,064**	**66,392**	**66,392**
	Growth & Communities							
9	Digital Autopsy	To provide a body storage and digital autopsy facility	3,065	305	90	2,670	0	0
10	Essella Road Bridge (PROW)	Urgent works to ensure footbridge remains open	1,600	191	629	520	260	0
11	Public Mortuary	To consider options for the provision of a public mortuary	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	0
12	Innovation Investment Initiative (i3)	Provision of loans to small and medium enterprises with the potential for innovation and growth, helping them to improve their productivity and create jobs	10,375	7,379	1,190	1,100	706	0
13	Javelin Way Development	To provide accommodation for creative industries and the creation of industrial units	12,631	12,599	0	0	32	0
14	Kent & Medway Business Fund	Loan fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, to enable creation of jobs and support business start ups	31,073	22,316	1,675	1,709	1,743	1,768
15	Kent & Medway Business Fund - Small Business Boost	Loan fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, aimed at helping small businesses	12,268	2,977	1,778	1,813	1,849	1,876

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
16	Kent Empty Property Initiative - No Use Empty (NUE)	Bringing long term empty properties including commercial buildings and vacant sites back into use as quality housing accommodation	73,237	60,251	2,567	1,087	6,315	3,017
17	The Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme	Voucher scheme to benefit properties in hard to reach locations	2,862	514	533	1,298	517	0
	Environment & Circular Economy							
18	Energy and Water Efficiency Investment Fund - External	Recycling loan fund for energy efficiency projects	2,876	2,711	57	49	35	23
19	Energy Reduction and Water Efficiency Investment - KCC	Recycling loan fund for energy efficiency projects	2,439	2,308	27	27	25	19
20	Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Area	Contribution to partnership-funded projects to provide flood defences for the River Medway	2,500	2,053	447	0	0	0
21	Kings Hill Solar Farm	Construction of a solar farm	5,038	4,897	141	0	0	0
22	Maidstone Heat Network	To install heat pumps in offices in Maidstone	408	332	76	0	0	0
23	New Transfer Station - Folkestone & Hythe [1]	To provide a new waste transfer station in Folkestone & Hythe	10,302	644	5,100	4,558	0	0
24	Surface Water Flood Risk Management	To provide flood risk management and climate adaptation investment in capital infrastructure across Kent, to reduce the significant risks of local flooding and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to be substantial on the county	5,493	765	600	628	500	500
25	Windmill Asset Management & Weatherproofing	Works to ensure Windmills are in a safe and weatherproof condition	1,794	1,286	100	186	100	122
26	Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)	Tree planting programme funded by grant	979	646	152	125	56	0
27	Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund	Grant funding to ensure a dedicated resource to respond to housing stalling resulting from nutrient pollution	9,800	7,000	2,800	0	0	0
28	Reuse Shop at Allington Household Waste Recycling Centre	Capital contributions to the provision of a reuse shop	360	44	50	50	50	166
	Transportation							
29	A2 Off Slip Wincheap, Canterbury [1]	To deliver an off-slip in the coastbound direction	4,400	0	1,500	2,199	701	0
30	A228 and B2160 Junction Improvements with B2017 Badsell Road [1]	Junction improvements	4,790	878	3,897	15	0	0
31	A28 Chart Road, Ashford [1]	Strategic highway improvement	29,699	4,549	3,819	11,061	10,190	80
32	Bath Street, Gravesend	Bus Lane project - Fastrack programme extension	5,520	5,095	425	0	0	0
33	Dover Bus Rapid Transit	To provide a high quality and reliable public transport service in the Dover area, funded from Housing Infrastructure funding	25,899	25,654	185	60	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
34	Fastrack Full Network - Bean Road Tunnels [1]	Construction of a tunnel linking Bluewater and the Eastern Quarry Development	23,539	2,903	11,439	9,197	0	0
35	Green Corridors	Programme of schemes to improve walking and cycling in Ebbsfeet	6,591	2,526	3,990	75	0	0
36	Herne Relief Road [1]	Provision of an alternative route between Herne Bay and Canterbury to avoid Herne village	9,076	9,076	0	0	0	0
37	Housing Infrastructure Fund - Swale Infrastructure Projects	Improvements to A249 Junctions at Grovehurst Road and Keycol Roundabout	45,199	35,890	9,124	185	0	0
38	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	2,039	1,800	239	0	0	0
39	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	2,698	1,782	916	0	0	0
40	Bearsted Road Improvements - formerly Kent Medical Campus (National Productivity Investment Fund - NPIF)	Project to ease congestion in Maidstone	14,357	8,278	6,049	30	0	0
41	Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (Thamesway) [1]	Strategic highway improvement in Dartford & Gravesham	9,095	2,525	1,036	5,534	0	0
42	LED Conversion	Upgrading street lights to more energy efficient LED lanterns & implementation of Central Monitoring System	40,604	40,329	275	0	0	0
43	Maidstone Integrated Transport [1]	Improving transport links with various schemes in Maidstone	14,079	13,943	136	0	0	0
44	Rathmore Road Link	Road improvement scheme	7,808	7,777	31	0	0	0
45	Sturry Link Road, Canterbury [1]	Construction of bypass	43,774	6,072	1,646	26,486	9,111	301
46	Thanet Parkway	Construction of Thanet Parkway Railway Station to enhance rail access in east Kent and act as a catalyst for economic and housing growth	43,225	42,933	292	0	0	0
47	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 & M20 Interchange Upgrades [4]	Initial works for a scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide free flowing interchange wherever possible	7,000	3,198	3,802	0	0	0
48	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington) [4]	Initial works on the creation of a relief road	4,294	4,002	292	0	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
49	Zebra Funding - Electric Buses and infrastructure	Grant funded projects for electric buses and infrastructure	9,526	8,234	1,292	0	0	0
50	Folkestone Brighter Futures	A package of transport and public realm improvements from Folkestone Central Station through to the Town Centre, funded from Levelling Up Fund 2, which KCC are delivering on behalf of Folkestone and Hythe District Council	15,953	5,254	10,279	420	0	0
51	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) [1]	Grant funded project to provide electric vehicle infrastructure	12,280	0	525	762	1,106	1,128
52	National Bus Strategy - Bus Service Improvement Plan	Part of the National Bus Strategy for England to provide improved quality buses and services	14,660	13,560	1,100	0	0	0
53	M20 Junction 7	Highway improvements at M20 junction 7	6,622	164	1,826	4,578	54	0
54	Thames Way (STIPS)		3,380	1,000	2,380	0	0	0
55	Manston to Haine Link [1]	A package of new highway links and improved highway infrastructure linking strategic development in Westwood and Manston	17,514	80	373	2,945	8,345	5,771
56	Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) Landscaping Improvements	To deliver an exemplar approach to design and maintenance of green infrastructure and the creation of ecological value at key gateways into the Garden City	1,878	150	1,728	0	0	0
57	Tunnel Fans	To enhance fans at Chestfield Tunnel	1,000	0	1,000	0	0	0
58	**Total Individual Projects**		**618,599**	**376,870**	**87,608**	**79,367**	**44,695**	**14,771**
59	**Total - Growth, Environment & Transport**		**1,275,108**	**376,870**	**149,701**	**146,431**	**111,087**	**81,163**

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved
[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2025-26 to 2034-35
[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme
[4] Initial works only are reflected, with the main scheme in the Potential Projects section, whilst awaiting award of funding.

Page 20

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 to 2034-35

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
	Growth & Communities							
1	Country Parks Access and Development	Improvements and adaptations to country parks	70	70	70	70	70	70
2	Public Rights of Way (PROW)	Structural improvements of public rights of way	900	900	900	900	900	900
3	Public Sports Facilities Improvement	Capital grants for new provision/refurbishment of sports facilities and projects in the community	75	75	75	75	75	75
4	Village Halls and Community Centres	Capital Grants for improvements and adaptations to village halls and community centres	75	75	75	75	75	75
	Transportation							
5	Highways Asset Management/Annual Maintenance [1] [2]	Maintaining Kent's roads	61,320	61,320	61,320	61,320	61,320	61,320
6	Integrated Transport Schemes [1] [2]	Improvements to road safety	3,952	3,952	3,952	3,952	3,952	3,952
7	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, Land Compensation Act (LCA) Part 1	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, LCA Part 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	**Total Rolling Programmes [3]**		**66,392**	**66,392**	**66,392**	**66,392**	**66,392**	**66,392**
	Growth & Communities							
9	Digital Autopsy	To provide a body storage and digital autopsy facility	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Essella Road Bridge (PROW)	Urgent works to ensure footbridge remains open	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Public Mortuary	To consider options for the provision of a public mortuary	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Innovation Investment Initiative (i3)	Provision of loans to small and medium enterprises with the potential for innovation and growth, helping them to improve their productivity and create jobs	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Javelin Way Development	To provide accommodation for creative industries and the creation of industrial units	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	Kent & Medway Business Fund	Loan fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, to enable creation of jobs and support business start ups	1,862	0	0	0	0	0
15	Kent & Medway Business Fund - Small Business Boost	Loan fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, aimed at helping small businesses	1,975	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 to 2034-35

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
16	Kent Empty Property Initiative - No Use Empty (NUE)	Bringing long term empty properties including commercial buildings and vacant sites back into use as quality housing accommodation	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	The Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme	Voucher scheme to benefit properties in hard to reach locations	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Environment & Circular Economy							
18	Energy and Water Efficiency Investment Fund - External	Recycling loan fund for energy efficiency projects	1	0	0	0	0	0
19	Energy Reduction and Water Efficiency Investment - KCC	Recycling loan fund for energy efficiency projects	17	14	2	0	0	0
20	Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Area	Contribution to partnership-funded projects to provide flood defences for the River Medway	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	Kings Hill Solar Farm	Construction of a solar farm	0	0	0	0	0	0
22	Maidstone Heat Network	To install heat pumps in offices in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	New Transfer Station - Folkestone & Hythe [1]	To provide a new waste transfer station in Folkestone & Hythe	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	Surface Water Flood Risk Management	To provide flood risk management and climate adaptation investment in capital infrastructure across Kent, to reduce the significant risks of local flooding and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to be substantial on the county	500	500	500	500	500	0
25	Windmill Asset Management & Weatherproofing	Works to ensure Windmills are in a safe and weatherproof condition	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)	Tree planting programme funded by grant	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund	Grant funding to ensure a dedicated resource to respond to housing stalling resulting from nutrient pollution	0	0	0	0	0	0
28	Reuse Shop at Allington Household Waste Recycling Centre	Capital contributions to the provision of a reuse shop	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Transportation							
29	A2 Off Slip Wincheap, Canterbury [1]	To deliver an off-slip in the coastbound direction	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	A228 and B2160 Junction Improvements with B2017 Badsell Road [1]	Junction improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	A28 Chart Road, Ashford [1]	Strategic highway improvement	0	0	0	0	0	0
32	Bath Street, Gravesend	Bus Lane project - Fastrack programme extension	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	Dover Bus Rapid Transit	To provide a high quality and reliable public transport service in the Dover area, funded from Housing Infrastructure funding	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 to 2034-35

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
34	Fastrack Full Network - Bean Road Tunnels [1]	Construction of a tunnel linking Bluewater and the Eastern Quarry Development	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	Green Corridors	Programme of schemes to improve walking and cycling in Ebbsfeet	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	Herne Relief Road [1]	Provision of an alternative route between Herne Bay and Canterbury to avoid Herne village	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	Housing Infrastructure Fund - Swale Infrastructure Projects	Improvements to A249 Junctions at Grovehurst Road and Keycol Roundabout	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	Bearsted Road Improvements - formerly Kent Medical Campus (National Productivity Investment Fund - NPIF)	Project to ease congestion in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
41	Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (Thamesway) [1]	Strategic highway improvement in Dartford & Gravesham	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	LED Conversion	Upgrading street lights to more energy efficient LED lanterns & implementation of Central Monitoring System	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	Maidstone Integrated Transport [1]	Improving transport links with various schemes in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	Rathmore Road Link	Road improvement scheme	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	Sturry Link Road, Canterbury [1]	Construction of bypass	68	90	0	0	0	0
46	Thanet Parkway	Construction of Thanet Parkway Railway Station to enhance rail access in east Kent and act as a catalyst for economic and housing growth	0	0	0	0	0	0
47	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 & M20 Interchange Upgrades [4]	Initial works for a scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide free flowing interchange wherever possible	0	0	0	0	0	0
48	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington) [4]	Initial works on the creation of a relief road	0	0	0	0	0	0

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2025-26 to 2034-35

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
49	Zebra Funding - Electric Buses and infrastructure	Grant funded projects for electric buses and infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
50	Folkestone Brighter Futures	A package of transport and public realm improvements from Folkestone Central Station through to the Town Centre, funded from Levelling Up Fund 2, which KCC are delivering on behalf of Folkestone and Hythe District Council	0	0	0	0	0	0
51	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) [1]	Grant funded project to provide electric vehicle infrastructure	1,150	1,171	1,193	1,215	4,030	0
52	National Bus Strategy - Bus Service Improvement Plan	Part of the National Bus Strategy for England to provide improved quality buses and services	0	0	0	0	0	0
53	M20 Junction 7	Highway improvements at M20 junction 7	0	0	0	0	0	0
54	Thames Way (STIPS)		0	0	0	0	0	0
55	Manston to Haine Link [1]	A package of new highway links and improved highway infrastructure linking strategic development in Westwood and Manston	0	0	0	0	0	0
56	Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) Landscaping Improvements	To deliver an exemplar approach to design and maintenance of green infrastructure and the creation of ecological value at key gateways into the Garden City	0	0	0	0	0	0
57	Tunnel Fans	To enhance fans at Chestfield Tunnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
58	**Total Individual Projects**		**5,573**	**1,775**	**1,695**	**1,715**	**4,530**	**0**
59	**Total - Growth, Environment & Transport**		**71,965**	**68,167**	**68,087**	**68,107**	**70,922**	**62,608**

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved
[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2025-26 to 2034-35
[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme
[4] Initial works only are reflected, with the main scheme in the Potential Projects section, whilst awaiting award of funding.

APPENDIX C - POTENTIAL CAPITAL PROJECTS 2025-26 TO 2034-35 BY YEAR

These projects are currently very high level and commencement is subject to business case approval and affordable funding solutions identified.

Directorate	Potential Forthcoming Projects	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Shortfall on Council's Office and Highways Network to Maintain Backlogs at Steady State							
DCED	Modernisation of Assets	Maintaining KCC's Office Estate	101,790	5,337	10,248	10,500	12,705
CYPE	Schools Annual Planned Enhancement	Planned and reactive capital projects to keep schools open and operational	53,500	1,000	5,000	5,000	5,500
CYPE	Schools Modernisation Programme	Improving and upgrading school buildings including removal of temporary classrooms	43,500		4,000	4,000	4,500
GET	Highways Asset Management, Annual Maintenance and Programme of Significant and Urgent Safety Critical Works	Maintaining Kent's Roads	1,321,101	105,034	110,285	115,800	121,590
GET	Public Rights of Way	Structural improvements of public rights of way	25,130	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513
Potential Forthcoming Projects							
ASCH	Extra Care Facilities	Provision of Extra Care Accommodation	16,800		4,000	4,000	8,800
GET	Casualty Reduction/Congestion Management Schemes	Casualty reduction/congestion management scheme	7,500	7,500			
GET	Walking/Cycling/Public Transport Improvement Schemes	Walking, cycling and public transport improvement schemes	43,100	8,200	7,500	6,400	3,000
GET	Transitioning Fleet to EV	Transitioning Fleet to EV	7,500				2,500
GET	Kent Scientific Services	Renewal/Modernisation of laboratory facilities	10,000		10,000		
GET	Programme of Waste site Infrastructure Requirements	Programme of Waste Site Infrastructure Requirements	53,300	5,300	11,000	5,000	16,000
GET	Designated Funds	Programme of projects related to the Lower Thames Crossing	2,737	2,737			
GET	Dover Access Improvements	Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid to improve the efficiency of the port and also reduce congestion on the strategic and local road network	58,470	58,470			
GET	Thanet Way	Structural improvements to the Thanet Way A299	20,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
GET	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington)	Creation of a relief road	72,450	2,295	11,419	27,174	28,933
GET	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 and M20 Interchange Upgrades	Scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide freeflowing interchange wherever possible	243,000	2,982	2,488	15,114	105,602
DCED	Future Assets	Asset review to include community services, office estate and specialist assets	52,000	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
DCED	Further Provision for Member Accomodation in Invicta House	Further Provision for Member Accomodation in Invicta House	3,000		3,000		
DCED	Renewable Energy Programme	Renewable energy source options to work towards Net Zero target	32,000	8,000	7,500	8,000	8,500
	Total Potential Forthcoming Projects		**2,166,878**	**220,868**	**200,453**	**215,001**	**331,643**

APPENDIX C - POTENTIAL CAPITAL PROJECTS 2025-26 TO 2034-35 BY YEAR

These projects are currently very high level and commencement is subject to business case approval and affordable funding s

Directorate	Potential Forthcoming Projects	Description of Project	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£'000s	£000s
Shortfall on Council's Office and Highways Network to Maintain Backlogs at Steady State								
DCED	Modernisation of Assets	Maintaining KCC's Office Estate	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500	10,500
CYPE	Schools Annual Planned Enhancement	Planned and reactive capital projects to keep schools open and operational	5,500	6,000	6,000	6,500	6,500	6,500
CYPE	Schools Modernisation Programme	Improving and upgrading school buildings including removal of temporary classrooms	4,500	5,000	5,000	5,500	5,500	5,500
GET	Highways Asset Management, Annual Maintenance and Programme of Significant and Urgent Safety Critical Works	Maintaining Kent's Roads	127,669	134,052	140,755	147,793	155,182	162,941
GET	Public Rights of Way	Structural improvements of public rights of way	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513
Potential Forthcoming Projects								
ASCH	Extra Care Facilities	Provision of Extra Care Accommodation						
GET	Casualty Reduction/Congestion Management Schemes	Casualty reduction/congestion management scheme						
GET	Walking/Cycling/Public Transport Improvement Schemes	Walking, cycling and public transport improvement schemes	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
GET	Transitioning Fleet to EV	Transitioning Fleet to EV	5,000					
GET	Kent Scientific Services	Renewal/Modernisation of laboratory facilities						
GET	Programme of Waste site Infrastructure Requirements	Programme of Waste Site Infrastructure Requirements	16,000					
GET	Designated Funds	Programme of projects related to the Lower Thames Crossing						
GET	Dover Access Improvements	Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid to improve the efficiency of the port and also reduce congestion on the strategic and local road network						
GET	Thanet Way	Structural improvements to the Thanet Way A299						
GET	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington)	Creation of a relief road	2,629					
GET	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 and M20 Interchange Upgrades	Scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide freeflowing interchange wherever possible	67,901	45,617	626	2,670		
DCED	Future Assets	Asset review to include community services, office estate and specialist assets	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500		
DCED	Further Provision for Member Accomodation in Invicta House	Further Provision for Member Accomodation in Invicta House						
DCED	Renewable Energy Programme	Renewable energy source options to work towards Net Zero target						
	Total Potential Forthcoming Projects		**251,712**	**213,182**	**174,894**	**184,976**	**183,195**	**190,954**

APPENDIX D - High Level 2025-28 Revenue Plan and Financing

													INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES					
2024-25				**2025-26**			**2026-27**			**2027-28**		
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	1,526,088.5	0.0	1,526,088.5	1,604,182.4	0.0	1,604,182.4
			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	1,526,088.5	0.0	1,526,088.5	1,604,182.4	0.0	1,604,182.4
			SPENDING									
31,721.5		31,721.5	Base Budget Changes	10,425.7	-744.1	9,681.6	-100.0	0.0	-100.0	4,000.0	0.0	4,000.0
35.0		35.0	Reduction in Grant Income	3,234.7	11,276.2	14,510.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
10,798.4	505.1	11,303.5	Pay	21,645.7	626.9	22,272.6	12,524.5	0.0	12,524.5	11,863.6	0.0	11,863.6
49,568.4	1,695.6	51,264.0	Prices	41,407.1	1,944.4	43,351.5	31,361.3	0.0	31,361.3	27,562.6	0.0	27,562.6
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	22,989.0	24,150.3	47,139.3	23,025.6	-15,600.0	7,425.6	22,979.6	-14,200.0	8,779.6
16,393.1	-10,327.3	6,065.8	Government & Legislative	-14,751.5	5,814.5	-8,937.0	454.5	-19,502.4	-19,047.9	3,249.5	-1,898.1	1,351.4
15,712.2	-1,538.8	14,173.4	Service Strategies & Improvements	17,278.5	2,136.2	19,414.7	-757.6	236.5	-521.1	-803.2	-3,995.2	-4,798.4
209,578.3	-9,380.7	200,197.6	**TOTAL SPENDING**	**150,438.6**	**45,204.4**	**195,643.0**	**113,139.4**	**-34,865.9**	**78,273.5**	**115,483.2**	**-20,093.3**	**95,389.9**
			SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT									
-36,454.8		-36,454.8	Transformation - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	-30,834.5	0.0	-30,834.5	-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	469.6	-65.0	404.6	-4,243.5	0.0	-4,243.5	-171.2	0.0	-171.2
-15,406.6	-281.3	-15,687.9	Income	-20,109.3	0.0	-20,109.3	-6,344.6	0.0	-6,344.6	-6,643.8	0.0	-6,643.8
-10,967.6		-10,967.6	Financing	1,001.0	0.0	1,001.0	7,253.3	0.0	7,253.3	-2,166.3	0.0	-2,166.3
-11,910.2	-9.2	-11,919.4	Policy	-8,742.9	0.0	-8,742.9	-14,215.2	0.0	-14,215.2	-12,111.8	0.0	-12,111.8
-88,865.5	-290.5	-89,156.0	**TOTAL SAVINGS & INCOME**	**-62,716.1**	**-65.0**	**-62,781.1**	**-30,238.7**	**0.0**	**-30,238.7**	**-31,793.1**	**0.0**	**-31,793.1**
	7,210.7	7,210.7	Increases in Grants and Contributions	0.0	-25,209.8	-25,209.8	0.0	18,429.4	18,429.4	0.0	-8,876.7	-8,876.7
-88,865.5	6,920.2	-81,945.3	**TOTAL SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT**	**-62,716.1**	**-25,274.8**	**-87,990.9**	**-30,238.7**	**18,429.4**	**-11,809.3**	**-31,793.1**	**-8,876.7**	**-40,669.8**
			MEMORANDUM:									
			Removal of undelivered/temporary savings & grant	32,735.3	3,362.8	36,098.1	10,715.1	19,502.4	30,217.5	800.0	5,470.3	6,270.3
			New & FYE of existing Savings	-71,942.1	-65.0	-72,007.1	-33,259.2	0.0	-33,259.2	-25,949.3	0.0	-25,949.3
			New & FYE of existing Income	-23,509.3	0.0	-23,509.3	-7,694.6	0.0	-7,694.6	-6,643.8	0.0	-6,643.8
			New & FYE of existing Grants	0.0	-28,572.6	-28,572.6	0.0	-1,073.0	-1,073.0	0.0	-14,347.0	-14,347.0
				-62,716.1	-25,274.8	-87,990.9	-30,238.7	18,429.4	-11,809.3	-31,793.1	-8,876.7	-40,669.8
			Prior Year savings rolling forward for delivery in 25-26									
			TOTAL Savings for delivery in 2025-26	*-95,451.4*	*-28,637.6*	*-124,089.0*						

| | 2024-25 | | | | INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 2025-26 | | | 2026-27 | | | 2027-28 | | |
	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s		Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s
				RESERVES									
	27,481.5		27,481.5	Contributions to Reserves	42,428.9	14,200.0	56,628.9	43,817.1	14,200.0	58,017.1	43,538.0	34,300.0	77,838.0
	-24,739.6		-24,739.6	Removal of prior year Contributions	-34,545.8	-10,640.0	-45,185.8	-42,028.9	-14,200.0	-56,228.9	-35,796.1	-14,200.0	-49,996.1
	-14,877.4	-1,350.5	-16,227.9	Drawdowns from Reserves	-13,064.7	-25,598.1	-38,662.8	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	13,064.7	25,598.1	38,662.8	0.0	9,161.6	9,161.6
	-6,816.6	2,460.5	-4,356.1	**TOTAL RESERVES**	9,695.8	-20,766.2	-11,070.4	14,852.9	16,436.5	31,289.4	7,741.9	28,970.0	36,711.9
	113,896.2	0.0	113,896.2	**NET CHANGE**	97,418.3	-836.6	96,581.7	97,753.6	0.0	97,753.6	91,432.0	0.0	91,432.0
				UNRESOLVED BALANCE / SURPLUS				-3,959.7	0.0	-3,959.7	2,638.3	0.0	2,638.3
				ADULT SOCIAL CARE FUNDING UNRESOLVED BALANCE				-15,700.0		-15,700.0	-18,400.0		-18,400.0
	1,429,506.8	0.0	1,429,506.8	**NET BUDGET**	1,526,088.5	0.0	1,526,088.5	1,604,182.4	0.0	1,604,182.4	1,679,852.7	0.0	1,679,852.7
				MEMORANDUM:									
				The net impact on our reserves balances is:									
	27,481.5	0.0	27,481.5	Contributions to Reserves	42,428.9	14,200.0	**56,628.9**	43,817.1	14,200.0	**58,017.1**	43,538.0	34,300.0	**77,838.0**
	-14,877.4	-1,350.5	-16,227.9	Drawdowns from Reserves	-13,064.7	-25,598.1	**-38,662.8**	0.0	-9,161.6	**-9,161.6**	0.0	-291.6	**-291.6**
	12,604.1	-1,350.5	11,253.6	Net movement in Reserves	29,364.2	-11,398.1	**17,966.1**	43,817.1	5,038.4	**48,855.5**	43,538.0	34,008.4	**77,546.4**
				PER INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET									
				GROWTH	117,204.8	12,558.8	129,763.6	117,883.7	-16,436.5	101,447.2	106,103.6	-20,240.3	85,863.3
				SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-41,633.1	7,370.8	-34,262.3	-40,368.6	0.0	-40,368.6	-28,656.1	-8,729.7	-37,385.8
				RESERVES	4,138.3	-20,766.2	-16,627.9	22,909.5	16,436.5	39,346.0	-4,795.2	28,970.0	24,174.8
				NET CHANGE	79,710.0	-836.6	78,873.4	100,424.6	0.0	100,424.6	72,652.3	0.0	72,652.3
				CHANGE FROM INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET									
				GROWTH	33,233.8	32,645.6	65,879.4	-4,744.3	-18,429.4	-23,173.7	9,379.6	147.0	9,526.6
				SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-21,083.0	-32,645.6	-53,728.6	10,129.9	18,429.4	28,559.3	-3,137.0	-147.0	-3,284.0
				RESERVES	5,557.5	0.0	5,557.5	-8,056.6	0.0	-8,056.6	12,537.1	0.0	12,537.1
				NET CHANGE	17,708.3	0.0	17,708.3	-2,671.0	0.0	-2,671.0	18,779.7	0.0	18,779.7

								INDICATIVE FOR PLANNING PURPOSES					
2024-25				**2025-26**			**2026-27**			**2027-28**			
Core	External	Total		Core	External	Total	Core	External	Total	Core	External	Total	
£000s	£000s	£000s		£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
			Funding per the Local Government Finance Settlement & Local Taxation										
		11,806.0	Revenue Support Grant			15,680.3			16,101.0			16,448.1	
		117,046.1	Social Care Grant			137,143.6			137,143.6			137,143.6	
		26,969.4	Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund			26,969.4			26,969.4			26,969.4	
		11,686.6	Adult Social Care Discharge Fund			0.0			0.0			0.0	
			Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant			4,031.2			4,031.2			4,031.2	
		1,311.9	Services Grant			0.0			0.0			0.0	
		-	Children's Social Care Prevention Grant			6,207.1			6,207.1			6,207.1	
		-	Recovery Grant			0.0			0.0			0.0	
		147,382.5	Business Rate Top-up Grant			149,107.7			152,869.0			156,093.0	
		50,014.7	Improved Better Care Fund (iBCF)			61,701.3			61,701.3			61,701.3	
		51,080.2	Business Rates Compensation Grant			52,795.4			54,127.2			55,268.7	
		2,058.5	New Homes Bonus			1,926.7			0.0			0.0	
		-	S31 Grant for increase in employer NICs			9,361.1			9,361.1			9,361.1	
		3,544.6	Other Un-ringfenced grants			0.0			0.0			0.0	
		65,740.7	Local Share of Retained Business Rates			67,238.1			68,814.4			70,165.5	
		2,682.8	Business Rate Collection Fund			0.0			0.0			0.0	
		800,320.3	Council Tax Income (including increase up to referendum limit but excluding social care levy)			838,626.3			881,450.4			926,897.4	
		135,347.0	Council Tax Adult Social Care Levy			155,922.5			178,406.7			202,566.3	
		2,515.5	Council Tax Collection Fund			-622.2			7,000.0			7,000.0	
		1,429,506.8	**Total Funding**			**1,526,088.5**			**1,604,182.4**			**1,679,852.7**	

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2025-26 APPENDIX E

MTFP Category	TOTAL Core £000s	TOTAL External £000s	TOTAL Total £000s	ASCH Core £000s	ASCH External £000s	Public Health Core £000s	CYPE Core £000s	CYPE External £000s	CYPE Total £000s	GET Core £000s	GET External £000s	GET Total £000s	CED Core £000s	DCED Core £000s	NAC Core £000s	CHB Core £000s	CHB External £000s	CHB Total £000s
Original base budget	1,429,506.8	0.0	1,429,506.8	585,946.2	0.0		429,966.5	0.0	429,966.5	201,737.2	0.0	201,737.2	29,540.9	81,942.6	102,759.4	-2,386.0	0.0	-2,386.0
internal base adjustments	-836.6	836.6	0.0	54.4	436.6		-203.7	400.0	196.3	-404.8	0.0	-404.8	-518.8	241.9	0.0	-5.6	0.0	-5.6
Revised Base	**1,428,670.2**	**836.6**	**1,429,506.8**	**586,000.6**	**436.6**		**429,762.8**	**400.0**	**430,162.8**	**201,332.4**	**0.0**	**201,332.4**	**29,022.1**	**82,184.5**	**102,759.4**	**-2,391.6**	**0.0**	**-2,391.6**
SPENDING																		
Base Budget Changes	10,425.7	-744.1	9,681.6	7,800.0	-344.1		-3,300.0	-400.0	-3,700.0	6,692.1	0.0	6,692.1	0.0	-915.0	307.0	-158.4	0.0	-158.4
Reduction in Grant Income	3,234.7	11,276.2	14,510.9	2,960.5	0.0		0.0	11,276.2	11,276.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	274.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pay	21,645.7	626.9	22,272.6	-233.6	626.9		343.8	0.0	343.8	-122.6	0.0	-122.6	-93.0	-75.5	65.5	21,761.1	0.0	21,761.1
Prices	41,407.1	1,944.4	43,351.5	26,300.0	1,944.4		9,148.5	0.0	9,148.5	5,413.5	0.0	5,413.5	6.7	459.4	79.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Demand & Cost Drivers - Cost	48,209.4	0.0	48,209.4	30,900.0	0.0		17,309.4	0.0	17,309.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Demand & Cost Drivers - Demand	22,989.0	24,150.3	47,139.3	11,300.0	250.3		10,626.5	23,900.0	34,526.5	1,062.5	0.0	1,062.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Government & Legislative	-14,751.5	5,814.5	-8,937.0	796.5	709.5		0.0	-3,332.0	-3,332.0	-488.0	0.0	-488.0	40.0	0.0	-15,100.0	0.0	8,437.0	8,437.0
Service Strategies & Improvements	17,278.5	2,136.2	19,414.7	475.0	269.2		6,207.1	0.0	6,207.1	1,735.0	1,867.0	3,602.0	226.4	9,319.1	-184.1	-500.0	0.0	-500.0
TOTAL SPENDING	**150,438.6**	**45,204.4**	**195,643.0**	**80,298.4**	**3,456.2**		**40,335.3**	**31,444.2**	**71,779.5**	**14,292.5**	**1,867.0**	**16,159.5**	**454.3**	**8,788.0**	**-14,832.6**	**21,102.7**	**8,437.0**	**29,539.7**
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT																		
Transformation - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	-30,834.5	0.0	-30,834.5	-20,234.5	0.0		-10,600.0	0.0	-10,600.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transformation - Service Transformation	-4,500.0	0.0	-4,500.0	0.0	0.0		-2,450.0	0.0	-2,450.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-2,050.0	0.0	0.0	-2,050.0
Efficiency	469.6	-65.0	404.6	3,304.9	-65.0		-1,891.5		-1,891.5	150.0	0.0	150.0	-105.5	-309.4		-678.9	0.0	-678.9
Income	-20,109.3	0.0	-20,109.3	-6,207.1	0.0		-148.4		-148.4	-15,524.8	0.0	-15,524.8	-230.9	0.0	2,001.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Financing	1,001.0	0.0	1,001.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-8,021.0	9,022.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Policy	-8,742.9	0.0	-8,742.9	-728.9	0.0		-6,094.9	0.0	-6,094.9	512.5	0.0	512.5	-3,658.7	-872.9	0.0	2,100.0	0.0	2,100.0
TOTAL SAVINGS & INCOME	**-62,716.1**	**-65.0**	**-62,781.1**	**-23,865.6**	**-65.0**		**-21,184.8**	**0.0**	**-21,184.8**	**-14,862.3**	**0.0**	**-14,862.3**	**-3,995.1**	**-9,203.3**	**11,023.9**	**-628.9**	**0.0**	**-628.9**
Increases in Grants and Contributions	0.0	-25,209.8	-25,209.8	0.0	-1,801.6		0.0	-13,104.2	-13,104.2	0.0	-1,867.0	-1,867.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-8,437.0	-8,437.0
TOTAL SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	**-62,716.1**	**-25,274.8**	**-87,990.9**	**-23,865.6**	**-1,866.6**		**-21,184.8**	**-13,104.2**	**-34,289.0**	**-14,862.3**	**-1,867.0**	**-16,729.3**	**-3,995.1**	**-9,203.3**	**11,023.9**	**-628.9**	**-8,437.0**	**-9,065.9**
MEMORANDUM:																		
Removal of undelivered/temporary savings & grant	32,735.3	3,362.8	36,098.1	14,942.2	30.8		0.0	3,332.0	3,332.0	1,449.0	0.0	1,449.0	0.0	222.1	13,822.0	2,300.0	0.0	2,300.0
New & FYE of existing Savings	-71,942.1	-65.0	-72,007.1	-32,600.7	-65.0		-21,036.4	0.0	-21,036.4	-686.5	0.0	-686.5	-3,764.2	-9,425.4	-1,500.0	-2,928.9	0.0	-2,928.9
New & FYE of existing Income	-23,509.3	0.0	-23,509.3	-6,207.1	0.0		-148.4	0.0	-148.4	-15,624.8	0.0	-15,624.8	-230.9	0.0	-1,298.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
New & FYE of existing Grants	0.0	-28,572.6	-28,572.6	0.0	-1,832.4		0.0	-16,436.2	-16,436.2	0.0	-1,867.0	-1,867.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-8,437.0	-8,437.0
	-62,716.1	-25,274.8	-87,990.9	-23,865.6	-1,866.6		-21,184.8	-13,104.2	-34,289.0	-14,862.3	-1,867.0	-16,729.3	-3,995.1	-9,203.3	11,023.9	-628.9	-8,437.0	-9,065.9
Prior Year savings rolling forward for delivery in 25-26	0.0	0.0	0.0						0.0			0.0						
TOTAL Savings for delivery in 2025-26	*-95,451.4*	*-28,637.6*	*-124,089.0*	*-38,807.8*	*-1,897.4*		*-21,184.8*	*-16,436.2*	*-37,621.0*	*-16,311.3*	*-1,867.0*	*-18,178.3*	*-3,995.1*	*-9,425.4*	*-2,798.1*	*-2,928.9*	*-8,437.0*	*-11,365.9*
RESERVES																		
Contributions to Reserves	42,428.9	14,200.0	56,628.9	0.0	0.0		0.0	14,200.0	14,200.0	400.0	0.0	400.0	0.0	90.9	41,938.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Removal of prior year Contributions	-34,545.8	-10,640.0	-45,185.8	0.0	-1,600.0		0.0	-9,040.0	-9,040.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-160.0	-34,385.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drawdowns from Reserves	-13,064.7	-25,598.1	-38,662.8	0.0	-1,698.1		0.0	-23,900.0	-23,900.0	-160.0	0.0	-160.0	0.0	0.0	-12,904.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	14,877.4	1,271.9	16,149.3	567.2	1,271.9		0.0	0.0	0.0	475.0	0.0	475.0	262.0	0.0	13,573.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
TOTAL RESERVES	**9,695.8**	**-20,766.2**	**-11,070.4**	**567.2**	**-2,026.2**		**0.0**	**-18,740.0**	**-18,740.0**	**715.0**	**0.0**	**715.0**	**262.0**	**-69.1**	**8,220.7**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
NET CHANGE (excl internal base adjustments)	**97,418.3**	**-836.6**	**96,581.7**	**57,000.0**	**-436.6**		**19,150.5**	**-400.0**	**18,750.5**	**145.2**	**0.0**	**145.2**	**-3,278.8**	**-484.4**	**4,412.0**	**20,473.8**	**0.0**	**20,473.8**
NET BUDGET	**1,526,088.5**	**0.0**	**1,526,088.5**	**643,000.6**	**0.0**		**448,913.3**	**0.0**	**448,913.3**	**201,477.6**	**0.0**	**201,477.6**	**25,743.3**	**81,700.1**	**107,171.4**	**18,082.2**	**0.0**	**18,082.2**

	TOTAL			ASCH	Public Health	CYPE			GET			CED	DCED	NAC	CHB		
	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	Core £000s	External £000s	Total £000s
PER INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET																	
GROWTH	117,204.8	12,558.8	129,763.6	66,141.4	3,456.2	35,552.6	20,168.0	55,720.6	13,356.7	0.0	13,356.7	182.9	1,055.7	-10,826.1	11,741.6	-11,065.4	676.2
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-41,633.1	7,370.8	-34,262.3	-24,016.5	-1,866.6	-22,133.9	-1,828.0	-23,961.9	-1,372.5	0.0	-1,372.5	-3,795.1	-1,089.0	10,523.9	250.0	11,065.4	11,315.4
RESERVES	4,138.3	-20,766.2	-16,627.9	567.2	-2,026.2	0.0	-18,740.0	-18,740.0	315.0	0.0	315.0	262.0	-69.1	3,063.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
NET CHANGE	**79,710.0**	**-836.6**	**78,873.4**	**42,692.1**	**-436.6**	**13,418.7**	**-400.0**	**13,018.7**	**12,299.2**	**0.0**	**12,299.2**	**-3,350.2**	**-102.4**	**2,761.0**	**11,991.6**	**0.0**	**11,991.6**
CHANGE FROM INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET																	
GROWTH	33,233.8	32,645.6	65,879.4	14,157.0	0.0	4,782.7	11,276.2	16,058.9	935.8	1,867.0	2,802.8	271.4	7,732.3	-4,006.5	9,361.1	19,502.4	28,863.5
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-21,083.0	-32,645.6	-53,728.6	150.9	0.0	949.1	-11,276.2	-10,327.1	-13,489.8	-1,867.0	-15,356.8	-200.0	-8,114.3	500.0	-878.9	-19,502.4	-20,381.3
RESERVES	5,557.5	0.0	5,557.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	400.0	0.0	400.0	0.0	0.0	5,157.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
NET CHANGE	**17,708.3**	**0.0**	**17,708.3**	**14,307.9**	**0.0**	**5,731.8**	**0.0**	**5,731.8**	**-12,154.0**	**0.0**	**-12,154.0**	**71.4**	**-382.0**	**1,651.0**	**8,482.2**	**0.0**	**8,482.2**

APPENDIX E - 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						
Revised Base	**201,332.4**						
SPENDING							
Base Budget Changes	6,692.1	4,678.5	2,052.4	**6,730.9**	-38.8	0.0	**-38.8**
Reduction in Grant Income	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Pay	-122.6	-96.6	-15.4	**-112.0**	-10.6	0.0	**-10.6**
Prices	5,413.5	2,248.2	2,914.2	**5,162.4**	251.1	0.0	**251.1**
Demand & Cost Drivers - Cost	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Demand & Cost Drivers - Demand	1,062.5	27.5	1,085.0	**1,112.5**	0.0	-50.0	**-50.0**
Government & Legislative	-488.0	-500.0	0.0	**-500.0**	12.0	0.0	**12.0**
Service Strategies & Improvements	1,735.0	-15.0	1,800.0	**1,785.0**	0.0	-50.0	**-50.0**
TOTAL SPENDING	**14,292.5**	**6,342.6**	**7,836.2**	**14,178.8**	**213.7**	**-100.0**	**113.7**
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT							
Transformation - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Transformation - Service Transformation	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Efficiency	150.0	0.0	150.0	**150.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Income	-15,524.8	-1,576.7	-13,288.0	**-14,864.7**	-660.1	0.0	**-660.1**
Financing	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Policy	512.5	0.0	560.0	**560.0**	38.0	-85.5	**-47.5**
TOTAL SAVINGS & INCOME	**-14,862.3**	**-1,576.7**	**-12,578.0**	**-14,154.7**	**-622.1**	**-85.5**	**-707.6**
Increases in Grants and Contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
TOTAL SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	**-14,862.3**	**-1,576.7**	**-12,578.0**	**-14,154.7**	**-622.1**	**-85.5**	**-707.6**
MEMORANDUM:							
Removal of undelivered/temporary savings & grant	1,449.0	100.0	1,301.0	**1,401.0**	48.0	0.0	**48.0**
New & FYE of existing Savings	-686.5	0.0	-591.0	**-591.0**	-10.0	-85.5	**-95.5**
New & FYE of existing Income	-15,624.8	-1,676.7	-13,288.0	**-14,964.7**	-660.1	0.0	**-660.1**
New & FYE of existing Grants	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
	-14,862.3	-1,576.7	-12,578.0	**-14,154.7**	-622.1	-85.5	**-707.6**
Prior Year savings rolling forward for delivery in 25-26	0.0			**0.0**			**0.0**
TOTAL Savings for delivery in 2025-26	**-16,311.3**	**-1,676.7**	**-13,879.0**	**-15,555.7**	**-670.1**	**-85.5**	**-755.6**
RESERVES							
Contributions to Reserves	400.0	400.0	0.0	**400.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Removal of prior year Contributions	0.0	0.0	0.0	**0.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Drawdowns from Reserves	-160.0	-160.0	0.0	**-160.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	475.0	475.0	0.0	**475.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
TOTAL RESERVES	**715.0**	**715.0**	**0.0**	**715.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**	**0.0**
NET CHANGE	**145.2**	**5,480.9**	**-4,741.8**	**739.1**	**-408.4**	**-185.5**	**-593.9**
PROPOSED NET BUDGET	**201,477.6**						
PER INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET							
GROWTH	13,356.7	6,469.1	6,773.9	**13,243.0**	213.7	-100.0	**113.7**
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-1,372.5	-1,576.7	830.0	**-746.7**	-540.3	-85.5	**-625.8**
RESERVES	315.0	315.0	0.0	**315.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
NET CHANGE	**12,299.2**	**5,207.4**	**7,603.9**	**12,811.3**	**-326.6**	**-185.5**	**-512.1**
CHANGE FROM INITIAL DRAFT BUDGET							
GROWTH	935.8	-126.5	1,062.3	**935.8**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
SAVINGS, INCOME & GRANT	-13,489.8	0.0	-13,408.0	**-13,408.0**	-81.8	0.0	**-81.8**
RESERVES	400.0	400.0	0.0	**400.0**	0.0	0.0	**0.0**
NET CHANGE	**-12,154.0**	**273.5**	**-12,345.7**	**-12,072.2**	**-81.8**	**0.0**	**-81.8**

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

		TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
Significant Risks (over £10m)							
CYPE	High Needs Spending	The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block does not meet the cost of demand for placements in schools, academies, colleges and independent providers.	The Safety Valve programme does not deliver the reduction to the in-year deficit on spending to support children with high needs as planned leading to a higher deficit. Whilst initial progress in 2022-23 and 2023-24 was positive the council was ahead of target, 2024-25 has been a more challenging year where the council is forecasting to be £10m off-target due to a combined effect of higher prices and significantly higher demand in financial support in mainstream schools. If compensating savings cannot be delivered and/or these pressures cannot be retained in future years, there is risk the Council will become increasingly off-target by the end of the agreement in 2027-28.	The Department for Education withholds its contribution towards the accumulated deficit and/or the increased overspend leaves a residue deficit. The government requires that the total deficit on the schools budget to be carried forward and does not allow authorities to offset from general funds anything above the amounts included in the Safety Valve agreement without express approval from Secretary of State. This approach does not resolve how the deficit will be eliminated and therefore still poses a significant risk to the council	4		165.0
ALL	Non delivery of Savings and income and inability to replace one-off measures	Changes in circumstances, resulting in delays in the delivery of agreed savings or income and inability to replace one-off measures with sustainable permanent alternatives	Inability to progress with plans to generate savings or additional income as planned, due to changing circumstances	Overspend on the revenue budget, requiring alternative compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	120.7	
ASCH / CYPE	Market Sustainability	The long term impact of Covid-19 is still impacting on the social care market, as is several years of unfunded above inflation increases in the national living wage. There continue to be concerns about the sustainability of the sector as a result. At the moment all areas of the social care sector are under pressure in particular around workforce capacity including both recruitment and retention of staff especially for providers of services in the community, meaning that sourcing appropriate packages for all those who need it is becoming difficult. This is likely to worsen over the next few months with the pressures of winter, and increased activity in hospitals. Throughout this year we have continued to see increases in the costs of care packages and placements far greater than what would be expected and budgeted for, due to a combination of pressures in the market but also due to the increased needs and complexities of people requiring social care support.	If staffing levels remain low, vacancies unfilled and retention poor, then repeated pressure to increase pay of care staff employed in the voluntary/private sector in order to be able to compete in recruitment market. At the moment vacancy level said to be 1 in 10. The increases to the National Minimum and National Living Wage will create more challenges for the market to recruit and retain when other sectors may be paying more, so it may be that they will need to increase their wages accordingly. The changes to Employer National Insurance contributions affect all employers, but the reduction in the threshold to £5,000 pa hits this sector hardest because of the number of part-time and low paid employees.	Care provider closures are not an infrequent occurrence and whilst some providers that close are either too small or poor quality, others are making informed business decisions to exit the market. The more providers that exit in this unplanned manner further depletes choice and capacity to meet need, which can create pressures in the system regarding throughput and discharge from hospital thus potentially increasing price.	4	20.0	

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

			TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure £m	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure £m
ALL	2024-25 potential overspend impact on reserves	Under delivery of recovery plan to bring 2024-25 revenue budget into a balanced position by 31-3-25.	Overspend against the revenue budget in 2024-25 required to be met from reserves leading to a reduction in our financial resilience	Insufficient reserves available to manage risks in 2024-25 and future years	3	26.8	
ALL	Revenue Inflation	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Inflation rises above the current forecasts leading to price increases on commissioned goods and services rising above the current MTFP assumptions and we are unsuccessful at suppressing these increases. Each 1% is estimated to cost £14m.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	14.0	
ALL	Distribution of Grant Settlements	The government's reforms to funding allocations, starting with targeted approach to additional funding in 2025-26 ahead of broader redistribution of funding through multi-year settlement from 2026-27 and the consolidation of existing funding streams	Allocations to fund services and activities in Kent are reduced	The council is unable to make consequential adjustments to spending on the same timescale as funding changes resulting in further calls on reserves	4	22.0	
CE O	Council Taxbase assumptions	Collection authorities assume lower collection rates (increased bad debts) and/or change local discretionary discounts/premiums	Reduced council tax funding	The existing smoothing reserves for local taxation equalisation is insufficient to cover this ongoing base shortfall beyond 2025-26	4	12.0	
ALL	Capital - Developer Contributions	Developer contributions built into funding assumptions for capital projects are not all banked.	Developer contributions are delayed or insufficient to fund projects at the assumed budget level.	Additional unbudgeted forward funding requirement and potential unfunded gaps in the capital programme	4		12.0
ALL	Demand & Cost Drivers	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Non inflationary cost increases (cost drivers) continue on recent upward trends particularly but not exclusively in adult social care, children in care and home to school transport above the current MTFP assumptions and the Council is not able to supress these	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	12.0	
CYPE	Market Sustainability	Availability of suitable placements for looked after children.	Continued use of more expensive and unregulated placements, where it is difficult to find suitable regulated placements as no suitable alternative is available.	Unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves.	4	10.0	
CYPE	Home to School Transport	Lack of suitable local education placements for children with Special Education Needs	Parents seek alternative placements outside of their locality requiring additional transport support	Additional transport costs incurred resulting in an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves and potential recurring budget pressure for future years; or seek to demonstrate that the available local placements are suitable for the child's needs	3	10.0	

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

		TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
GET/DCED	Changing Government focus on funding to support the Net Zero/Carbon Reduction green agenda (capital spend)	Government has previously provided 100% funding for certain Net Zero/green projects e.g. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Funding towards the Bowerhouse and Kings Hill Solar Farms (£20m in total on community/HQ buildings, and £2m on schools), as well as LED installation, heat network or heat source pumps (gas, water). The PSDS grant is now moving focus from LED/Solar - despite the Council requiring 2 more Solar Parks as part of its Net Zero ambitions - and towards Heat Networks. Not only this, but whereas some projects were previously match funded, Government is now looking at >50% match funding requirements. The latest PSDS funding secured only funded 18% of the project. The cost of one large and one small Solar Park is in the region of £22.5m, plus a need for gas boilers on the corporate and schools estate to be replaced by heat source pumps (and/or hydrogen in the future).	The risk is that the Council has to find much higher match funding for future Net Zero projects, or review its expectations with regards to Net Zero 2030 and 2050 ambitions.	The consequence is that the Council has to put forward match funding for capital projects which can only come from borrowing or reserves. Borrowing then has a revenue implication and adds to the financing cost budget which is currently unaffordable, or accept that we will have to meet the target in other ways.	4		30.0
Non Attributable Costs	Insecure funding	The 2025-26 core budget includes £12.75m from insecure funding (company dividends, business rate pool and new homes bonus).	Previously it was recognised that core spending should not be funded from insecure/volatile sources and such funding should be held in reserve and used for one-off purposes	Funding is not secured at the planned level resulting in overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	14.2	

Page 37

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

			TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
GET Page 38	Waste capital infrastructure life expired and insufficient to cope with increased housing and population levels	A number of KCC's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) are life expired (35-40 years old) and require significant repair or replacement/reconfiguration. In addition to this, District Local Plan targets mean additional houses, and increasing population, presents a capacity issue for the service. Council Tax allows price inflation, additional tonnes (demography) and legislative changes to be taken into account, but does not allow for renewing or adding new infrastructure. The service started securing s106 from 2023 onwards, but unless other (Government) funding can be secured, the Council will need to invest in both of these areas. The introduction of new legislation (Simpler Recycling, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)) brings with it additional requirements and costs on how certain materials can be segregated, disposed of and new levies (Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) - Jan 28) will further add to the cost of disposal (estimated £12m-17m) for all tonnes that are disposed via the Energy for Waste plant.	Unless grant or other funding (s106, CIL) can be secured, the Council will need to fund replacing and reconfiguring (due to Government legislative unfunded changes) the existing sites, as well as building new sites. Outside of the capital programme, which includes building one new WTS, there is up to £50m investment required and noted in the 10-year capital programme. Funding has not been identified for these schemes, which include two new WTS and renewing existing sites, but is an indication of the level of investment required over the medium to long term and for which there is no currently identified funding source (one WTS/HWRC could be partner funded). Funding will also need to be set aside to react/prepare for changes in legislation (Simpler Recycling, EPR, ETS), although some of the EPR income can be used to reconfigure sites due to the new legislation, as well as to enable behaviour change in terms of improved recycling, re-use and hence lower disposal costs.	The consequence is that the Council has to put forward match funding, or the entirety of funding, for the new sites and/or reconfigured sites which means additional borrowing and the financing/borrowing costs that go along with this. £50m is the maximum financial impact figure, or accept the consequential reduction in capacity in terms of Waste Infrastructure, with impact of ETS then being estimated at £12m -17m per annum.	4		50.0
Other Risks (under £10m - individual amounts not included)						80.0	30.0
ALL	Full year effect of current overspends	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Increases in forecast current year overspends on recurring activities resulting in higher full year impact on following year's budget than included in current plan meaning services would start the year with an existing deficit (converse would apply to underspends). This risk is less significant than in previous year budget risk register due to a lower amount of base budget changes required in 2025-26 draft budget compared to 2024-25 budget	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

			TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
GET	Capital – asset management and rolling programmes including: Highways, Country Parks, PROW	The asset management/rolling programmes for KCC Highways are annual budgets and are not increased for inflation each year, meaning that the purchasing power reduces year on year as inflation is compounded yet the budget remains fixed.	Inflation pressures are incurred annually on these budget areas but the funding sources (Council borrowing, DfT grant) remain fixed and therefore this contributes to the 'managed decline' notion in that these budgets do not even maintain steady state as often the level of investment is significantly below (risk accepted by the Executive) the required level of spend - steady state asset management principles recommend £170m pa is spent. Plus year-on-year inflation is not budgeted for so the level of works commissioned reduces year-on-year also, which was exacerbated in 2023 with BCIS reaching 29% and RPIX 12%+ (inflation is estimated at needing to be £4m pa) just to stand still, plus then a £110m pa shortfall on asset management "steady state" (£170m, less actual capital spend of c£60m).	A funding gap exists annually, so steady state cannot be achieved, so unless budget provision is made, the level of capital/asset management preventative works commissioned each year will reduce. This will present a revenue pressure, as more reactive works are likely to be required, plus the respective backlogs for Highways Asset Management (c£700m) will increase exponentially. The risk represents the level of annual inflation required to mitigate this risk or accept that the asset will deteriorate.	4		
GET	Highways asset defects/failures as a result of static asset management funding	New risk of highways failures due to inadequate provision for inflation in DFT grants and KCC capital borrowing, leading to reduction in real terms value of grant/funding to the quantum of asset management/replacement works that can be effected. KCC spend c£60m per annum (DfT and KCC borrowing) but asset management principles calculate the annual spend requirement to remain at "steady state" to be £170m per annum and hence a £110m per annum shortfall.	An increase in reactive general repairs (revenue) as well as increased Cat 1 and Cat 2 defects where assets on the highways network will need replacement or extensive repairs well before the end of their useful economic life	Current funding levels are insufficient to be able to react to such defects, so the asset management backlog increases and more reactive revenue repairs are needed whereas proactive asset management/replacement is the preference. Previously an annual borrowing funded Cat 1 budget but this ceased 3 years ago when the no new borrowing stance was enacted	4		
ALL	Capital	Capital project costs are subject to higher than budgeted inflation.	Increase in building inflation above that built into business cases.	Capital projects cost more than budgeted, resulting in an overspend on the capital programme, or having to re-prioritise projects to keep within the overall budget. For rolling programmes (on which there is no annual inflationary increase), the level of asset management preventative works will reduce, leading to increased revenue pressures and maintenance backlogs.	4		
ALL	Contract retender	Contracts coming up for retender are more expensive due to prevailing market conditions and recruitment difficulties	This risk could result in a shortage of potential suppliers and/or increases in tender prices over and above inflation	Higher than budgeted capital/revenue costs resulting in overspends unless that can be offset by specification changes	4		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

	TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
GET	Investment in the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network	Insufficient funding to adequately maintain the PROW network. Estimated shortfall compared to steady state asset management principles is an additional £2.5m pa.	Condition of the PROW network suffering from under-investment. A £150k allocation was included in the 2021-22 but additional one-off and base funding is likely to be needed for a service that is already operating at funding levels below best practice recommended asset management levels. This has been further exacerbated by the increased usage several years ago arising from the covid related restrictions and national lockdown	The potential for claims against the Council due to injury and from landowners and the need to undertake urgent works that lead to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves.	4		
GET	Revenue - drainage and adverse weather	Persistent heavy rainfall and more frequent storm events mean insufficient revenue and capital budget to cope with the reactive and proactive demands on the service	An additional £1m was put into the drainage budget in 2021-22 but this was below the level of overspends in the two prior years and the risk is therefore the budget is not being funded at the level of demand/activity. More erratic weather patterns also cause financial pressures on the winter service and many other budgets. The risk is that this weather pattern continues and additional unbudgeted funding is required. A £1m saving was put into the budget in 2023-24 with a view to reducing the service standards/intervention levels in this area but due to the climate/persistent rainfall, damage to the network meant that additional works were required. Despite provisionally including £1m back into the 2024-25 budget, there is still a view that the budget is £1m light due to the changing weather climate/events and that the budget could see activity/demand require an additional £1m-£1.5m being required to reduce potential for flooding on the road network and the level of defects that then arise.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves	4		
GET	Changing Government focus on funding to support the Net Zero/Carbon Reduction green agenda (revenue spend)	The Sustainable Business and Communities team with Net Zero within its remit has received significant EU/Interreg funding which has helped plan and deliver the plan for Net Zero by 2030/2050. This funding ceased in 2023-24 and the Council has invested £0.7m (2023-24) into the base budget to create a permanent team, with £0.3m deferred until 2025-26 (budgetary constraints) to deliver this strategy/Framing Kent's Future priority. If such funding is unaffordable to the Council then Net Zero requirements won't be met.	The risk is that the Council has to fund any reduction or cessation of funding.	The consequence is an overspend against the revenue budget, requiring compensating savings or funding from reserves, as simply not delivering Net Zero by 2050 is not an option due to Government legislation being implemented.	4		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

		TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
GET	Waste income, tonnage and gate fee prices	The current market has seen a considerable volatility in the income received for certain waste streams (potentially due to other supply shortages), as well as increased gate fees due to the double digit inflation seen in 2023 (majority of Waste contracts are RPI which was 12% during the year). The budget for 2024-25 includes not only significant price pressures for contract inflation, gate fees and HWRC management costs, but also realignment of budgets from 2023-24 where the actual inflation levels at the point the contracts are uplifted being higher than budgeted. Inflation is reducing, but November OBR showed a slowing rate of reduction than March OBR.	Projected levels of income fall, or gate fees/contractual price uplifts are above budgeted levels which leave an unfunded pressure.	This will result in an unfunded pressure that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4		
CYPE	Recruitment, retention & cover for social workers	Higher use of agency staff to meet demand and ensure caseloads remain at a safe level in children's social work. The Service has relied on recruitment of newly qualified staff however this is being expanded to include a more focused campaign on attracting experienced social workers. There are higher levels of sickness and maternity leave across children's social work	Inability to recruit and retain sufficient newly qualified and experienced social workers resulting in continued reliance on agency staff, at additional cost. Higher levels of sickness and maternity leave resulting in need for further use of agency staff.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3		
DCED	Cyber Security	Malicious attacks on KCC systems.	Confidentiality, integrity and availability of data or systems is negatively impacted or compromised leading to loss of service, data breaches and other significant business interruptions.	Financial loss from damages and potential capital/revenue costs as a result of lost/damaged data and need to restore systems	3		
DCED	Strategic Headquarters	Sub optimal solution for the Council's strategic headquarters following the decision to market Sessions House as an entire site (with options on individual blocks)	Capital programme includes a capped £20m allocation for strategic assets project that limits the available options. Provision of a dedicated council chamber cannot be afforded within the current allocation. If the purchase falls through then KCC would need to re-assess all options.	Inability to address all backlog issues increases the risk of cost overruns and potential need for higher future maintenance, running and holding costs	3		
ALL	Capital - Capital Receipts	Capital receipts not yet banked are built into the budget to fund projects.	Capital receipts are not achieved as expected in terms of timing and/or quantum.	Funding gap on capital projects requiring additional forward funding.	3		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

					TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
ALL	Income	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust income estimates.	Income is less than that assumed in the MTFP.	Loss of income or reduced collection of income that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3		
GET	English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) and Kent Travel Saver (KTS) journey levels	ENCTS journeys have reduced over time, more so during the pandemic, so a £3.4m reduction was reflected in 2022-23 budget with a further £1.9m reduction in the 2023-24 budget. Should custom/patronage return to pre-covid levels, this would lead to a £5.3m budget shortfall. This is a national scheme and the Council has to reimburse the operators for running this on the Council's behalf. There was initially a ringfenced grant for this service, it then became part of the Revenue Support Grant and now no specific grant exists so the taxpayers of Kent fund this scheme and would need to fund any update.	Activity levels return to a level of journeys in excess of the revised budget, therefore causing a financial pressure.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years if current activity levels are not indicative of the new normal.	3		
Non Attributable Costs	Volatility on Investment Income	The 2025-26 budget for investment income from the treasury management strategy is £10.2m for 2025-26 and £9.9m for 2026-27. The outturn is heavily dependent on the path of short term interest rates, the level of cash that is available for investment, and the performance of investments. The budget already assumes a reduction in interest rates but a faster or more severe decline in rates could lead to underperformance versus the budget.	Performance of our investments falls below predicted levels as a result of volatility in the economy	Reduction in investment income leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3		
CYPE	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking (UAS) Children	Home Office Grant for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and (former UAS Children) Care Leavers permanently residing in Kent has not increased for inflation for several years	The Grant no longer covers the full cost of supporting UAS Children and Care Levers permanently residing in Kent. The Home Office does not increase the rates with inflation.	Overspend on the revenue budget, requiring alternative compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

		TOTAL £m	341.7	287.0

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
CYPE / DCED	Reduction in DFE grants for central services for schools and review of school services provided by the Local Authority	Local Authority grant funding to support schools continues to be reduced, equating to a cumulative total reduction of nearly £5m for the Council since 2019-20. Consequently the Council needs to review its relationship with schools and the services it provides free of charge.	Long term solutions cannot be implemented within timescales and may require schools agreement (which may not be achieved). There is also a risk that passing greater responsibilities to schools could have a possible negative impact on other areas of Local Authority responsibility if schools do not comply (for example: school maintenance). There is also the risk of further cuts to the Local Authority Central Services for School Grants in the future.	If this remains unresolved there is a risk that this will also have to either be met from reserves in future years or result in an overspend until a longer term solution is identified	3		
ASCH (PH)	Uplift in Public Health Grant	The 'real' increase in the Public Health grant is insufficient to meet additional costs due to i) price increases (particularly those services commissioned from NHS staff where pay has increased) and/or increased demand; and/or ii) costs of new responsibilities.	The increase in the Public Health grant is less than the increases in costs to Public Health.	(i) Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. (ii) Public Health Reserves could be exhausted	3		
ALL	Capital - Climate Change	Additional costs are incurred to comply with climate change policy	Project costs increase beyond budget	Overspend on the capital programme resulting in additional borrowing	3		
DCED	Enterprise Business Capabilities (EBC) - Now called Oracle Cloud Programme	Cost and/or timescale overruns on implementation phase for Oracle replacement	Unforeseen or higher than budgeted costs	Additional unfunded costs over and above the reserve set aside for the project	3		
DCED	Capital Investment in Modernisation of Assets	Unless the Council estate asset base is reduced sufficiently, there is risk of insufficient funding to adequately address the backlog maintenance of the Corporate Landlord estate and address statutory responsibilities such as Health & Safety requirements	Condition of the Corporate Landlord estate suffering from under-investment. Recent conditions surveys estimate an annual spend requirement of £12.7m per annum required for each of the next 10 years. Statutory Health & Safety responsibilities not met.	The estate will continue to deteriorate; buildings may have to close due to becoming unsafe; the future value of any capital receipts will be diminished. Potential for increased revenue costs for patch up repairs. Risk of legal challenge.	2		
ALL	VAT Partial Exemption	The Council VAT Partial Exemption Limit is almost exceeded.	Additional capital schemes which are hosted by the Council result in partial exemption limit being exceeded.	Loss of ability to recovery VAT that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	2		

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Appendix F: Budget Risks Register 2025-26

| | | | | | | TOTAL £m | 341.7 | 287.0 |

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Annual Financial Exposure	Estimated Lifetime Financial Exposure
						£m	£m
ALL	IFRS9	Local Authorities will be required to recognise the revenue impact on the General Fund of unrealised gains/ losses on pooled fund investments from 2025-26 when the statutory override ceases. The statutory override currently allows unrealised gains/losses resulting from changes in the fair value of pooled investment funds to be transferred to an unusable reserve until the gain/loss is realised once the financial asset has matured.	Any unrealised gain or loss as a result of stock market performance will impact on the General Fund. The likelihood and estimated financial exposure reflected reference an adverse scenario where the Council would need to recognise a significant loss on its investments, (as a scenario where the council recognises a significant gain, would be to our advantage and therefore not a budget risk).	A significant loss would reduce our General Fund and the council's financial resilience.	2		
CYPE	Capital - Basic Need Allocations	Estimates of future basic need allocations are included in the capital programme.	Basic need allocations are less than expected.	Funding gap for basic need projects which will need to be funded either by reprioritising the capital programme or by descoping.	2		
DCED	Highways unadopted land	Maintenance costs for residual pieces of land bought by Highways for schemes and subsequently tiny pieces not required or adopted.	Work becomes necessary on these pieces of land and neither Highways or Corporate Landlord have budget to pay for it.	Work needs to be completed whilst estates work to return the land to the original landowner	1		
DCED	Backlog of maintenance for properties transferring to Corporate Landlord	Maintenance backlog historically funded by services from reserves or time limited resources which have been exhausted. Properties that have been transferred to the corporate landlord require investment.	Urgent repairs required which cannot be met from the Modernisation of Assets planned programme within the capital budget	Unavoidable urgent works that lead to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	1		

Likelihood Rating

Very Likely	5
Likely	4
Possible	3
Unlikely	2
Very Unlikely	1

DRAFT

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 January 2025

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 fourth dashboard for 2024/25 and includes data up to October 2024.

Thirteen of the seventeen KPIs achieved target for latest performance and are RAG rated Green (the same as the last report). Three KPIs are below target but did achieve the floor standard and are RAG rated Amber (one fewer than the last report). One KPI is below the floor standard and rated Red (one more than the last report).

Recommendation(s):
The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the Performance Dashboard.

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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 fourth 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 October 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. Six of the eight KPIs in Highways & Transportation achieved target for latest month performance and are RAG rated Green. One KPI is below floor standard and RAG rated red, which is Emergency Incidents attended to within 2 hours (HT08). One other KPI was below target but above floor standard and is RAG rated Amber.

2.5. Seven of the nine indicators for Environment and Circular Economy were above target and are RAG rated Green. The other two KPIs are all RAG rated Amber; and both relate to municipal and Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) recycled and composted waste.

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3. Recommendation(s):

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

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4. **Contact details**

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Environment and Transport Performance Dashboard

Financial Year 2024/25

Results up to September/October 2024

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	AMBER	GREEN
HT08 : Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	RED	AMBER
HT12 : Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	GREEN	GREEN
HT14 : Member enquiries completed within 20 working days	GREEN	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	GREEN

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Highways & Transportation	**Simon Jones**	**Neil Baker**

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Month RAG	Year to Date	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Yr
HT01	Reported potholes repaired in 28 calendar days	98%	96%	97%	92%	GREEN	**95%**	GREEN	90%	80%	89%
HT02	Faults reported by the public completed in 28 calendar days	94%	90%	89%	89%	AMBER	**90%**	GREEN	90%	80%	86%
HT08	Emergency incidents attended to within 2 hours	99%	100%	94%	89%	RED	**96%**	AMBER	98%	95%	94%
HT12	Streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards repaired in 28 calendar days	89%	92%	95%	95%	GREEN	**93%**	GREEN	90%	80%	94%
HT14	Member Enquiries completed within 20 working days*	62%	77%	86%	87%	GREEN	**79%**	AMBER	85%	75%	61%
DT01	Percentage of public enquiries for Highways Maintenance completed online	64%	64%	65%	64%	GREEN	**68%**	GREEN	60%	55%	69%
DT03	Percentage of concessionary bus pass applications completed online	75%	80%	78%	76%	GREEN	**77%**	GREEN	75%	65%	77%
DT04	Percentage of speed awareness courses bookings completed online	90%	91%	91%	89%	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. This KPI 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.

HT02 – The year-to-date performance for this indicator is meeting target at 90%, but the target was missed by one percentage point in October.

HT08 – Attendance at Emergency Incidents within two hours of notification was a Red RAG rating in October, with very unsettled weather in which the MET office recorded the first named storm of 2024/25. This also contributed to the Year-To-Date result missing its target of 98% by two percentage points (Amber RAG rating).

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Year to Date	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper | Lower	
HT01b	Potholes due to be repaired (arising from routine faults reported)	1,659	1,242	1,129	974	789	**11,990**	**Above**	7,800	5,500
HT02b	Routine faults reported by the public due for completion	5,011	5,624	4,803	3,801	4,449	**38,805**	**Above**	34,000	26,200
HT06	Number of new enquiries requiring further action (total new faults)	7,279	7,306	5,688	6,849	6,819	**49,591**	Yes	57,000	47,500
HT07	Work in Progress (active enquiries/jobs) - end of month snapshot	9,976	8,077	6,299	5,958	**6,194**	N/a	Yes	6,800	5,500
HT08b	Emergency incidents attended	141	135	108	144	186	**1,159**	Yes	1,500	1,100
HT13	Streetwork permits issued	11,724	12,406	11,041	12,146	13,478	**86,572**	Yes	96,200	78,900

HT01b – The number of potholes due for repair is still showing as above expectations for the year to date, following high demand earlier in the year, but the monthly total for the latest month reported (October) this has now come back within expectations.

HT02b – Similar to HT01b above, although the total is above expectations for the year since April, since August monthly totals have been within expectations, continuing to reflect the easing of demand generated from new enquiries. .

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Environment & Circular Economy	**Simon Jones**	**Rob Thomas**

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

Ref	Indicator description	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	RAG	Target	Floor
WM01	Municipal waste* recycled and composted	42%	42%	43%	42%	**43%**	AMBER	50%	42%
WM02	Municipal waste* converted to energy	57%	58%	57%	57%	**56%**	GREEN	49%	44%
01+02	Municipal waste diverted from landfill	99.9%	99.9%	99.9%	99.4%	**99.2%**	GREEN	99%	95%
WM03	Waste recycled and composted at Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	45%	45%	46%	48%	**50%**	GREEN	50%	42%
WM04	Percentage HWRC waste recycled/composted & wood converted to energy at biomass facility	66%	65%	65%	65%	**65%**	AMBER	70%	65%
WM08	Overall score for mystery shopper assessment of Household Waste Recycling Centres	97%	98%	98%	98%	**97%**	GREEN	97%	90%
WM10	Customer satisfaction with HWRCs	No Survey	96%	No Survey	**96%**	No Survey	GREEN	95%	90%

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

WM01 – The KPI continues to maintain performance above the floor standard 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 and are now meeting target 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.

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Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Environment & Circular Economy	**Simon Jones**	**Rob Thomas**

Activity Indicators (Rolling 12 months)

Ref	Indicator description	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper	Lower
WM05	Waste tonnage collected by District Councils	559,908	558,504	558,620	555,553	**560,733**	Yes	570,000	550,000
WM06	Waste tonnage collected at HWRCs	100,407	101,581	104,489	107,243	**111,341**	**Above**	110,000	90,000
05+06	Total waste tonnage collected	660,315	660,085	663,109	662,796	**672,074**	Yes	680,000	640,000
WM07	Waste tonnage converted to energy at Allington Waste to Energy Plant	324,700	325,518	327,259	327,698	**331,523**	Yes	340,000	320,000
WM09	Wood Tonnage converted to energy at Biomass Facility	20,787	20,784	19,360	18,781	**16,491**	**Below**	25,000	21,000

WM06 – Waste volumes collected at HWRCs continue to increase, although are still 26% below the pre-covid level.

WM07 - Energy recovery for residual waste is in keeping with the legal requirements of the waste hierarchy, which dictates that recovery is prioritised over disposal methods such as landfill. Energy from Waste (EFW), saves approximately 200kg of CO2 per tonne of residual waste, compared to waste that is landfilled. Our EFW contract is an essential part of our waste disposal strategy, but we recognise that reducing the amount of waste going to EFW will reduce emissions and has financial benefits, and we are actively working to promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling with our residents and the other authorities in Kent to ensure that reducing our residual waste remains a priority.

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.

Division	Corporate Director	Cabinet Member
Environment & Circular Economy	**Simon Jones**	**Rob Thomas**

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	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Sep-24	YTD 24/25	YTD RAG	Target	Floor
EW1	Percentage of statutory planning consultee responses submitted within 21 days	92%	85%	95%	92%	95%	**90%**	GREEN	90%	80%

From: Robert Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment

                    Simon Jones, Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and
                    Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 January 2025

Subject: KCC Environment Policy revision

Decision Number: 24/00114

Classification: Unrestricted

Past pathway of paper: N/A

Future pathway of paper: For Decision by Cabinet Member

Electoral Division: N/A

Summary: This report presents the revision of the Council's Environment Policy to be formally approved and adopted by the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation(s):
The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment to:

(i)   APPROVE the revised Policy for adoption and implementation through the ISO14001 Environmental Management Standard framework; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Environment and Circular Economy to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

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1.   **Introduction**

1.1   The purpose of the Council's Environment Policy is to make a clear public commitment to implement a programme of environmental improvement. This includes reducing the environmental impacts of the Council's operations and services, taking account of future climate risk when planning services and taking decisions and working with partners, businesses and communities to address KCC's and Kent's environmental issues and priorities.

1.2   The current Policy was issued in September 2020. Since that time several environmental strategies and plans have been endorsed, these include the Environment Plan, the Adaptation Plan, Net Zero Plan, Framing Kent's Future, Kent's Plan Bee and Kent Plan Tree.

2.   Revised Policy and governance

2.1   The Policy is a key requirement to meet the criteria of the ISO14001 International Standard for Environmental Management. All services within the Council have been assessed against and certified to this Standard since April 2009, demonstrating that our environmental management, compliance and improvement plans stand up to external scrutiny and reflect good management practice.

2.2   Key revisions to the Policy include alignment to the Environment Plan, key strategies and the ISO14001 standard.

2.3   The implementation of the Policy commitments is overseen by the KCC Environment Board, chaired by the Director for Environment & Circular Economy. All Directorates are represented at Director level on this board and it reports to the Corporate Management Team. The revision of the Policy was informed by key officers and this Board.

2.4   The Environment and Circular Economy division will co-ordinate the implementation of the Policy through the Council's environmental programme, engaging with all services to deliver actions to achieve environmental targets. The team provides six-monthly progress reports to each Directorate Management Team as well as the KCC Environment Board.

3.   Options (other options considered but discarded)

Do nothing - Retain existing policy which was last revised and published in September 2020.

4.   Financial Implications

4.1   The review and revision of the Environment policy has been carried out by base-funded staff and at no additional cost to the council. The policy refresh will not place any additional financial obligations on the council. Staff time will be the main resource required to deliver the goals that are set out in this policy and will be undertaken by base funded staff from all services involved. The delivery actions are predominantly focused on increasing knowledge, communication and engagement and enhancing procedures and policies. This will be carried out by base staff taking into account relevant spending controls including Securing Kent's Future.

4.2   The commitment of staff resources to deliver the Policy will principally be through the Council's established environmental programme. The core staff resources sit within Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate.

4.3   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.

4.4 The proposed decision supports **Securing Kent's Future** as financing options underpinned by KCC's emerging green finance strategy will provide an alternative route to funding for environmental outcomes. Having the ISO 14001 certification opens up more funding opportunities, as some funders may require this standard. 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.

4.5 The updated policy will be there to significantly reduce the risk of non-compliance with environmental legislation. Not updating the policy will mean there is outdated information and a greater risk of KCC being fined due to non-compliance, therefore the updating of the policy further supports **Securing Kent's Future**.

5. Policy Framework

5.1 The revised Policy aligns with the Environment Plan and supporting strategies and plans, such as Framing Kent's Future, Adaptation Plan, Net Zero Plan, Kent Environment Strategy, Kent & Medway Energy & Low Emissions Strategy, Kent Biodiversity Strategy, Plan Bee Pollinator Action Plan, Kent Plan Tree and the Active Travel Strategy.

5.2 The environmental programme provides assurance that environmental risks and compliance with relevant legislation is adequately managed and addressed across all Council services.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken. There are no significant negative impacts but there is a possibility that there are some specific characteristic groups that may struggle to view the policy online so we will work with the digital services team to ensure this is accessible to all. As this Policy is aimed at improving environmental performance and is aligned with the Environment Plan there are likely to be more positive equality impacts than negative, particularly for Age, Maternity, Carers and Disability.

7. General Data Protection Regulation Considerations

7.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessment is not needed as this Policy does not require the processing of personal data.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The intention of the Policy is to continue to make a clear and updated public commitment for Kent County Council to implement a programme of environmental improvement. This includes reducing the environmental impacts of the Council's operations and services, taking account of future climate risk when planning services and taking decisions and working with partners,

businesses and communities to address KCC's and Kent's environmental issues and priorities.

8.2 Under the framework of the Environment Plan, the Environment and Circular Economy division will co-ordinate the implementation of this Policy through an environmental improvement programme compliant with the Environmental Management Standard ISO14001. It is important the Policy is kept up to date and aligned with new strategies and plans reflecting the Council's commitment to taking action in line with current environmental priorities for KCC and Kent.

9. Next Steps and Timescales

9.1 Subject to comments from Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee, the Policy will proceed to the decision to adopt the Policy which will replace the current policy published on the Council's website.

10. Recommendation(s)

> **Recommendation(s)**:
> The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Environment to:
>
> (i)   APPROVE the revised Policy for adoption and implementation through the ISO14001 Environmental Management Standard framework; and
>
> (ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Environment and Circular Economy to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

11. Appendices and Background Documents

- Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
- Appendix B – Revised Environment Policy
- Appendix C – Equality Impact Assessment
- Current Environment Policy published here: **KCC Environment Policy (kent.gov.uk)**

12. Contact details

Helen Shulver – Head of Environment
Helen.Shulver@kent.gov.uk **03000 417711**

Relevant Director: Matthew Smyth, Director for Environment and Circular Economy
03000 416676

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Robert Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment	24/00114

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: KCC Environment Policy revision

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree to:

(i) APPROVE the revised Policy for adoption and implementation through the ISO14001 Environmental Management Standard framework; and

(ii) To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Environment and Circular Economy to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision

Reason(s) for decision:
The purpose of the Council's Environment Policy is to make a clear public commitment to implement a programme of environmental improvement. This includes reducing the environmental impacts of the Council's operations and services, taking account of future climate risk when planning services and taking decisions and working with partners, businesses and communities to address KCC's and Kent's environmental issues and priorities. The current Policy was issued in September 2020. Since that time several environmental strategies and plans have been endorsed, these include the Environment Plan, the Adaptation Plan, Net Zero Plan, Framing Kent's Future, Kent's Plan Bee and Kent Plan Tree and therefore the current policy needs to be updated to align to these strategies.

The Policy is also a key requirement to meet the criteria of the ISO14001 International Standard for Environmental Management

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The proposal is being considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 14 January 2025..

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
Do nothing - Retain existing policy which was last revised and published in September 2020.

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

....
signed

....
date

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Kent County Council Environment Policy

Kent County Council plays a crucial role in ensuring Kent's future prosperity by fostering a healthy and thriving natural environment. Our approach is to minimise conflicts between growth, health and the environment allowing us to live within our ecological and financial means and deliver the national agenda amidst unprecedented change, challenge and opportunity.

Our focus is on protecting and enhancing the environment, and the quality of life for Kent's residents, through environmental conservation, mitigation, adaptation, protection and careful management of our resources and emissions. This includes managing the natural environment, air, water, heritage and waste.

Our aim is to fulfil our compliance obligations and statutory duties whilst influencing environmental outcomes. We will achieve this through evidence-based decision-making and shared knowledge within partnerships and internal and external collaboration.

We understand that the Council's activities and services have an impact on the environment and that we have a responsibility to manage environmental risks and opportunities effectively. We strive to minimise our use of natural resources for the benefit of future generations.

The Council is committed to continually improving the environmental management system to enhance environmental performance. This commitment is supported by the goals and priorities set out in the Environment Plan and supporting strategies, such as Framing Kent's Future, KCC Adaptation Plan, KCC Net Zero 2030 Plan, Kent Environment Strategy, Kent & Medway Energy & Low Emissions Strategy, Kent Biodiversity Strategy, Plan Bee Pollinator Action Plan, Kent Plan Tree and the Active Travel Strategy.

Our aim is to:

- Safeguard and improve our environment, supporting healthy communities and sustainable growth through delivery of the Environment Plan.

Our goals are to:

- Deliver green energy and reduce carbon emissions: by enabling the delivery of green energy infrastructure in the county, delivering new zero greenhouse gas emissions across our own estate and operations and collaborating with partners to achieve countywide net zero emissions;

- Adapt to our changing climate: assess climate change risk and impacts , and adapt to future climate conditions and severe weather to protect our residents;

- Reduce flood risk and effectively manage water resources: mitigate flood risk, improve community flood resilience, and promote sustainable drainage and water efficiency across the county.

- Protect and improve the natural and built environment: drive nature protection and recovery, reduce air pollution and ensure that our habitats are rich with wildlife and plants**.**

- Manage resources through a circular economy: minimise waste, reuse and recycle materials, enabling the development of a circular economy in Kent**;**

- Conserve and promote Kent's natural beauty and heritage: maintain Kent's historical environment and promote its unique countryside and natural beauty through public engagement.

To deliver this we will:

- Engage with partners and services by enhancing knowledge sharing to facilitate collaborative solutions and more efficient delivery models, balancing risk and innovation;

- Explore alternative delivery models that reduce reliance on public funds and find new, affordable ways to finance our environmental ambitions;

- Align local plans and strategic statements, to set broader environmental objectives and develop sustainable local plans that deliver greener infrastructure and attract investment;

- Apply a coordinated approach to decarbonisation, to ensure environmental risks and opportunities support future environmental outcomes;

- Embed our environmental priorities in decision-making to improve our environmental impact across the organisation and through our partnerships, supporting evidence-based approaches and maximising co-benefits;

- Enhance commissioning and procurement to include social value criteria such as climate, environment and sustainability to support local community organisations and outcomes;

- Use data and evidence to drive informed decision-making about climate and environmental impacts, policies, projects and programs;

- Increase awareness of environmental issues and opportunities through training, webinars and networking opportunities, to ensure staff and leadership have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities in achieving our environmental objectives;

- Communicate progress, successes, and challenges to ensure stakeholders are well-informed to enable the dissemination of information and requests for data internally and externally;

- Maintain and continually improve our Environmental Management System, meet our compliance obligations and prevent pollution.

This policy will be implemented and monitored through the council's environmental management system. This system is a structured approach to making environmental improvements, which is assessed against the ISO14001:2015 Standard by the British Standards Institute.

A progress report on the implementation of the policy will be reviewed annually by the Council's corporate management team.

Robert Thomas

Cabinet Member for Environment

Simon Jones

Corporate Director for Growth, Environment & Transport

Issued <mark>Date TBC</mark>

This leaflet is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages. Please call 03000 421 553 or email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk for details.

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title

Environment Policy Refresh 2024

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 and Circular Economy

Responsible Head of Service

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

Responsible Director

Matthew Smyth - GT - ECE

Aims and Objectives

Context:

Kent County Council is certified to the international standard for environmental management (ISO14001:2015). To meet the requirements of the ISO14001:2015 Environmental Management standard, the Council must regularly update and publish their Environment Policy to ensure it is aligned to any new Strategies and Plans issued by the UK Government and current environmental objectives and targets, strategic direction and context of the organisation, including aligning with county wide plans such as the Environment Plan.

The Environment Policy revision has been prepared by the Programme and Business Services and Energy and Climate Change teams to ensure current information is included and it meets the requirements of the ISO14001:2015 environmental management standard.

The Environment Policy is reviewed annually by the Corporate Management Team to confirm the policy remains valid. The policy has a full review/revision approximately every 3 years, unless there are any significant changes which will lead to the policy being updated sooner.

Aims & Objectives:

Revise the Policy in line with current environmental priorities and new strategies and plans issued since the Policy was last updated in 2020.

Equality Recommendation Summary:

The positive impacts identified relate to environmental improvements, which in turn have beneficial health effects for certain protected characteristics such as age, disability, maternity and carers.

There could be a disadvantage for anybody trying to access the policy if they have a visual imparement for example. This will be mitiated by consulting with the digital communications team to ensure that the correct resources are incorporated. A non-digital copy can be available on request.

When implementing the policy, new projects or initiatives will also be equality impact assessed.

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?

CMT who review the policy every three years, or when there is a big change.

Teams within GET who have policies which impact this policy.

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

Age: Access to an improved natural environment, increased facilities to use active travel and reduced emissions from energy/fuel use all lead to reduced air pollution. This reduces the likelihood of a range of acute and chronic health conditions. This will benefit all ages, in particular children and all people with existing medical conditions and obesity.

Reducing fuel poverty will also benefit health and wellbeing of adults, including mental health from living in a warmer and drier home with reduced fuel bills. For children there is a positive link between educational attainment and home environment/living conditions.

Promotion of remote/flexible working and active travel opportunities may provide more employment opportunities for young people who cannot drive or afford their own transport.

Disability: benefits from reduced air pollution minimising the likelihood of ill health or exacerbating existing conditions/disabilities. Reducing fuel poverty will also benefit health and wellbeing, including mental health from living in a warmer and drier home with reduced fuel bills.
Promotion of remote technologies and more flexible working practices may provide more employment opportunities for disabled people who have impaired mobility or cannot drive/use public transport.

Pregnancy/Maternity: children including the unborn foetus can be harmed by poor air quality. By reducing emissions with have a positive effect on improving poor air quality. Promotion of remote and flexible working practices may enable pregnant mothers to continue working at home to avoid ill health or travel risks.

Carer: reduction in emissions should have a positive impact on minimising instances of poor health and hence reduce the demand on carers due to a reduced likelihood that those being cared for will become unwell/ existing symptoms may be minimised.
Promotion of remote and flexible working may enable carers to fulfil caring responsibilities more easily, avoiding stress and poor mental health

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

No

Details of negative impacts for Age

Not Applicable

Mitigating Actions for Age

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Not Applicable

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

Yes

Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

There are only positive impacts with the delivery of the policy, however there is potential that visually impared people will have trouble reading the policy online.

Mitigating actions for Disability

Ensure that the policy is accesible for all and hard copies are available if required

Responsible Officer for Disability

Katie Jones

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

Are there negative impacts for Sex

No

Details of negative impacts for Sex

Not Applicable

Mitigating actions for Sex

Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Sex	
Not Applicable	

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

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

23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race

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

24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief

Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	
No	
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	
Not Applicable	

25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

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

26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity

Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
No	
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	

27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
No	

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

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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 January 2025**

Subject: **Kent Countryside Management Partnerships – Signing new Memorandum of Agreements and future funding**

Key Decision: **24/00125**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: **None**

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

Electoral Division: **All**

Summary: Kent County Council relies on the skills, knowledge and volunteers that the Kent Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs) provide in order to fully deliver our priorities under Framing Kent's Future. The Memorandums of Agreement (MoA) are formal agreements for the partnerships that are required as part of their overall governance and are essential for them to be able to access external funding. They are time limited to allow for review and revision and now require resigning as they expire. The signing of the Memorandums of Agreement commits KCC to hosting arrangements and the provision of small revenue funding arrangements.

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:

- Agree to the SIGNING of the two expired Kent Countryside Management Partnerships Memorandums of Agreement, and the signing of other Memorandums of Agreement when they expire;
- Agree continued HOSTING through the MoA for the four Countryside Management Partnerships;
- Agree to INCREASE annual contributions for the four hosted Countryside Management Partnerships in line with KCC's pay strategy annual pay award.
- Agree to INCREASE annual contributions for the Countryside Management Partnerships in line with inflation; and
- DELEGATE responsibility for the negotiation of any annual increase to contributions to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport as shown at Appendix A.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Kent County Council depends on the skills, knowledge, and volunteers from the Kent Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs) to achieve its goals under

Framing Kent's Future. The Memorandums of Agreement (MoA) are formal agreements that are necessary for the partnerships' governance and to secure external funding.

1.2 The Kent CMPs were established in the mid to late 1980s. Since then, there has always been an agreement between core partners. The current MoAs are the latest version of this ongoing agreement, which has been in place since the CMPs were formed. Previously, the Head of Service has signed these MoAs.

2. Key considerations

2.1 The key considerations are:
- That the documents are current and appropriate for the nature of the Partnership and its resources.
- That any financial risk is identified, and control mechanisms are in place to mitigate them.
- That the documents allow for the County Council to exit their commitments without significant penalty.
- That the financial contribution from KCC is agreed.

3. Background

3.1 The Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs) were created through policies from the Countryside Commission/Agency between the 1970s and 1990s. While many CMPs across the country have been absorbed into local authority teams, Kent's seven CMPs have maintained their local identity while serving the entire county.

3.2 CMPs are dedicated to managing Kent's green and blue spaces. They have experienced staff, dedicated volunteer teams, tools and vehicles. They play a vital role in conserving the Kent countryside and coast and also provide valuable community services. They deliver community, education, health, habitat and biodiversity projects and collaborate with a wide range of public and private partners to achieve better outcomes, make best use of resources and access various funding sources.

3.3 CMPs also promote positive land management in line with the Kent Downs and High Weald National Landscape Management Plans, biodiversity net gain, Plan Bee, Plan Tree and KCC's Environment Plan.

3.4 Each CMP is hosted by a local authority; four are hosted by Kent County Council and, as such, are a valuable internal resource for the KCC Environment Group, wider KCC teams and KCC Partners. The four KCC hosted CMPs are:
- Kent High Weald Countryside Partnership
- Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership
- Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
- North West Kent Countryside Partnership.

3.5 Additionally, Dover District Council host two CMPS, Romney Marsh Countryside Partnership and White Cliffs Countryside Partnership. Medway Council hosts one CMP, the Medway Swale Estuary Partnership.

3.6   Each CMP operates as an independent non-profit organisation within their host authority's structure. Kent County Council provides a fixed amount of core funding to each CMP annually, which has not increased for several years despite inflation.

3.7   Each CMP's governance, partnership, and funding arrangements are detailed in their Memorandum of Agreement, which acts as their governing document. As partnership organisations, CMPs work towards their partners' strategic priorities and report to them according to individual agreements and Service Level Agreements. Kent County Council, as a host authority and core funder, significantly influences the work of CMPs, making them essential for achieving many of the council's environmental goals set out in **Framing Kent's Future**.

4.   Options considered

1.   **Do nothing**: Without the current Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs), CMPs will struggle to access some funding streams because grant-giving bodies require proof of governance arrangements. The MoA serves this purpose. Without it, their ability to generate income and fund staff and resources will be affected.

2.   **Do not extend the agreements**: If the MoAs are not signed, an alternative method to continue the projects would be needed. This could involve Kent County Council (KCC) taking on the service, which would increase financial burden as a new team of KCC employees would need to be formed. This could impact the quality and quantity of work, cause delays, and potentially stop some projects altogether. It could also damage KCC's reputation.

5.   Financial implications

5.1   The CMPs receive a small contribution from KCC but are required to generate sufficient income to cover all of their costs, capital and revenue as well as maintain adequate reserves. Income is generated from other partners, who may or may not be signatories to the MoA, grant giving bodies, donations and project delivery. CMPs also raise external funds as partner funding does not cover the full cost in contributions – see tables 1 and 2 below. The relationship between the CMPs and Medway Swale Estuary Partnership is project based

Table 1 – KCC annual financial contribution

CMP	KCC core contribution 24/25	% of turnover funded by KCC contribution in 23/24
Medway Valley	£9,300	3.6%
Kentish Stour	£12,000	1.4%
North West Kent	£11,400	2.7%
Kent High Weald	£11,900	3.6%
White Cliffs	£10,500	1.7%
Romney Marsh	£10,500	1.7%
Medway Swale Estuary	£0	0%

Table 2 – other organisations annual contributions

CMP	Other core partner annual contributions 23/24	23/24 turnover *inc reserves and rolled project funding
Medway Valley	Maidstone Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council - £12,000	£259,474
Kentish Stour	Canterbury City Council and Ashford Borough Council - £7,000	£850,417
North West Kent	Swale District Council and London Borough of Bexley - £29,850	£425,417
Kent High Weald	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council - £76,194	£329,101
White Cliffs & Romney Marsh	Dover District Council and Folkestone and Hythe District Council - £140,360	£631,575

5.2 In addition, the four KCC hosted CMPs receive KCC in kind contribution as staff are employed by KCC and they adhere to KCC financial regulations and polices.

5.3 For many years, the annual financial contribution has not kept up with inflation, causing the CMPs to receive less funding in real terms each year. For KCC-hosted CMPs, the staff are KCC employees and receive pay increases as determined by KCC. Each Partnership has had to cover these increased costs by reducing expenses or increasing income, which has put a significant strain on them. It is proposed that from 1st April 2025, the annual pay award increase be applied to the annual contribution, and the financial contribution in Table 1 be adjusted for inflation.

5.4 This decision supports **Securing Kent's Future** because the contribution is much less than it would be if KCC provided the service itself and had to fund the entire team. Having the MoA in place also opens up more funding opportunities for the CMPs, as formal governance is required for external funders. Securing external funding means KCC does not need to increase its contributions to the CMPs.

5.6 The MoA provides a governance structure with other core partners, enabling SLAs and securing external funding. This helps maintain the viability and sustainability of the Partnerships as a county-wide service that KCC can use to support key priorities.

6 Legal implications

6.1 KCC legal service has advised on the MoAs, ensuring they align with KCC's strategy, budget, insurance, and liabilities. The advice confirms that the documents are binding and enforceable where KCC is the host.

6.2 To manage risks in the MoA, the Head of Country Parks and Countryside Partnerships is part of the CMPs' Steering Groups, maintaining relationships with funders, managing resources, and ensuring the CMP's business plan aligns with KCC's objectives.

6.3   Financial risks are managed through KCC policies, maintaining reserves, appropriate staffing levels, and recruitment based on income and budget. The Head of Country Parks and Countryside Partnerships oversees funding agreements and external bids to ensure commitments are within the CMP's resources.

6.4   If KCC decides to withdraw from a CMP, there are several options:
- Maintain hosting but withdraw the annual financial contribution, with the option to give notice to withdraw funding.
- Withdraw from hosting but maintain the financial contribution, seeking an alternative host body. If none is found, the CMP would cease, and staff would be at risk of redundancy, with normal KCC procedures applying and the CMP's reserve used to mitigate costs.
- Withdraw both the financial contribution and hosting, with the same outcome if no alternative host body is identified.

7.   Equalities implications

7.1   An EqIA has been undertaken. There are no negative implications in signing the MoAs and continuing the work of the Kent CMPs. There would be a negative impact if the MoAs were not maintained as this may cause the Partnerships not to be able to access funding to deliver projects to improve communities access to greenspaces, deliver inclusive events or wellbeing and educational projects.

8.   Data protection implications

8.1   A DPIA screening was carried out. It concluded that a DPIA was not required.

9.   Other corporate implications

9.1   The CMPs are a KCC delivery network that supports other areas of KCC, particularly within the Environment Group but also Public Health, Public Rights of Way and Education and Skills

10.   Conclusions

10.1   The Kent CMPs offer a countywide service that runs various community, education, health, habitat, and biodiversity projects. They support KCC's goals and provide good value for money by getting a lot of their income from external sources and partners. The MoAs are crucial for their governance, showing the commitment of the organisations on the steering groups and securing core funding. These documents are also important for winning funding bids.

10.2   KCC is a key partner and leader in the CMP service. Keeping the MoAs in place helps gain support from local authorities and other key partners like the Environment Agency and the London Borough of Bexley.

10.3   KCC's financial support is essential for attracting additional funding to carry out projects and efficiently achieve KCC priorities like Plan Tree.

11. Recommendations

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:

- Agree to the SIGNING of the two expired Kent Countryside Management Partnerships Memorandums of Agreement, and the signing of other Memorandums of Agreement when they expire;
- Agree continued HOSTING through the MoA for the four Countryside Management Partnerships;
- Agree to INCREASE annual contributions for the four hosted Countryside Management Partnerships in line with KCC's pay strategy annual pay award.
- Agree to INCREASE annual contributions for the Countryside Management Partnerships in line with inflation; and
- DELEGATE responsibility for the negotiation of any annual increase to contributions to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport as shown at Appendix A.

12. Background documents
- *Equality Impact Assessment*
- *Data Protection Impact Assessment*

13. Appendices
- Appendix 1: Proposed Record of Decision
- Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

14. Contact details

Report Author: Kate Boorman Job title: Head of Country Parks & Countryside Partnerships Telephone number: 07920 428494 Email address: kate.boorman@kent.gov.uk	Director: Matthew Smyth Job title: Director of Environment and Circular Economy Telephone number: 03000 416676 Email address: matthew.smyth@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Robert Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment	24/00125

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Kent Countryside Management Partnerships – Signing new Memorandum of Agreements (MoA) and future funding

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Environment, I agree to:

• SIGNING of the two expired Kent Countryside Management Partnerships Memorandums of Agreement, and the signing of other Memorandums of Agreement when they expire;
• HOSTING through the MoA for the four Countryside Management Partnerships;
• INCREASE annual contributions for the four hosted Countryside Management Partnerships in line with KCC's pay strategy annual pay award.
• INCREASE annual contributions for the Countryside Management Partnerships in line with inflation; and
• DELEGATE responsibility for the negotiation of any annual increase to contributions to the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

Reason(s) for decision:
Kent County Council relies on the skills, knowledge and volunteers that the Kent Countryside Management Partnerships (CMPs) provide in order to fully deliver our priorities under Framing Kent's Future. The Memorandums of Agreement (MoA) are formal agreements for the partnerships that are required as part of their overall governance and are essential for them to be able to access external funding. They are time limited to allow for review and revision and now require resigning as they expire. The signing of the Memorandums of Agreement commits KCC to hosting arrangements and the provision of small revenue funding arrangements

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The proposal is being considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 14 January 2025..

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
1. Do nothing: Without the current Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs), CMPs will struggle to access some funding streams because grant-giving bodies require proof of governance arrangements. The MoA serves this purpose. Without it, their ability to generate income and fund staff and resources will be affected.

2. Do not extend the agreements: If the MoAs are not signed, an alternative method to continue the projects would be needed. This could involve Kent County Council (KCC) taking on the service, which would increase financial burden as a new team of KCC employees would need to be formed. This could impact the quality and quantity of work, cause delays, and potentially stop some projects altogether. It could also damage KCC's reputation.

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

Countryside Management Partnerships MoA

Responsible Officer

Kate Boorman - 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

[Q07g_OtherActivityDetails]

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

Responsible Service

Kent Country Parks & Countryside Partnerships

Responsible Head of Service

Helen Shulver - GT - ECE

Responsible Director

Matthew Smyth - GT - ECE

Aims and Objectives

Agreement to sign exiting Memorandums of Agreement for each CMP - 4 KCC hosted partnerships and 1 hosted by Dover DC.

The MoAs provide a governance structure for the CMPs and a working agreement betwenn the core partners of that individual CMP. They are often required for external funding apllications.

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?

No

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

No

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

Partners of the CMPs including Local Authorities, Eurotunnel, Dover Town Counci and Environment Agency

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
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
Age and disability - Projects designed to provide positive improvements in access to the outdoors and peoples mental and physical wellbeing

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

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

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

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

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex

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

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

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

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

No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable

From: **Neil Baker – Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

            Simon Jones – Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 14 January 2025**

Subject: **Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards**

Key Decision 24/00110

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: N/A

Electoral Division: Countywide

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: The currently adopted Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards are outdated. These standards are used as guidance and in recommendations on planning application consultation responses issued by KCC as local highway authority. A new policy document has been developed based on surveys, data, best practice and Government policy changes and is recommended for adoption.

Recommendation(s): The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, on the proposed decision to

(i)   ADOPT the Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards 2024 as an approved policy; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

---

1.   **Introduction and Background**

1.1   The Kent Vehicle Parking Standards provide guidance on parking provision and layout for new developments in the county. Parking for all types of vehicle are considered, seeking a balance between the need to provide an appropriate parking provision to ensure the safe operation of the public highway and to encourage travel by sustainable modes. The standards represent a starting point for engagement between prospective developers and the local planning authorities and KCC as local highway authority on parking and layout matters in the context of site-specific considerations.

1.2   Parking standards are not new and were first introduced in Kent over 50 years ago. However, the approach to parking at local and national level has changed considerably in recent years and parking standards have evolved accordingly. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the concept of maximum parking standards was introduced with the aim of significantly lowering levels of off-street parking as a means of reducing car use. More recently, national government parking policy has sought to end 'unrealistic' restrictions on parking provision. At the same time travel patterns, car ownership and transport technologies have all been evolving and need to be taken into account.

2.   **Policy Framework and Applications**

2.1   As local highway authority, Kent County Council provides statutory recommendations to local planning authorities in their consideration of planning applications. Officers refer to a range of policy and guidance documents in their responses including vehicle parking standards, and recommend that developments be required to meet these standards or provide evidence to justify variations. Having a formally adopted parking standards document encourages developers to align their proposed parking provision with the standards and it also 'adds weight' to the County Council's evidence base in the event of an appeal situation.

2.2   Some districts have adopted their own parking standards as local plans have been updated (this is the case for Ashford, Dartford, Gravesham and Tunbridge Wells) with some variations to KCC standards and some new survey information and officers refer to these in responses. Other districts have adopted KCC's parking standards and have been requesting that KCC develop and adopt updated parking standards rather than progressing their own. Given the close interactions between Kent districts, it is considered sensible for KCC as highway authority to produce an updated policy incorporating the latest best practice and to promote a consistent approach in line with Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026.

2.3   If adopted this guidance will supersede all previous KCC parking standards, including the Kent and Medway Structure Plan: Supplementary Planning Guidance 4 (2006) in respect of non-residential developments, and the Kent Design Guide: Interim Guidance Note 3 (2008) in respect of residential developments.

2.4   Good design in new development is an essential prerequisite for the effective application of parking provision. The current residential parking standards are part of the Kent Design Guide (KDG) and it is intended that the new combined standards will be hosted within the planned 'web-based' update to the Kent Design Guide which is under development.

2.5   KCC is leading the work to produce an updated KDG with support from *Design South East* (a not-for-profit organisation providing design advice and training to local government and the development sector). Workshops have been held with key stakeholders including officers from the Kent district councils and attendees have been very supportive.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

3.1   Do nothing. Currently there is a mix of some districts and boroughs with their own adopted parking standards as local plans have been updated whilst others have adopted KCC's parking standards leading to an inconsistent approach across Kent. Given the close interactions between Kent districts, it is considered sensible for KCC as highway authority to produce an updated policy incorporating the latest best practice and to promote a consistent approach in line with Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026.

4.   Key Updates

4.1   The updated parking standards included at **Appendix B** to this report are largely an evolution of the existing standards, benefiting from surveys of new sites, local and national best practice and Government policy updates. Updates include:
- Policy context from the latest National Planning Policy Framework (2023). For example 'maximum' standards have been removed and any meaningful reduction needs a suitable evidence base demonstrating a sustainable location and quality provision for non car travel choices.
- Increase in minimum parking bay and garage dimensions to reflect the growth in car size.
- Electric vehicle parking best practice and requirements in line with Building Regulations.
- Guidance on sustainable travel initiatives including car clubs and travel plans
- Information on the TRICS (Trip Rate Information Computer System) database which provides estimates of trip generation.
- Accessible vehicle and cycle parking layouts in line with Department for Transport Inclusive Mobility Guidance (2021)
- Good practice in design from national research and policy such as Building for a Healthy Life (2020)
- Examples from Kent experience of good (and bad) practice to inform parking layouts.
- Rear parking courts are only now promoted as part of a through route or if they are overlooked by surrounding properties and any 'allocated' parking needs to be well related to the associated property.
- The standards align with the reclassification of land-use classes introduced by Government in September 2020

5.   Consultation

5.1   At the beginning of the process the proposal to update the parking standards was reported to the Kent Planning Officers Group and a draft document was published as part of the consultation on the updated Kent Design Guide (KDG) which occurred during 2020. The consultation web site, including the parking standards, was still on line and able to be referred to as 'emerging' until May 2023.

5.2   Feedback on the consultation was positive regarding the format, the layout, the relation to National Guidance and the various technical appendices, including the draft parking standards, which were generally welcomed by the districts and

developers. However, it was noted that significant gaps remained in the content before it could be considered for full launch, and the inclusion of some elements of the guide as separate downloadable pdf documents also raised some criticism.

5.3 Due to resourcing pressures, the KDG update was subsequently put on hold and, whilst it is now being taken forward again, rather than seek adoption for the KDG and all of its associated documents, it is intended that KDG becomes an on-line guide in order to be kept more up to date with evolving best practice and that associated policy documents relating to specific standards would be adopted separately.

5.4 Since the consultation the land use classes appendix has been updated to reflect its re-categorisation by Government and further examples of good practice in terms of design and layout have been included.

5.5 At a KDG engagement event held with district council officers in November 2024 the intention to move forward with the adoption of the parking standards was reported and welcomed by the district representatives.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications of adopting the updated parking standards.

7. Equalities Implications

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and confirms there are no negative equalities implications.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 There are no legal implications.

9. Data Implications

9.1 There are no implications in terms of use of personal data.

10. Conclusions

10.1 The Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards are used as guidance and in recommendations on planning application consultation responses issued by KCC as local highway authority. The current standards were adopted some 20 years ago and, whilst generally still useful as a starting point, they do not include the latest best practice or align with Government guidance and can be discredited simply due to their age. Whilst some districts have adopted their own parking standards, others have not and it is considered sensible for KCC as highway authority to produce an updated policy and promote a consistent approach. A new policy document has therefore been developed based on surveys, data, best practice and Government policy changes. It has been consulted on with stakeholders and is now recommended for adoption.

11. Recommendation(s)

> **Recommendation(s)**:
>
> The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse, or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, on the proposed decision to
>
> (i) ADOPT the Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards 2024 as an approved policy; and
>
> (ii) To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

12. Appendices and Background Documents

Appendix A – Proposed Record of Decision
Appendix B – Vehicle Parking Standards
Equality Impact Assessment

13. Contact details

Report Author: Relevant Director:

Sally Benge   Simon Jones, Director of Growth,
Transport & Development Manager East   Environment and Transport
Kent
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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	24/00110

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport I agree to:

(i)   ADOPT the Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards 2024 as an approved policy; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision

Reason(s) for decision:
The currently adopted Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards are outdated. These standards are used as guidance and in recommendations on planning application consultation responses issued by KCC as local highway authority. A new policy document has been developed based on surveys, data, best practice and Government policy changes.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The proposal is being considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 14 January 2025..

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
Do nothing. Currently there is a mix of some districts and boroughs with their own adopted parking standards as local plans have been updated whilst others have adopted KCC's parking standards leading to an inconsistent approach across Kent. Given the close interactions between Kent districts, it is considered sensible for KCC as highway authority to produce an updated policy incorporating the latest best practice and to promote a consistent approach in line with Framing Kent's Future 2022-2026.

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

....
signed

....
date

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Kent County Council's Parking Standards

1. Introduction

Background

1. This guidance sets out the parking standards for new developments in Kent. It considers parking for all types of vehicles and seeks to balance the need to provide an appropriate parking provision, ensure the safe operation of the public highway and encourage travel by sustainable modes. It represents a starting point for engagement with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities on parking and layout matters and promotes a pragmatic approach that can also be informed by site-specific considerations as appropriate.

2. Parking standards are not new and were first introduced in Kent over 50 years ago. However, the approach to parking at local and national level has changed considerably in recent years and parking standards have evolved accordingly. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the concept of maximum parking standards was introduced with the aim of significantly lowering levels of off-street parking as a means of reducing car use. With the introduction of Manual for Streets in 2007, the emphasis for residential development switched to the promotion of some unallocated, on-street parking. More recently, national government parking policy has sought to end 'unrealistic' restrictions on parking provision.

3. This guidance aligns with the current approach to parking. It should, however, be recognised that travel patterns, car ownership and transport technologies are evolving. Parking design will need to be flexible in the face of technology-driven changes to the way we use vehicles and therefore this guidance is likely to be regularly updated as new innovation that impacts the way we travel comes forward.

4. Once adopted this guidance will supersede all previous Kent County Council parking standards, including the Kent and Medway Structure Plan: Supplementary Planning Guidance 4 (2006) in respect of non-residential developments, and the Kent Design Guide: Interim Guidance Note 3 (2008) in respect of residential developments.

Policy Context

5. National planning policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which provides further detailed guidance on the policies set out in the NPPF.

6. This guidance has been prepared in accordance with the policy context set out in paragraph 117 of the NPPF, which states that:

    "Applications for development should:

    a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;

    b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;

    c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;

    d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and

    e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations."

7. The NPPF also states at paragraph 113 that: *"Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of this Framework). In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists."*

Application of the Standards

8. This document provides guidance on appropriate parking standards for new developments within the Kent County Council (KCC) area. It is intended to be flexible and to be the starting point for dialogue with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities.

9. Kent is a large and diverse county and hence identifying an appropriate level of car parking provision should take account of local circumstances. This includes accessibility to public transport, levels of car ownership, existing parking controls and local travel patterns. However, where the proposed supply of parking deviates significantly from the recommended standard, a detailed justification will be required.

10. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should be used to support and justify proposed parking arrangements. Developers are advised to engage with the Local Highway Authority prior to submitting a planning application and to include a clear parking allocation plan within the submission. The suitability of the proposed parking area in terms of its design, size and number of spaces will be assessed as part of the planning application. A Management Plan may also be required to ensure the parking can operate effectively. Further details can be found at: Highway pre-application advice - Kent County Council[1]

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[1] Highway pre-application advice - Kent County Council *https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/planning-and-land/planning-applications/planning-advice/highway-pre-application-advice*

11. The Objectives and Principles contained in the Kent Design Guide should be followed when incorporating parking within the design for developments.

2. Parking for Residential Uses

Layout and Design

12. Providing the right amount of infrastructure for parking relies upon robust and thoughtful design. Parking provision should be an integral part of the design of the development, and be considered at an early stage in the planning process. It is important that the amount, location, and critically, the layout of residential parking is appropriate to the development, for the benefit of future residents.

13. Besides providing an appropriate number of parking spaces, parking design must consider how parking spaces will be used in practice. Parking spaces which are not well-designed and convenient will not be used as intended.

14. Car parking should be designed so that it is well-integrated with and does not detract from the public realm, particularly in high density developments. The provision of parking should not dominate the street scene. The Ashmere and Alkerden villages at Whitecliffe, Ebbsfleet, show how parking has been located discretely, to the side of the buildings or behind the building line.

Car ports located to the side of buildings – Alkerden, Ebbsfleet.

Discreet car parking situated behind the building line - , Ashmere, Ebbsfleet

15. The development at Vellum Drive in Sittingbourne is of a lower density provision. A key aspect of these developments is that where parking is provided, it is well used and inappropriate on-street parking is kept to a minimum, allowing for the internal road and footway network to function effectively.

Well utilised parking between buildings – Vellum Drive, Sittingbourne.

Footway parking creates obstructions for pedestrians and can cause safety concerns.

16. At other developments within the County there are examples where parking does not work well and consequently residential parking has frequently been the greatest source of dissatisfaction among residents. Otherwise good developments have been blighted by inconsiderate, and sometimes dangerous parking across footways and in turning areas. Safety concerns are often associated with parking problems.

17. Common issues include:-

- Allocated parking is located remote from residential units;

- Rear parking courts feel unsafe and unattractive to use;

- Parking spaces located against a hard boundary are too small;

- Garages are too small and inaccessible;

- Driveways are too short or not used as intended with vehicles overhanging the footway;

- Poor quality on-plot parking spaces lead to indiscriminate on-street parking as an alternative; and

- The streetscape is dominated by cars.

Examples of poor parking implementation

18. Resultant footway parking can lead to obstruction, forcing pedestrians and wheelchair users into the carriageway. The lack of appropriate turning space due to inconsiderate parking can also prevent the use of driveways.

19. Getting the parking layout right results in a well-functioning development and a better place to live.

20. Residential parking is not just a 'numbers game'. The parking provision should satisfy reasonable demand bearing in mind the location, be well-designed with useable spaces and make the best use of the land available.

21. Parking design should seek to meet the design criteria relevant to parking within the national Building for Life tool at the Design for Homes website.[2]

The "Building for a healthy life" toolkit document.

22. The existing on-street parking controls in the immediate vicinity of a site can have a bearing on the most appropriate parking provision for a new development. For example, where effectively enforced on-street parking controls (or positively managed covenants/agreements) limit the opportunities for residents to own cars that they cannot accommodate in dedicated parking areas, lower levels of provision should be considered.

23. Parking standards for residential uses are outlined in **Table 1** in the Appendix.

24. There are a range of parking options for residential uses, which are discussed in the following paragraphs. For a large residential development, a mix of different parking options should be considered.

Car Barns, Car Ports and Garages

25. Where housing densities are lower, space for car parking can be provided on-plot, within the curtilage of the dwelling, such as in the form of a car port or private drive.

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[2] Building for a healthy life *https://www.designforhomes.org/project/building-for-life/*

26. Experience has shown that garages are unlikely to be used for the parking of a vehicle unless there are no alternative parking options available in the locality (e.g. due to the presence of on-street parking restrictions). As such, in suburban and rural locations, the Local Highway Authority will not count garages as formal car parking spaces.

27. Where garages are provided, the recommended standard for the internal dimensions is included in **Table 8** in the Appendix.

Example of a double car port

28. Open car ports and car barns are typically well-used by residents for parking vehicles, subject to good design. Car ports and car barns should be overlooked by housing from at least one side of the street. Where a car port is located to the side of a house, any fence or wall provided to secure the rear garden should be at least 1.0 metre from the end of the car port.

29. Where they are of good design and meet the minimum standard, car ports and car barns will count towards the parking requirement in full. They should be designed to ensure that the upright supports do not prevent opening of car doors. If this is the case, a larger space will be required. The recommended standard for the dimensions of car ports is included in **Table 8** in the Appendix.

An example of poor design, resulting in footway obstruction due to an overhanging parked vehicle.

30. Parking spaces in front of a garage, car port or car barn should provide space for the full length of the vehicle, plus an allowance for opening of a garage door where applicable. 6.0 metres should be provided in front of garages and 5.0 metres in front of car ports and car barns. Where there is insufficient space to allow for the full length of a vehicle on the forecourt, left-over space should be designed to ensure that it is not used for vehicle parking, with consequent overhanging, or blocking of the footway. Where no parking space is provided in front of garages, a space of 0.5 metres should be provided to allow for the opening of the garage door.

31. The location of all privately allocated parking spaces should relate well to the dwellings they belong to, in order to ensure they are user friendly and effectively utilised.

Parking Courts

32. Flatted and higher density residential developments often require communal parking areas. Again, however, it is important that parking spaces are conveniently located in close proximity to the residential units they serve.

33. Parking courts are off-street communal parking areas which can be located to the front or rear of dwellings.

34. Front parking courts are preferred since these are located where people prefer to park and where parking can be overlooked and be close to front doors.

35. In order to be supported, rear parking courts must be as secure as possible and designed in a way that encourages their use. They should be relatively small in nature, serving no more than eight residential units. They should be designed as part of the public realm, overlooked, secure and with a sense of place in order to encourage ownership. They should have direct access to/from surrounding dwellings and have adequate lighting. They should also provide sufficient manoeuvring space. Security can be improved where rear parking courts are for use by specific residents only, controlled with a gate or barrier.

36. For larger residential developments, communal parking areas should be divided and distributed around the layout, with some spaces convenient for visitors where required.

Tandem Parking

Tandem parking, with a car port space equating to 50% of the parking provision.

37.   Tandem parking is where one car parking space is located behind another. Observations indicate that such arrangements are often poorly utilised where the rear space takes the form of a garage. However, utilisation can be better where both spaces are uncovered or incorporated within car barns.

38.   Whilst independently accessible on-plot parking is preferred, where it is necessary to provide tandem arrangements (e.g. higher density schemes), the use of garages should be avoided.

39. Tandem parking in communal parking areas where access is already restricted, such as rear parking courts, is not acceptable and will not count towards the parking provision.

40. Where tandem parking is used there may be a requirement for additional parking provision within the layout.

41. The use of triple (or more) tandem parking is not acceptable as this fails to provide adequate and independently accessible parking spaces for future occupants. This approach introduces significant challenges for residents, due to the impracticalities associated with constant vehicle shuffling.

Visitor Parking

42. Consideration should be given to visitor parking in all new residential developments.

43. Unallocated parking allows for the flexible use of parking spaces and is the most efficient way to cater for visitor parking. Allocation of parking to individual units

increases the amount of parking needed, whereas unallocated parking takes advantage of different levels of car ownership, including those without vehicles, to use the land given over to parking in the most efficient way. It can also satisfy the reasonable needs of visitor parking because of the varying occupancy patterns across the day.

44. A design-led allowance for on-street parking will normally be the best way to cater for visitor parking. This provision should be well distributed throughout residential developments, to maximise its utility and minimise the prospect of abuse.

45. Within town centre locations with good accessibility to public transport, it should be encouraged for visitors to use non-car modes or existing public car parks.

An example of on-street parking which is recessed from the carriageway.

Van Parking

46. It is noted that some Councils have introduced the requirement for van parking within their own parking Supplementary Planning Document. Whilst this can be effective in better accommodating these vehicle types within the street scene, observations have indicated that if they are not well related to the properties in which their owners live, they are unlikely to be used for their intended purpose. As such, the need for such provision will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Car Free Development

47. KCC Highways are supportive of and will encourage car free development in the right locations. Should a developer wish to promote car free design then the development must already have (or include as part of the development) excellent public transport links. In addition, the standard of amenities within the development must be highly valued and include community wide uses such as shops, schools, medical centres and

library/leisure facilities. Streets should be designed to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists but also be inclusive for mobility scooters and encourage social interaction and engagement across all ages. Seating should be provided on longer links and all routes should be secure by design with opportunities taken for overlooking and wide enough to safely accommodate multiple users at any one time. Emergency vehicles, service vehicles and vehicles used by disabled badge holders (essential traffic) will still need access across the development but visitors to the area should be encouraged not to enter the development other than by sustainable modes. Car clubs, reduced charges for public transport, bicycle provision and repair packages should all be considerations of the Travel Plan (TP). Links within the site should extend to the wider area and connect with the existing Public Right of Way network and adjoining footways/cycleways. To prevent cars penetrating the area there should be a development wide Traffic Regulation Order enforcing on-street parking or physical (but removeable for essential traffic) barriers to control access by motorised vehicles.

Car Clubs

48. A car club can be an effective initiative within developments with limited parking provision. A car club is a membership based, pay as you go, car rental scheme. It provides easy and affordable access to a car when needed, without the cost and inconvenience of owning it. It can be an attractive alternative to car ownership, or to having a second car in the household and the number of sites where car clubs are operating in Kent is steadily increasing.
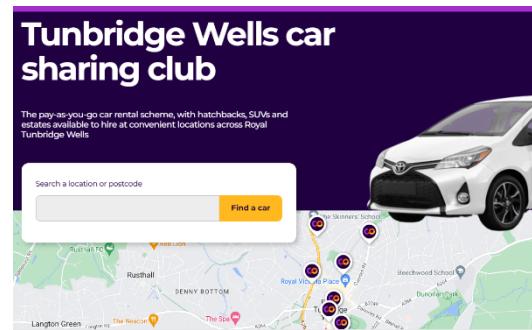
The Tunbridge Wells car sharing club website.

3. Parking for Non-Residential Uses

Context

49. It is widely acknowledged that limiting the amount of parking provided at the end destination of a trip can discourage journeys by car. This is particularly evident where there are a range of alternative modes available in sustainable locations. The optimum method of determining the parking provision for non-residential uses is often a 'first principles' approach, taking into account the development's predicted parking requirements and local circumstances.

50. Parking standards for non-residential uses are shown in **Table 2** in the Appendix. Where a particular land use is not included in **Table 2**, an individual assessment is required, using a first principles approach. It should be demonstrated that demand for parking is either met on-site or mitigated and managed as appropriate. The parking standards include staff, unless otherwise stated.

Travel Plans

51. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a robust Travel Plan. This should detail appropriate measures to encourage sustainable travel amongst future occupants and visitors. These measures may include a car club, sustainable travel vouchers, and welcome packs, although the final package of measures should be tailored to the development and site in question.

52. Some travel plans will be subject to monitoring if the reduction in trips generated by the development is critical to the safety and capacity of the adjoining highways. Further measures will be required if monitoring demonstrates that expected targets have not been achieved.

Deliveries and Servicing

53. All developments should provide adequate facilities to enable delivery and refuse vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. For developments which are anticipated to be served by a significant number of these large vehicles, swept path

analysis should be submitted to demonstrate that the manoeuvres can be accommodated within the proposed layout. The recommended parking space dimensions for light goods vehicles, minibuses, coaches, rigid goods vehicles and articulated goods vehicles are included in **Table 9** in the Appendix.

54. Vehicle parking requirements will be evidenced based according to land use, trip rates and business needs. Comparison to vehicle operating licences for similar buildings/operations may also be considered.

Mixed-Use Developments
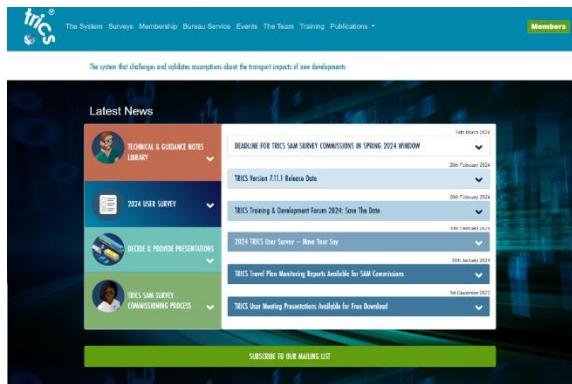
The TRICS website can be used to obtain trip generation information.

55. For mixed-use developments, the parking provision should first be determined for each constituent land use or building, both with reference to the applicable standards in this document and potentially also through an accumulation assessment on the TRICS database[3] (or similar). The scope to reduce overall parking through shared provision between uses should then be discussed with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities.

For example, at retail or business parks, parking could be provided centrally rather than for individual units. Different uses within a site that require parking at different times of the day or week may be able to share provision.

Hotels

56. For developments exceeding 20 bedrooms, suitable provision should be made for coaches. This should take the form of either: -

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[3] TRICS is the system of multi-modal trip generation analysis for developments in the UK and Ireland
https://trics.co.uk/

(a) Facilities to drop-off and pick-up guests which may consist of a lay-by adjacent to the public highway or utilisation of the car parking area (exact details to be agreed with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities), or

(b) Coach parking provision of 1 space per 20 bedrooms contained within the allocated space for car parking.

57. Additional vehicle provision should be made where bars and restaurant facilities are open to the general public of one third of the appropriate standard contained under Class A3. For bars, this equates to 1 space per 12m^2 and for restaurants, this would be 1 space per 15m^2.

Retirement Communities and Continuing Care Facilities

58. Research has highlighted that older people are travelling more than they did previously in the context of an ageing population. 'A comparison of the National Travel Survey results[4] shows how the average number of car trips and miles travelled for those aged 60+ has increased over the past few years. Car ownership levels for over 60s are also higher than for previous generations.

59. It is clear that older people are active for longer than they have historically been. As such, models of care are also changing, with a move towards retirement communities and continuing care facilities for the over 50s. For such facilities, the typical care home parking standard is often insufficient.

60. At the application stage, an understanding of the type and level of care being offered should be provided and an individual assessment of parking should be completed, potentially through the use of TRICS or through a 'first principles' approach using specific examples of similar sites, and this may lead to a requirement for the highest

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[4] National Travel Survey 2022 *https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2022*

parking provision within this use class to be provided. Parking should be discussed with the Local Planning and Highways Authorities to ensure suitability.

Schools

The Jambusters website for School Travel Planning

61. New schools, or those where expansion is proposed, are expected to develop, update and monitor School Travel Plans. Further details can be found at *www.jambusterstpms.co.uk*

Cars

62. Operational requirements (broadly defined as staff and visitors) should be provided for, together with overflow parking areas for any community uses. Parent and pupil parking is discouraged, as this is a disincentive to travel by sustainable modes. Appropriate provision should nevertheless be made for the setting down and picking up of pupils in a safe environment and in a manner that does not unduly interfere with the operation and use of the public highway. Exact details should be agreed with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities.

63. Measures to discourage parking should be considered and could include car sharing, parking restrictions, parking permits issued based on need and other measures as appropriate. A Parking Management Plan should be prepared and submitted as an integral part of any planning application where parking is an acknowledged issue.

Coach/Bus/Minibus

64. On all new school sites where it is likely that pupils will travel to and from school in coaches, buses or minibuses, sufficient space should be reserved to allow for the drop-off and collection of pupils. Where appropriate, bus stops, bays, raised kerbs, seating and shelters should be provided on the highway by the applicant.

65. Provision of cycle and non-motorised scooter parking should be provided at any new or expanded school. Wherever possible, improvements to cycle routes and related safety measures should be provided by the applicant.

4. Parking for Electric Vehicles

Background

66. The popularity of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) has increased in recent years. ULEVs include electric, plug-in hybrid and hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles. The Government has committed to ban new diesel and petrol cars and vans in the UK from 2035 to help tackle air pollution. This will further encourage the uptake of ULEVs.

67. Planning policy supports the provision of infrastructure for ULEVs, with Paragraph 116 of the NPPF stating that local parking standards should take account of: *"be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations."* It is appropriate, therefore, that new developments incorporate ULEV charging points into parking design. Alongside this, developments should also look to incorporate charging points for e-bicycles, which are considered as electric vehicles by the National Design Guide[5].

68. The technology associated with ULEVs is rapidly evolving and the parking design should accord with the most relevant technical requirements and open standards. Currently, this comprises a wired connection between a vehicle and a charging point. There are different charging speeds available for the wired connection. Justification and discussion of the type of charger would need to be undertaken with officers at the application stage to ensure an appropriate provision. For example, it may be that a

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[5] National Design Guide *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide*

lower speed charger would be suitable for office and residential uses where vehicles are parked for longer, yet for retail uses a faster charger may be more appropriate.

Designing for Electric Vehicles

69. Currently, most charging of ULEVs takes place at home, overnight. Therefore, each dwelling with on-plot parking should provide an electric vehicle charge-point within close proximity to the parking space.

70. For communal residential parking areas and car parks for non-residential uses, it is important to provide a mix of 'active' charging spaces with the charging infrastructure in place at the outset, and 'passive' charging spaces with the wiring and cable conduit in place under the car park for future use. In situations where it is not possible to meet demand for ULEV parking on-site, a financial contribution towards the provision of a charging hub nearby may be sought.

71. KCC has been allocated funding through the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund to facilitate the installation of on-street EV chargers primarily aimed at residents and businesses without access to off-street parking. Our ambition is to install up to 10,000 chargers by 2035 across the county. Outside of this programme on-street electric vehicle chargers will generally only be supported in locations where no other option is available locally. This will not only minimise street clutter and provide cost efficiencies but allow users to more easily find a charge point when grouped together.

An example of a charging hub, credit: Western Power Distribution (WPS)

72. ULEV parking spaces should be signed and marked for Electric Vehicle Charging Only, which will require ongoing management and enforcement. Charging points at public parking spaces, for example at retail parks or places of work, must be accessible to the general public and employees. Publicly available charging points should be registered with the National Charge-point Registry. Consideration should be given to the provision of charging points for disabled parking bays, alongside standard parking bays.

73. Details of how ULEV parking will be allocated and managed should be included within Transport Assessments and/or Car Park Management Plans (where relevant). This should also set out how ULEV parking for visitors and disabled users will be accommodated.

74. The ULEV parking standards are shown in **Table 3** in the Appendix.

5. Disabled Parking, Mobility Aids and Adaptive Bicycles

Background

75. Detailed guidance on the design and location of parking for disabled people can be found in the Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Inclusive Mobility' guidance.

76. Any new development that includes off-street parking should have at least one parking space that is either designated as disabled, or if not specifically designated, is of sufficient size to be used by a disabled person. Where provision for disabled people is not to be provided as part of the development, the Local Planning Authority may seek a financial contribution from the developer towards the provision, operation and maintenance of parking spaces either on-street or in public off-street car parks.

77. In some new developments, it has become apparent that the disabled parking provision is under-utilised. Where the proposed disabled parking provision is less than the standards shown in **Table 4**, the reduced provision should be fully justified and controlled through a Travel Plan. In such circumstances, oversized parking spaces should normally be provided as an alternative to designated disabled parking spaces, on the proviso that should demand dictate additional supply, these will be demarcated at a future date.

Design and Layout

78. Disabled parking should be conveniently located and clearly signed. Its location should take into consideration the distances that potential users may be capable of covering to reach the facilities they desire. The generally accepted guidelines of walking distances for different degrees of mobility are:-

- Visually impaired – 150 metres;
- Wheelchair users – 150 metres;
- Ambulatory impairment without a walking aid – 100 metres;
- Ambulatory impairment with a walking aid – 50 metres.

79. Disabled parking should be designed so that drivers and passengers, either of whom may be disabled, can get in and out of the vehicle easily and safely. They need to be designed to encompass a wide range of mobility impairments. They should also ensure easy access to and from the side and rear of the vehicle and protect from moving traffic.

80. Typical layouts of disabled parking are shown in **Figure 1** below. Off-street parking bays that are parallel to the access aisle, making access available from the side, should be at least 6.6 metres long and 2.4 metres wide. The additional length will allow access to the rear of the vehicle where wheelchairs are often stored. Access from the side should be unencumbered by street furniture.

81. Off-street parking spaces that are perpendicular to the access aisle should be at least 5.5 metres long and 2.5 metres wide with an additional width of at least 1.2 metres along both sides and the rear as per the DfT's Inclusive Mobility

Disabled parking with additional width provided on both sides and the rear. Access to the footway to the front of the spaces is level.

Guidance[6]. This should allow sufficient width for wheelchair access between vehicles and enable vehicle doors to be fully opened. Where spaces are adjacent to each other, the 1.2 metre access area can be utilised to serve parking spaces on either side. Access to and from the parking spaces should also be free from steps, obstructions and steep slopes.
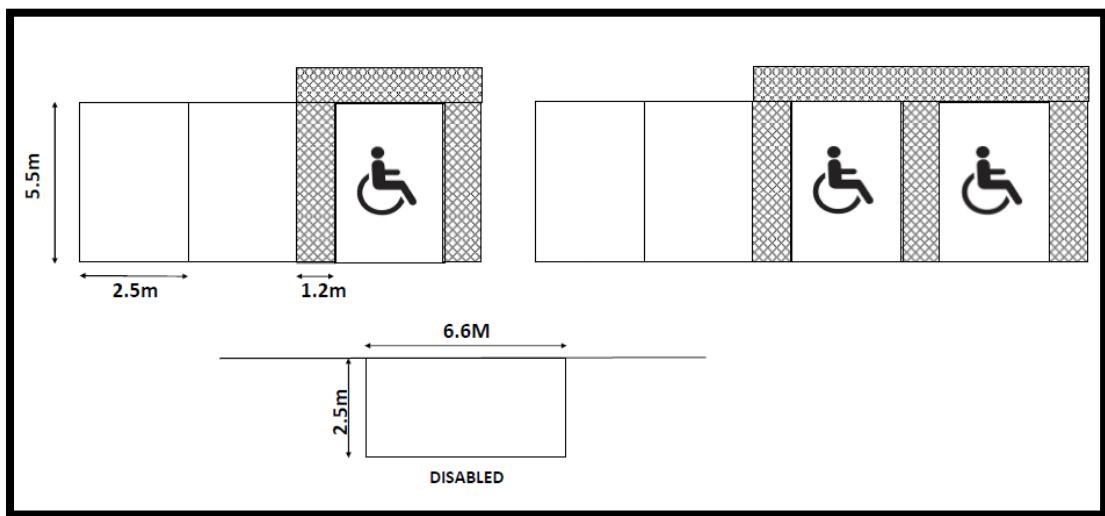

Figure 1 – Dimensions and layouts for disabled parking bays.

82. Where changes in level between the car park and the development have to be overcome, a ramp should be provided. Ramps should be short, preferably with a gradient of 5% (1 in 20) or less but not exceeding 8% (1 in 12). Where steps are provided, they should have edges with a strong colour contrast. Both ramps and steps should be provided with handrails on both sides and should be well lit.

83. Disabled parking should be clearly signed both within and at the entrance to the car park.

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[6] Inclusive mobility: making transport accessible for passengers and pedestrians
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-mobility-making-transport-accessible-for-passengers-and-pedestrians

84. The parking standards for disabled users are shown in **Table 4** in the Appendix.

Mobility Aids

85. Use of mobility aids, such as scooters and large wheelchairs, is increasing. It is therefore appropriate to make provision for parking mobility aids at new developments, including within communal parking areas. Mobility aid parking should be located as close to the building's pedestrian access points as possible.

86. The parking standards for mobility aids is shown in **Table 5** in the Appendix.

Adaptive Bicycles

87. Adaptive bicycles are designed to accommodate the individual needs of a disabled cyclist. The majority of cycle parking and storage facilities fail to cater for the needs of disabled cyclists. This is often because the cycle parking space is not wide enough. Therefore, the following design standards apply when catering for adaptive bikes:-
    - The minimum gap between standard cycle stands should be 1.0m;
    - At least one signed bay for non-standard cycles should be allocated at the end of a row of standard cycle parking stands, with these bays a minimum of 1.5m wide in order to allow for dismounting.

6. Parking for Cycles and Motorcycles

Cycles

88. The provision of secure and convenient cycle parking is required to encourage people to cycle. It is essential that cycle parking is designed into a development at an early stage, prior to the granting of planning permission to ensure it relates well to the development.

89. The following locational requirements should be considered in the design of cycle parking:-

- Obvious and well signed;

- Close to the entrance of the premises being visited;

- Visible and attractive;

- Well lit;

- An appropriate level of surveillance and security;

- Good weather protection;

- Off-street location with good and safe access that does not require cyclists to dismount before reaching it, separated from parked vehicles;

- Situated close to well-used thoroughfares;

- Well maintained.

90. In addition to the provision of well-designed cycle parking, facilities for showering and storing of clothing and helmets in non-residential developments will be sought, as they are also important for encouraging cycle use.

91. Cycle parking standards are shown in **Table 6** in the Appendix.

Motorcycles

92. Provision should be made for motorcycle parking at all new developments in addition to vehicle and cycle parking.

93. Motorcycle parking areas should only be provided to the rear of footways in exceptional circumstances and under the condition that they would not compromise pedestrian safety.

94. Motorcycle parking standards are shown in **Table 7** in the Appendix.

7. Parking Dimensions and Layouts

Parking Space Dimensions

95. The dimensions of a car vary considerably and the average car size has been increasing in recent years. In view of this, the car parking space dimensions provided in **Table 8** in the Appendix are the absolute minimum required. **Figure 2** below shows typical types and dimensions for standard car parking spaces. The provision of larger spaces would be strongly supported and there are particular instances where this is necessary. This includes parking spaces which are located adjacent to a hard boundary, such as a wall at the end of a parking aisle. In these situations, the width of the parking space should be increased by a minimum of 0.2m for each restricted side to aid manoeuvrability into and out of the space. Larger parking spaces on private driveways can increase the attractiveness and ease of using the spaces, which can prevent inappropriate on-street parking.

Perpendicular car parking bays in front of a structure

6.0m

2.5m

Car parking bay with structure either side

6.0m

2.9m

Perpendicular car parking bays

5.0m

2.5m

6.0m

Grass Verge

2.5m

6.0m

Footway

2.0m
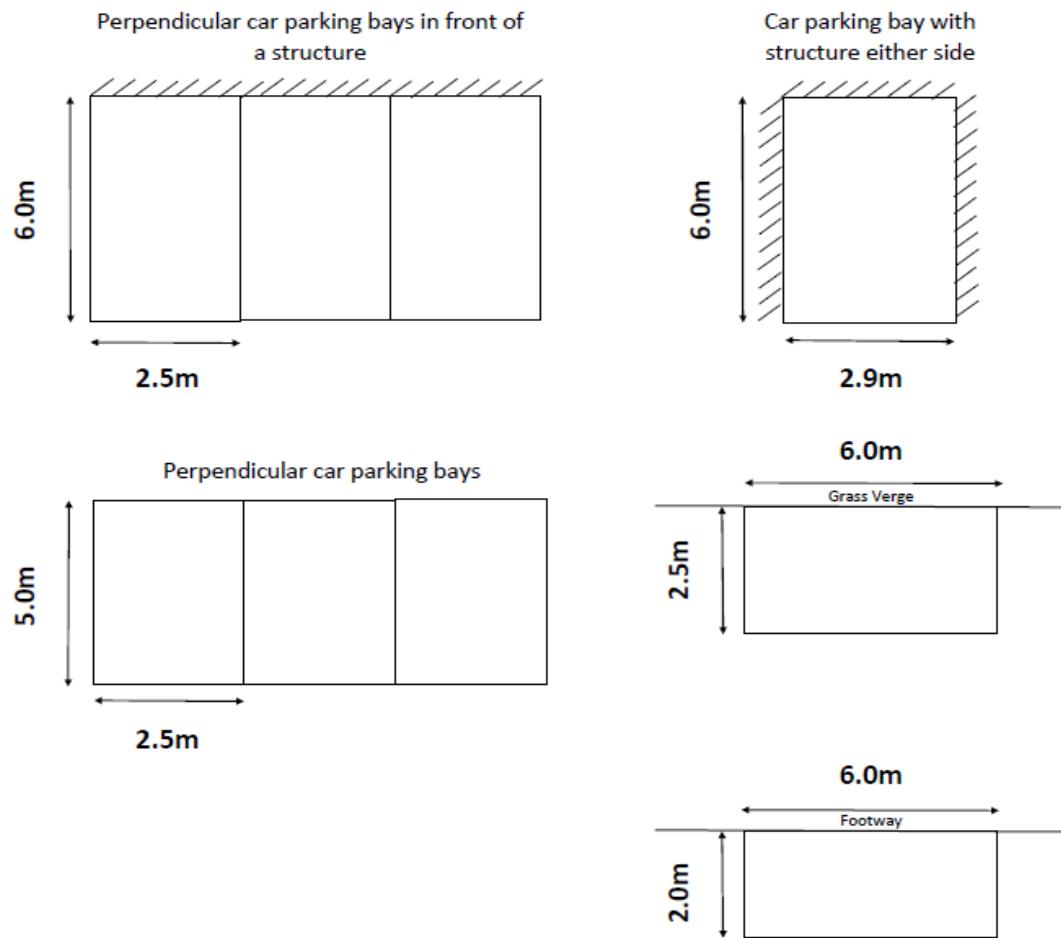
Figure 2 – The minimum dimensions for standard car parking spaces in different layouts..

Car Park Design

96. Car parks should be designed to provide good quality pedestrian routes in order to minimise conflict between those walking through the car park and manoeuvring vehicles.

97. Where multi-storey or underground car parks are provided, these should be designed in accordance with the usability specifications outlined in relevant industry guidance such as the Institution of Structural Engineers 'Design Recommendations for Multi Storey and Underground Car Parks' (2011). This includes guidance on issues such as the positioning of columns and minimum headroom requirements, which would affect the usability of a space.
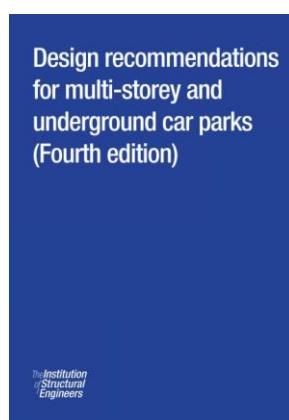
Cover page of the Design Recommendations for multi-storey and underground car parks document.

98. A minimum 6.0 metre aisle width is required to allow for manoeuvring in to and out of car parking spaces orientated at 90 degrees.

Perpendicular aisle car parking bays.

45° angled car parking bays.
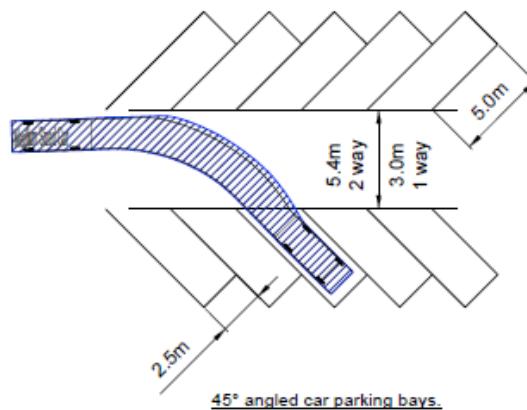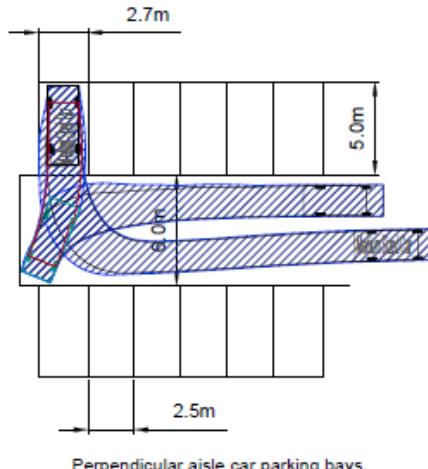
An extract of the minimum aisle widths required for different car parking space layouts, from the Kent Design Guide.

Appendix

Table 1: Residential Car Parking Standards - Use Class C3(a)

Location	City / Town Centre[1]	Edge of Centre[1]	Suburban	Rural
On-Street Controls	On-street controls preventing all (or all long stay) parking	On-street controls, residents' scheme and/or existing saturation	No, or very limited, on-street controls	No on-street controls, but possibly a tight street layout
1 & 2 Bed Flats				
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit
Form	Controlled[2]	Unallocated	Unallocated	Unallocated
1 & 2 Bed Houses				
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	1 space per unit[6]	2 spaces per unit
Form	Controlled[2]	Allocation possible	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible
3 Bed Houses				
Provision	1 space per unit	1 space per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit
Form	Controlled[2]	Allocation possible	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of one or both spaces possible
4+ Bed Houses				
Provision	1 space per unit	2 spaces per unit	2 spaces per unit[6]	3 spaces per unit[7]
Form	Controlled[2]	Allocation of one space per unit possible	Allocation of both spaces possible[5]	Allocation of both spaces possible[5]

Location	City / Town Centre[1]	Edge of Centre[1]	Suburban	Rural
Are Garages Acceptable?[3]	Yes, but with areas of communal space for washing etc.	Yes, but not as a significant proportion of overall provision	Additional to amount given above only	Additional to amount given above only
Visitor Parking Provision[4]	None	Communal areas. 0.2 per unit	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit.	On-street areas. 0.2 per unit

Notes:

[1] The locational category of sites will be subject to discussion between the Local Planning and Highway Authorities.

[2] Parking/garage courts, probably with controlled entry.

[3] Open car ports or car barns acceptable at all locations, subject to good design.

[4] May be reduced where main provision is not allocated. Not always needed for flats.

[5] Best provided side by side, or in another independently accessible form. Tandem parking arrangement are often under-utilised.

[6] An additional "off plot" parking space may be required for some properties at the discretion of the Highway Authority depending on the size of the property and the layout and capacity of the adjoining road network.

[7] The use of triple tandem parking is not an acceptable design solution as this fails to provide adequate and independently accessible parking spaces for future occupants. This approach introduces significant challenges for residents, due to the impracticalities associated with constant vehicle shuffling.

These car parking standards are for guidance purposes and evidence will be required from local surveys or from similar sites to support the level of parking provision being sought.

A lower provision may be appropriate where effective measures are in place or proposed. Measures might include car clubs, travel plans, controlled parking zones and/or the availability of sustainable transport modes.

A higher provision may be appropriate such as in suburban or rural areas and/ or where local car ownership data /'parking stress' surveys support this.

Table 2: Non-Residential Car Parking Standards

Class B		
General Industrial – B2		
	Car Parking	**Goods Vehicles**
Up to 200m²	3 spaces	See Note 1
Over 200m²	1 space per 50m²	1 space for 200 m²
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvres clear of the public highway. 2. For large developments the provision for goods vehicles only applies up to a maximum of 6 spaces. For sites where more provision is required, a minimum of 6 spaces should be provided with the actual number being determined by consideration of the operational requirements and demonstrated through a Transport Assessment.	
Storage or Distribution – B8		
	Car Parking	**Goods Vehicles**
Storage & Distribution	1 space per 110m²	1 space per 300m²
Wholesale Trade Distribution	1 space per 35m²	1 space per 300m²
Notes:	1. Parking provision for associated office space to be determined using the standards set out under Use Class E(g).	
Class C		
Hotels – C1		

	Car Parking		**Goods Vehicles and Coach Parking**
	Staff	**Guests**	
Hotels, boarding and guest houses (excluding hostels)	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per bedroom	See Notes 1 and 2
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. For developments exceeding 20 bedrooms, suitable provision should be made for coaches. This should take the form of either: - (a) Facilities to drop-off and pick-up guests which may consist of a lay-by adjacent to the public highway or utilisation of the car		

parking area (exact details to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority), or (b) Coach parking provision of 1 space per 20 bedrooms contained within the allocated space for car parking.
3. An additional provision should be made where bars and restaurant facilities are open to the general public of one third of the appropriate standard contained under Class E (b). For bars this equates to 1 space per 12m^2. for restaurants this would be 1 space per 15m^2.

Residential Institutions – C2

	Car Parking		Goods Vehicles and Coach Parking
	Staff	Visitors	
Nursing / Residential Care Homes	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 6 beds or residents	Minimum of 1 space for an Ambulance (see Note 1)
Hospitals & Hospices	1 space per 2 staff	2 spaces per 3 beds	See Notes 1 & 2
Residential Schools or Colleges, Training Centres	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 15 students	See Note 1 & 3
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Sufficient ambulance bays and/or parking should be provided to meet the operational needs of the development. Exact details should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority. 3. At special schools there is a need to include appropriate additional spaces for ambulances, taxis and coaches.		

Secure Residential Institution – C2A

Including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.

Dwellinghouses – C3

C3(a) – see Table 1	
C3(b) – Sheltered Accommodation (up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care).	1 space per resident warden and 1 space per 2 units
C3(c) – up to six people living together as a single household, including groups that do not fall within Class C4.	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.

Houses in Multiple Occupation – C4	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.

Class E

Shops, excluding sale of hot food – E(a)

	Car Parking	Goods Vehicles
Food Retail up to 1,000m^2	1 space per 18m^2	1 space per 500m^2
Food Retail over 1,000m^2	1 space per 14m^2	1 space per 500m^2
Non-Food Retail	1 space per 25m^2	1 space per 500m^2
Notes:	1. Car parking provision includes spaces for staff. 2. Garden Centre greenhouses that are used predominantly for growing and are not open to members of the public should not be included as part of the gross floor space for determining the level of car parking provision. Up to 50% of the car parking spaces required can be provided as overflow car parks. 3. For all large retail establishments, the provision for goods vehicles only applies up to a maximum of 6 spaces. For sites where more provision is required, a minimum of 6 spaces should be provided with the actual number being determined by consideration of the operational requirements and demonstrated through a Transport Assessment, which includes examination of the scope for a Freight Quality Partnership.	

Food and Drink, for consumption (mostly) on the premises – E(b). See Sui Generis uses for drinking establishments and hot food takeaways.

	Car Parking		Goods Vehicles
	Staff	Customers	
Restaurants and Cafes [2]	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 6m^2	See Note 1
Transport Cafes [3]	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 15m^2	1 lorry space per 5m^2
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Includes roadside restaurants. 3. Car parking provision for customers should be contained within the allocated space for lorry parking.		

Financial and Professional Services, including other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality – E(c)

	Car Parking
All Developments – E(c)(i), E(c)(ii) and E(c)(iii)	1 space per 20m^2 – covering space for staff and visitors/customers.

Indoor sport, recreation or fitness (not involving motorised vehicles, firearms, or use as a swimming pool or skating rink) – E(d)		
	Car Parking	
Multi-Activity Sports & Leisure Centres, Health & Fitness Centres, Gymnasia, Social Clubs, Discotheques, Dance Halls, Ballrooms.	1 space per 22m^2 + 1 space per 15 seats where appropriate	
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 300 seats. Such provision is to be provided as an alternative to car parking provision. 3. Where provisions are made within the development to accommodate spectators then an additional parking provision of 1 space per 15 seats should be provided. 4. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 5,000 visitors per annum.	

Medical or health services – E(e)			
	Car Parking		**Goods Vehicles**
	Staff	**Visitors**	
Medical Centres/Clinics/Surgeries (including veterinary surgeries)	1 space per 2 staff	4 spaces per consulting/treatment room	See Notes 1 and 2
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Provision should be made to accommodate ambulances where appropriate.		

Creche, day nursery or day centre (not including residential use) – E(f)			
	Car Parking		**Goods Vehicles**
	Staff	**Pupils/Visitors**	
Nurseries/Crèches/Pre Schools	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 children	See Notes 1 and 2
Day Care Centres	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 attendees	See Notes 1 and 3
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Appropriate provision should be made for the setting down and picking up of children in a safe environment and in a manner that does not unduly interfere with the operation and use of the public highway. Exact details should be agreed with the Local Planning Authority.		

	3. Provision within the overall allocation for car parking should be made for mini-buses where these are used to transport people to and from the day care centres.			

Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity – E(g)

		Car Parking
Offices for operation or administrative functions – E(g)(i)	Offices up to 500m^2	1 space per 20m^2
	Offices between 500 - 2,500m^2	1 space per 25m^2
	Offices over 2,500m^2	1 space per 30m^2
Research and development of products or processes – E(g)(ii) and Industrial processes – E(g)(iii)	Hi-tech / Research / Light Industrial	1 space per 35m^2

Class F

Learning and non-residential institutions – F1

		Car Parking		Goods Vehicles
		Staff	**Visitors/Pupils/Clients**	
Provision of Education – F1(a)	**Primary and Secondary Schools**	1 space per staff + 10%		See Notes 1, 2, 3 and 6
	Further and Higher Education	1 space per 1 staff	1 space per 7 students	See Notes 1, 2 and 3
Display of works of art – F1(b)	1 space per 60m^2			See Note 1
Museums – F1(c)	1 space per 60m^2			See Note 1
Public libraries or public reading rooms – F1(d)	1 space per 60m^2			See Note 1
Public halls or exhibition halls – F1(e)	1 space per 60m^2			See Note 1
Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use) – F1(f)	1 space per 5 seats			See Note 1
Law courts – F1(g)	1 space per 2 staff	6 spaces per courtroom		See Note 1

Local Community – F2

	Car parking
Shops (mostly) selling essentials goods, including food, where the premises do not exceed 280m² and there is no other such facility within 1000m – F2(a)	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Halls/meeting places for the principle use of the local community – F2(b)	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms) – F2(c)	1 space per 2 participants + 1 space per 15 spectators
Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or skating rinks – F2(d)	1 space per 22m² + 1 space per 15 seats where appropriate

Sui Generis		
	Employees	**Visitors/Customers**
Large Houses in Multiple Occupation (over six unrelated individuals).	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Theatres, cinemas, concert halls, conferences centres and bingo halls	1 space per 5 seats	
Amusement Arcade/centre or funfair	1 space per 22m²	
Launderettes	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Fuel stations	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	
Selling and/or displaying motor vehicles	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 50m²
Vehicle servicing and repair	1 space per 2 staff	4 spaces per service bay
Taxi and vehicle hire. Coach and bus depots	1 space per 2 staff	1 space per 4 registered vehicles
Open commercial use (e.g. scrap yards, recycling centres)	1 space per 2 staff	To be assessed individually
Hostels (providing no significant element of care)	1 space per resident staff + 1 space per 2 other staff	1 space per 6 residents
Waste disposal installations for	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.	

the incineration, chemical treatment or landfill of hazardous waste	
Retail warehouse clubs	1 space per 25m^2
Nightclubs	1 space per 22m^2
Casinos	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Betting offices/shops	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Pay day loan shops	Provision to be determined on an individual basis.
Public houses, licensed bars/ drinking establishments and banqueting halls (Includes bars open to non-residents in hotels and non-diners in restaurants).	1 space per 2 staff 1 space per 10m^2
Drinking establishments with expanded food provision	To be determined
Hot food takeaways, including drive-thru restaurants	1 space per 2 staff 1 space per 50m^2
Dance halls	To be determined
Historic Houses and Gardens, Country Parks	1 space per 400 visitors per annum See Note 4
Theme parks, leisure parks	1 space per 200 visitors per annum See Note 4
Golf Courses and Driving Ranges	3 spaces per hole/bay
Bowling green/Centres/Alleys, snooker halls, tennis/squash/badminton clubs	3 spaces per lane/court/table See Note 3
Equestrian Centres, Riding Stables	1 space per stable
Marinas and other boating facilities	1 space per mooring or berth
Stadia	1 space per 15 seats See Note 2
Other Uses	1 space per 22m^2
Notes:	1. Adequate facilities should be provided to enable delivery vehicles to park and manoeuvre clear of the public highway. 2. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 300 seats. Such provision is to be

	provided as an alternative to car parking provision.
	3. Where provisions are made within the development to accommodate spectators then an additional parking provision of 1 space per 15 seats should be provided.
	4. Provision should also be made for coach parking with a maximum standard of 1 coach space per 5,000 visitors per annum

Table 3: Electric Vehicle Parking Standards

Residential Uses	
Dwellings with On-Plot Parking	Refer to Building Regulations *https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057375/AD_S.pdf*
Dwellings with unallocated communal parking	Refer to Building Regulations *https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057375/AD_S.pdf*
Non-Residential Uses	
All Uses with Off-Street Parking	Refer to Building Regulations** *https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1057375/AD_S.pdf* An exception to the above applies for units with less than 10 spaces whereby provision will be required for a minimum of 10% active charging spaces and 20% passive charging spaces*

*applicable to new sites, change of use applications or extensions will be discussed on an individual basis

Table 4: Disabled Car Parking Standards

For Employees and Visitors to Business Premises (Land Use Classes B2, B8, E(c) and E(g)).	
Car Parks up to 40 spaces	2 designated spaces + 1 space of sufficient size but not specifically designated.
Car Parks with 40 to 200 spaces	4 designated spaces or 5% of the total capacity, whichever is greater
Car parks with greater than 200 spaces	6 designated spaces + 2% of the total capacity
For Shopping, Recreation and Leisure (Land Use Classes C1, E(a-b), E(d-f), F1(b-e), F2(c-d) and Sui Generis).	
Car Parks up to 50 spaces	1 designated space + 2 spaces of sufficient size but not specifically designated.
Car Parks with 50 to 200 spaces	3 designated spaces or 6% of the total capacity, whichever is greater
Car parks with greater than 200 spaces	4 designated spaces + 4% of the total capacity

Table 5: Mobility Aid and Adaptive Bicycle Parking Standards

	Mobility Aids	Adaptive Bicycle
All land uses	1 designated car parking space + 2% of all car parking spaces	5% of all cycle parking spaces designed for use by disabled cyclists

Table 6: Minimum Cycle Parking Standards

	Short to Medium Term (collection/delivery/shopping)	Medium to Long Term (meetings/workplace)

B2/B8/E(g) Uses	1 space per 1,000m^2	1 space per 200m^2
Hotels – C1	1 space per 10 beds, units or pitches	

Uses – C2		
Hospitals & other residential institutions offering a level of care	1 space per 10 beds	
Residential schools, colleges & training centres	1 space per 5 students	

Residential Uses – C3		
Houses	1 space per bedroom	
Flats and Maisonettes	1 space per bedroom	
Sheltered Accommodation	1 space per 5 units	

1. Cycle parking provision should normally be provided within the curtilage of the residential dwelling. Where a garage is provided it should be of a suitable size to accommodate the required cycle parking provision in addition to that of a car.
2. Parking provision should be provided as a secure communal facility where a suitable alternative is not available.
3. Scooter parking should also be provided for nurseries and primary schools.
4. For flats/maisonettes it is recommended cycle parking is provided at 1 space per bedroom.

Retail Uses – E(a)		
Up to 1,000m^2	1 space per 200m^2	1 space per 200m^2
Up to 5,000m^2	1 space per 400m^2	1 space per 400m^2
Over 5,000m^2	Minimum of 12 spaces; Additional Spaces Negotiable	
Retail Uses – E(b)/Sui Generis	1 space per 10 seats	1 space per 20 seats
Retail Uses – E(c)	1 space per 1,000m^2	1 space per 200m^2

Non-Residential Institutions – E(e-f), F1		

Primary Schools	1 space per 20 pupils	
Secondary Schools, Higher Education	1 space per 5 pupils preferred or 1 space per 7 pupils minimum	
Medical Centres, Surgeries	1 space per 2 consulting / treatment rooms	
Other Non-Residential Institutions	1 space per 50 seats or 100m^2	
Assembly & Leisure Uses – E(d), F2(c-d)		
Leisure and Entertainment Venues	1 space per 300 seats	1 space per 300 seats
Sports Facilities and Venues	1 space per 10 participants + 10%	1 space per 10 staff
Sui Generis Uses		
To be determined on a first principles basis		

Table 7: Minimum Motorcycle Parking Standards

Non-Residential Developments
1 motorcycle space + 1 space for every 20 car parking spaces provided

Table 8: Minimum Car Parking Space Dimensions

	Length	**Width**
Cars – Minimum[1]	5.0m (6.0m for parallel spaces[2])	2.5m
Disabled Car Space	5.5m	3.7m
Cars - Abutting hard boundary/vegetation on one side[3] - Minimum	5.0m	2.7m

Cars - Abutting hard boundary/vegetation on both sides[3] - Minimum	5.0m	2.9m
Garage - One Car[4]	7.0m	3.6m
Garage - Two Cars[4]	7.0m	6.0m
Car Port/Car Barn – One Car[5]	5.0m	2.5m
Car Port/Car Barn – Two Cars[5]	5.0m	5.5m
Car Barn – One Car[6]	5.5m	3.6m
Car Barn – Two Cars[6 & 7]	5.5m	6.0m
Tandem Parking – First Car	6.0m	2.5m
Tandem Parking – Rear Car[1]	5.0m	2.5m

[1] Where space abuts a footway or carriageway, 0.5m setback should be provided.

[2] Applicable where car parking spaces are provided parallel to, and abutting, a carriageway, aisle or drive.

[3] Typically in a car park, rather than residents' driveway.

[4] These dimensions refer to internal dimensions.

[5] These refer to car barns/car ports that are open on all sides.

[6] These refer to car barns that are enclosed.

[7] Carn barns to accommodate more than two vehicles may be considered. A triple car barn with a single supporting pillar requires a minimum width of 7.9m whilst a triple car barn with two supporting pillars requires a minimum width of 8.3m.

Table 9: Parking Space Dimensions for Other Vehicle Types

	Length	Width
Powered Two Wheelers	2.5m	1.5m
Light Goods Vehicles	7.5m	3.5m
Minibuses	8.0m	4.0m
Coaches	15.0m	4.0m
Rigid Goods Vehicles	14.0m	3.5m
Articulated Goods Vehicles	18.5m	3.5m

Information on recommended cycle storage dimensions can be found in the Department for Transport's Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN1/20 guidance document (2020)[7].

Information on storage requirements for mobility scooters can be found in the Department for Transport's Inclusive Mobility Guidance (2021)[6]

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[7] [Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120) *https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120*

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EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title

Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards

Responsible Officer

David Joyner - GT TRA

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

Tim Read - GT TRA

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

Highways & Transportation

Responsible Head of Service

Tim Read - GT TRA

Responsible Director

Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

The currently adopted Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards are outdated. These standards are used as guidance and in recommendations on planning application consultation responses issued by KCC as local highway authority. A new policy document has been developed based on surveys, data, best practice and Government policy changes and is recommended for adoption.

The aim of the standards is to get the right number of parking spaces and layout of parking provision in new developments to the benefit of the residents and users and in accordance with Government policies.

The outcome of adoption of the updated Vehicle Parking Standards is expected to have a positive impact in terms of equalities as the proposals promote access by all users of vehicles and particularly for disabled drivers and disabled cyclists who will benefit from more generous provision.

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?	
The updated Vehicle Parking Standards were informed by reviews of user surveys undertaken at development sites over a several years. The intention to update the standards was reported to the Kent Planning Officers Group. The Vehicle Parking Standards were included within the consultation process for the Kent Design Guide which was available on-line during 2023.	
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	
No	
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	
The aim of the standards is to get the right number of parking spaces and layout of parking provision in new developments to the benefit of the residents and users and in accordance with Government policies. Parking for all types of vehicle are considered seeking a balance between the need to provide an appropriate parking provision, to ensure the safe operation of the public highway and to encourage travel by sustainable modes which tend to have a higher proportion of users with protected characteristics such the young for cycling, the young, females and the old for public transport. Disabled drivers and disabled cyclists will benefit from more generous provision included in revised layout plans within the document.	

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

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

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

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

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable

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

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

24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
No
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Not Applicable

25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
No	
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity	
Not Applicable	
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
No	
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships	
Not Applicable	
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	
No	
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities	
Not Applicable	

From: Neil Baker- Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation

Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 January 2025

Subject: Network Management Framework

Decision no: 24/00111

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Countywide responsibilities.

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: The Network Management plan is a comprehensive document designed to evidence the ongoing and proposed works Kent County Council carry out in line with the Network Management Duty. The plan reflects how the Duty, as defined in the Traffic Management Act 2004, is embedded throughout Highways and Transportation.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation to:

(i)   ENDORSE and ADOPT on behalf of Kent County Council the updated Network Management Plan produced by the Network Management Team in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

---

1.   Introduction

1.1   Traffic Management Act 2004 outlines how a highway authority must ensure the appointed Traffic Manager has provision in place to carry out its responsibilities in line with the Act. We must be able to provide a document outlining the council's responsibilities in relation to our Network Management Duty. This is known as the Network Management Plan.

1.2   The Plan is not intended to change any services or provide new proposals. The document outlines how KCC currently perform the Network Management Duty and how the requirements of the Traffic Management Act are embedded throughout Highways and Transportation. The highway authority must keep the arrangements under review and update the Plan to comply with legislation.

2. Key Considerations

2.1   This decision to endorse and adopt the updated Network Management Plan ensures Kent County Council is fulfilling its duties under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

3. Background

3.1   It is acknowledged that the plan provides an insight into the functions being carried out by Highways and Transportation. It is not intended to be an all-encompassing document which details all responsibilities but provides a strong and clear overview into the general functions carried out by KCC Highways and Transportation. The detail within the plan is obtained from other sources within the department which are readily available

4. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

4.1   Not applicable in this case, as legislation requires KCC to produce a Network Management Plan..

5. Financial Implications

5.1   There are no financial implications. This is a document which supports the Traffic Managers role in adhering to the Traffic Management Act 2004.

6. Legal implications

6.1   The Traffic Management Act 2004 requires highway authorities to prepare and publish a Network Management Plan which outlines how the authority adheres to its Network Management Duty. Through the approval of this Key Decision, KCC can ensure we are carrying out our responsibilities in line with national legislation. We have ensured the Act is considered throughout the document.

7. Equalities implications

7.1   The EqIA identified a concern with the disability protected characteristic. This related to the accessibility requirements to ensure the document was formatted correctly. Throughout the drafting of the document, these concerns were managed by following KCC guidance on formatting and accessibility. The use of Accessibility Checker tools ensured the document achieved all required standards.

7.2   The EqIA was updated upon completion of the document as images have been used on the front title page. The process of using alternative text on photos was followed which ensures the document is compatible with text-to-speech applications for visually impaired readers.

7.3   The document aligns with KCC's Digital Accessibility Team requirements which ensures the Plan complies with the Equality Act 2010.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1   A Data Protection Impact Assessment screening identified no concerns which required any mitigation measures as all statistics and relevant information remains readily available to the public.

9. Other corporate implications

9.1   The decision will not cause any wider implications to other services within the Council due to the nature of the Plan. This is a document which states the work currently being undertaken by Highways and Transportation officers which meets the expectations of the Network Management Duty.

10.   Governance

10.1   The Director of Highways and Transportation will inherit main delegations via the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

11.   Conclusions

11.1   The Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation to:

(i)   ENDORSE and ADOPT on behalf of Kent County Council the updated Network Management Plan produced by the Network Management Team in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision as shown at Appendix A.

12.   Appendix and Background Documents

- Appendix A: Proposed record of decision
- Network Management Plan (PDF document)
- EqiA- Network Management Plan v2 (word document)

13. Contact details

Report Author: Remy Laporte Job title: Senior Network Project Manager Telephone number: 03000 416037 Email address: remy.laporte@kent.gov.uk	Director: Haroona Chughtai Job title: Director of Highways and Transportation Telephone number: 03000 412479 Email address: Haroona.chughtai@kent.gov.uk

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	24/00111

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Network Management Framework

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport I agree to:

(i)   ENDORSE and ADOPT on behalf of Kent County Council the updated Network Management Plan produced by the Network Management Team in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004; and

(ii)   To DELEGATE authority to the Director of Highways and Transportation to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision

Reason(s) for decision:
The Network Management plan is a comprehensive document designed to evidence the ongoing and proposed works Kent County Council carry out are in line with the Network Management Duty., as defined in the Traffic Management Act 2004. The highway authority must keep the arrangements under review and update the Plan to comply with legislation.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The proposal is being considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 14 January 2025..

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
 Not applicable, as legislation requires KCC to produce a Network Management Plan..

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

....
signed   date

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Network Management Plan

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Kent County Council

Network Management Plan

Contents

2

3

Foreword

The Network Management Plan explains how we will continue to manage the operation, performance and development of our road network so that it delivers an efficient and effective transport system, which supports economic activity, meets future housing and employment needs, provides a good quality of life for residents, visitors and businesses. Kent County Council (KCC) is the largest non-metropolitan council in a two-tier arrangement in the country. It serves England's largest county with a population of 1.6 million people, which is expected to increase to 1.9 million by 2040, including a 60% increase in people aged over 80. Kent is a diverse county spanning 1,368 square miles over coastal, rural and urban areas. Our varied geography as well as our location as the gateway to Europe and adjacent to London makes Kent a unique place with significant opportunities and challenges, and this sets the operating environment that KCC is working in. This Network Management Plan outlines KCC Highways and Transportation's key roles and responsibilities which work together to ensure Kent has the best possible transport network.

Haroona Chughtai
Director of Highways and Transportation

National Context

The county of Kent sits in the South-East of England and is a mixture of rural, urban and coastal communities. It borders with Essex to the north over the River Thames, East Sussex to the South-west, Surrey to the west and Greater London to the north-west. The 2021 Census estimated 1,610,300 people living with the area of Kent County Council with the DfT estimating 9.38 billion vehicle miles were travelled on roads in Kent in 2023. Kent is a key transport link between the United Kingdom and the continent with both the Port of Dover and Le Shuttle (Eurotunnel) at Folkestone taking 41% of the countries freight movements. Kent is a very historical county, with some of the road network remaining from Roman past and settlements which have been in place for hundreds of years. The size of the county does make the management of the area difficult and particularly exacerbated given how varied the built environment is. In Kent, we are grateful for our members and officers who have a wealth of experience and understanding for this diversity. We continue to take a countywide approach to highways and transportation matters but are sympathetic to local issues and challenges.

Legislation

The County Council as Kent's Highway Authority has powers and duties through which it maintains and improves the highway network, in addition to managing activities taking place on this network. These powers and duties are derived from the

4

national legislation outlined below, which underpins the work of Network Management affording us the powers to manage the highway network.

- The Highways Act 1980
  This broadly covers the management and operation of the highway in England and Wales.
- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
  The act provides powers to the relevant authority to regulate or restrict traffic on the highway.
- The New Roads and Street Works Act (NRSWA) 1991
  This legislation provides a wide range of information on all aspects of works to roads carried out by statutory undertakers.
- The Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004
  offers new powers and duties to the local traffic authority and was introduced to reduce congestion and disruption on the road network. The TMA gives guidance on six main sections
  - Traffic Management on Trunk Roads
  - Network Management
  - Permits
  - Street Works
  - Highways and Roads
  - Civil Enforcement of Traffic Contraventions Compliance with the Traffic Management Act 2004

KCC recognise and support the opportunities the Traffic Management Act 2004 and network management duty provides. Whilst production of a Network Management Plan is not mandatory, the government does encourage highway authorities to prepare one. Given the opportunities and benefits that it provides, which include benefits to the economy, road users and service delivery, Kent County Council is fully committed to the implementation and delivery of our Network Management Plan.

The Traffic Management Act includes the appointment of a Traffic Manager to perform the tasks that are necessary for meeting the network management duty. In Kent the Head of Network Management is the Traffic Manager, retaining oversight of all congestion and traffic management activities in the county.

The 2004 Act suggests that local authorities could achieve objectives of reducing congestion and improving the travelled experience by taking a range of actions. This includes securing a more efficient use of the road network and tackling road congestion or disruption. It is an enabling Act which allows the Council to change laws by using appropriate legislation such as Traffic Regulation Orders.

Kent's Highway Network

Funding

5

KCC Highways and Transportation operate a financial budget where the amount varies yearly. In the 2023/24 financial period, the directorate managed over £70 million Revenue and £180 million Capital funding. The fluctuation in funding per year means officers face challenges in forecasting budgets for future years and ensuring assets are funded going forward.

Each year a budget is published on our website which shows the forecast capital investment plans for the next 10 years by directorate and the yearly revenue budget. Our capital budget comes from many sources, with the greatest amount being from grants of various forms. Comparatively, around 41% of total annual revenue expenditure budget is funded from council tax. This differentiation between sources for capital and revenue funding shapes how we're able to spend this money. Generally, revenue funding supports the maintenance and continued running of services as they stand. Capital funding looks to create improvement and change to locations and services.

Strategic Road Network

Kent's Strategic Road Network recognises certain roads as being vital to maintaining both economic activity and access to essential services during extreme weather emergencies or other major incidents. Kent has some of the most intensively used roads in the country and any disruption on these routes is felt very quickly by many road users. We must ensure resilience is a priority, meaning it must withstand extreme weather, industrial action, major incidents and other risks. This level of resilience must be proportionate to its use, economic or social importance and available alternatives. The criterion for this network includes, but is not limited to, roads connecting main towns with a population of 20,000 and above to National Highways Strategic Road Network, roads connecting main towns with main employment sites and roads connecting with key infrastructure or operational emergency services.

In addition to the above KCC policy, we must also adhere to guidance provided by the Department for Transport regarding road classification and our Primary Route Network (PRN). This designates a road between places of traffic importance across the UK and aims to provide easily identifiable routes to access the whole of the country. A PRN is constructed from a series of locations (primary designations) selected by the DfT, which are then linked by roads (primary routes) identified by the local highway authority.

This classification enables us to ensure our priorities with regards to resourcing and spend countywide is proportionate to the nature of the road. We are committed to ensuring we protect the efficient operation of the PRN which in turn should improve strategic levels of congestion.

Highway Assets

Our assets can be divided into three main divisional categories as follows.

6

Public Transport

KCC support bus operators to provide a vast network of buses across the County. The team issue over 25,000 concessionary travel passes for young people ever year with 230,000 concessionary travel bus passes for the elderly and disabled being provided. Private transport arrangements are also made for over 7,000 SEN school children every day.

Highways

Our Highways Inspectors carry out checks of the carriageways and footways in Kent as part of our statutory responsibilities to keep the highway in fair condition. We regularly inspect over 5,400 miles of roads and 4,000 miles of footways and the value of all our assets (like for like replacement) is over £24 billion. Our drainage team look after over 275,000 roadside drains and 8,500 soakaways with our Streetlighting officers managing over 122,500 streetlights and 17,700 lit signs. Those within our structures team are responsible for over 2,200 bridges and other structures and even two tunnels.

The Soft Landscaping team at KCC look after 3.2 million square metres of urban grass, 3,000 miles of rural verges that need regular cutting. Kent's arboriculture officers are responsible for over 550,000 highway trees. We estimate there are around 4,000 miles of centre line white lane markings, 1,800 miles of junction markings, 240,000 letters and arrows marked on the road and over 700,000 road studs. In adverse weather we treat over 60 salting routes covering 30% of the road network on Kent.

The customer contact centre and business performance teams receive over 220,000 contacts from customers each year to report a fault or request services. Our Streetworks teams handle over 130,000 permit requests each year from our own works and utility companies who need to work on our highways to ensure we do our best to minimise disruptions at roadworks.

Transportation

In our role as a Highways Authority and as a statutory consultee, our transport planners respond to over 4,000 planning applications per year. The highway improvements team deliver over 400 new highway improvements to Kent's transport network each year to seek to respond to Personal Injury collisions that are taking place, we call this our Crash Remedial Measures programme. Our intelligent transport systems team have around 330 signalled junctions, 370 signalled crossings, 170 CCTV cameras and over 500 other interactive warning, real time information and message signs. Kent's traffic operations centre has over 75,000 followers on Twitter @KentHighways and regularly publish over 1,000 tweets each month.

Whilst each of our three Service Units has their own identity, purpose and measures that help it understand and improve services, it is important that we deliver more than the sum of all our parts. We are clear that we must all work together to strive to deliver a set of overarching priorities that align to the priorities set out in Framing

Kent's Future. The key priorities for H&T that all staff should consider in everything we do are:

1. Fewer people killed or seriously injured on Kent's roads (Vision Zero).
2. Customer satisfaction by providing 'the right services in the right way for the right people'.
3. Maximising lifespan and minimising lifecycle costs of the highway and its assets. Improving maintainability by embedding asset management principles into everything we do.
4. Cost effective statutory and discretionary services by commissioning well and being commercially astute.
5. Growth and economic prosperity through efficient highway and transport infrastructure.
6. Everyone can choose to travel safely, efficiently and sustainably to employment, education, social and cultural opportunities.
7. Zero waste to landfill by maximising the use of waste as a resource.
8. Maximise inward investment into Kent.
9. Retaining a safe, healthy and motivated workforce with high levels of job satisfaction (creating 'more good days at work').
10. Working towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050 (with a focus on reducing the need for business travel, a clean fleet of vehicles and the overall impact of our working practices).

Tourism

The district of Kent has a variety of different features and attractions which bring in millions of tourists each year, both from within Kent, across the United Kingdom and from the continent. Kent's beaches have been listed as some of the best in Europe. We are also home to 18 castles scattered across the county, with Kent having more castles and historic houses than any other county. These stretch from Hever Castle in Sevenoaks in West Kent to Dover Castle in East Kent. The Kent coastline is flanked with various fortresses with many of these open to the public all year around. There is a reason the county is known as 'the garden of England', KCC manage nine country parks each with their own landscape and character. Our county is also home to many other privately owned parks and gardens which attract visitors.

With convenient links to London, Kent has been a location for tourism for hundreds of years. The County Showground in Maidstone is a hub for various events including the Kent County Show which takes place every July with around 80,000 attendees over the three days. Other locations such as the Hop Farm which holds the War and Peace Show, the largest military vehicle fair around the world which sees 100,000 visitors over the event. Brands Hatch in Sevenoaks famously holds the British Superbikes event. KCC take pride in supporting these, and many other, events through clearing possible routes for travel and working with organisers to promote safe access.

Freight

The UK freight system moved 154 billion tonnes of goods in 2019 supporting almost £400 billion in manufacturing sales. The amount of freight moved, and the vehicle miles driven have been increasing over the last 15 years. In total the amount of goods moved has increased by 23% since 2009 and the amount of road freight traffic is forecast to further increase.

Supporting efficient road freight movement is important to the national and local economy. However, owing to the complex nature of the UK freight system there are local challenges that affect residents across Kent. These include:

- Resilience and congestion issues on the A2, M2 and M20 which is an important road for movement between the rest of the UK and the port in Dover.
- Inappropriate vehicles and levels of freight movement through towns, leading to environmental and structural weight restrictions.
- Contribution to local air quality issues.
- Construction and logistics movements associated with the large number of housing development sites.

With over two million HGVs and unaccompanied trailers entering through the Port of Dover and Euro Tunnel, freight vehicles account for a high percentage of the counties moving traffic. Across the M2/A2 and M20/A20 corridors, HGVs account for up to 41% of all vehicles on the county's strategic road network. Due to the weight and volume of traffic passing through Kent, additional strain can be caused to the road network. As a highway authority, it is firmly understood that there are instances where HGVs take unsuitable routes that may cause local issues to Kent residents.

There is a compromise to be reached in accepting the practical need for vehicles to access the road network and allowing them to go about their daily business unimpeded. There is a benefit to finding ways of ensuring HGV drivers only use the road network which is appropriate for the weight and size of the vehicle. However, it is understood this is not a simple task as freight movements may be required to locations not generally noted as being suitable to larger vehicles due to residential or business need. KCC are collaborating with partners in the freight associations to work together to best resolve these challenges.

Agricultural and Arable Land

Kent is a county with a rich agricultural history and diverse rural landscape. Covering an area of approximately 3,736km^2, about 70% of Kent's land is used for agriculture, making it a vital part of the local economy. The county's agricultural land is split between arable farming, which accounts for 43% of the area, and permanent pasture, which makes up close to 40%. Kent is also a leading producer of fruits in England producing up to 40% of fruits such apples, pears and plums, and around 50% of the country's total cherry production. The county also growing a reputation

for its vineyards with over 50 in the county, covering around 350 hectares, producing high quality sparkling wines. Additionally, Kent's varied soil types and temperate climate support a range of agricultural activities, from cereal and vegetable farming to horticulture.

Environmental and infrastructure challenges play a crucial role in shaping Kent's rural landscape. The county is home to diverse habitats and protected areas, including two National Landscapes (previously known as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), the Kents Downs and the High Weald, and numerous Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), which contribute to its rich biodiversity. However, climate change presents significant threats to the region such as increased temperatures, altered rainfall patterns and more frequent extreme weather events. It is noted that these changes could impact agricultural productivity, biodiversity, and the availability of water resources particularly during dry spells. This is noteworthy as Kent already has an average of about 650-700mm of rainfall annually, which is relatively low compared to other parts of the UK, making irrigation an important factor for agriculture locally, now and in the future.

The rural population in Kent constitutes a significant proportion of the county's 1.9 million residents, with about 68% of the population living rurally. The population tends to be older, which affects the agricultural workforce as fewer of the younger population are choosing to enter farming. This poses a risk to the sustainability of agriculture in Kent as not only have labour shortages exacerbated since post-Brexit immigration policies along with the aging population, but there is additional pressure for residential and commercial development due to Kent's proximity to London. Overall, this is causing the rise land prices and threatening the availability of farmland. The growth in population and development has implications for Kent's highways and infrastructure. As more land is converted for residential and commercial use, traffic congestion and wear and tear on rural roads are likely to increase. The influx of heavy agricultural machinery and transport vehicles, coupled with an aging road network, can lead to deteriorating road condition and increased maintenance costs. This strain on the highways not only affects transportation and logistics for the agricultural sector, but also impacts the daily lives of rural residents, leading to challenges in accessibility for the aging population and connectivity across the county.

Development and Traffic Growth

Many large developments and settlements in Kent are located along or near to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) corridors. Based on our 2019 to 2037 forecasts, an estimated 200,000 additional car and freight person trips will be made per week day in 2037 compared to 2019, with a total of 3.5 million per day forecast in Kent in 2037. This change may be because of many reasons, such as the continued increase in online consumption of goods and services and the immediacy of their delivery as part of competitive edge in markets.

This leads to increased volumes of LGV and HGV trips, despite likely efficiencies through increased consolidation efforts by businesses owing to the attractiveness of the relatively unregulated gig-economy for providing delivery services. The proliferation of distribution centres and shadow stores leading to reduced distances between suppliers and customers, but also leading to increased locations attracting freight trips. The electrification of private vehicles, which leads to the increased use of Electric vehicles and assuming their continued cheaper operation relative to conventionally fuelled petrol or diesel vehicles, leading to increased mileage. The perception of Electric vehicles as clean zero emissions forms of transport leading to increased use over reduced concern about the negative externalities of private vehicle use. The potential for climate and societal conditions to make air conditioned, heated, door to door, and private transport increasingly attractive. Land use patterns, assuming the continued trend towards new satellite or standalone garden towns and villages which leads to an increase in the volume of vehicle trips over mid distances e.g. between five to 20 kilometres due to the need to travel to the main urban centres which act as the economic hubs across the county. At the same time, if designed well, then there should be a reduced need for private vehicle travel within the new settlements, helping to reduce the volume of car trips below the five-kilometre threshold.

Forecasting future public transport journeys, on Rail and Bus is extremely difficult as the factors affecting their use are more nuanced that private vehicles. This is due to their use being shared, subject to routings and frequencies not dictated by the user, and similarly in respect of fares pricing.

The pandemic knocked forecast use of Rail and Bus far off course. Prior to 2020, Rail use in the south east region was expected to remain on an upward curve of around an average of just over 1% per annum into the 2030s and beyond to 2050. Instead, Rail demand is not expected to recover to 2019 levels for at least two to three years, and with a strong possibility of going well beyond 2025 as working habits and travel requirements evolve. The future growth rate is therefore harder to determine at the current time and this uncertainty is acknowledged in predictive modelling.

KCC's local transport plan explains how we expect to achieve our transport vision to 2031. LTP4 'Delivering Growth without Gridlock' incorporates transportation policies, alongside local schemes and issues. It considers both countywide and national implications. The creation and development of LTP5 is currently ongoing and 'Striking the Balance' will replace LTP4 once delivered. This ensures we as a local highway authority are clear that our plans for transport should improve all types of journeys. LTP5 aims to outline proposals for improving roads and public transport across Kent to provide focus for future resources and funding. This will combine supporting the economy, making living and working in Kent better all while managing environmental challenges. Once the strategic objections of LTP5 are confirmed, KCC will support these through our network management capabilities.

Partnering Relationships

District authorities

Kent County Council are responsible for certain services across the whole of Kent. There are 12 district councils, known as either borough or city councils. Each of these district councils has their own challenges and environments. Gravesham and Dartford are impacted by delays and congestion at the Dartford Crossing. These are very urban areas with minimal rural environment. Dartford borders with Bexley and Bromley councils and Gravesham borders with Medway unitary authority. Dartford is also home to the counties busiest train station with, on average, 12,600 passengers alighting services every day. Sevenoaks borders with Bromley and Surrey and important motorway networks M26 and M25 run through the district. Delays on National Highways network can cause issues on KCC network as vehicles seek alternative routes. The district has some very rural parts and many historical landmarks which bring in tourism and large events during the year. Tunbridge Wells is home to Royal Tunbridge Wells, a historical spa town with high traffic flows and both commuters and weekend tourism. The wider district borders with East Sussex and is a large district with many individual towns primarily to the east of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

Tonbridge and Malling borough sits between various districts in Kent, and is mainly divided into two large urbanisations, Malling and Tonbridge. Tonbridge is known locally as a secondary school hub with seven secondary schools in the district which brings scholars from far afield. The Tonbridge train station is the second busiest station in the county. The borough of Maidstone is the county town of Kent, where our county offices are located. The district is noted as being one of the largest geographically in the county, with very high population density in comparison. Swale district combines urban areas, rural locations and tourism in the market town of Faversham and on the Island of Sheppey. This area is accessed via bridges from the mainland Kent. The Island of Sheppey is home to three blue flag beaches which bring in thousands of tourists per year. Canterbury district has city status with Canterbury Cathedral as the focal point of the district and the area also includes other towns including seaside locations Herne Bay and Whitstable.

Ashford borough is recognised as one of the largest geographical districts. Its rural network is vast and brings levels of tourism throughout the year. Folkestone and Hythe district is recognised primarily for being home to the Euro Tunnel network, transporting both tourist and freight traffic to Calais through the below-sea tunnels. It is also home to numerous beaches, with Folkestone harbour a popular seaside resort. Alongside the movements from those in Folkestone, Dover is the primary ferry port in Kent. Dover is also a tourism town with historical Dover Castle bringing many visitors to the district. Finally, the district of Thanet is our most eastern location with popular towns Broadstairs, Margate and Ramsgate and numerous Bays and beaches within those towns. Each of these districts has various attractions, their own

individual challenges and populations which require an individualised approach to network management.

Neighbouring authorities

As previously mentioned, it is noted that Kent has several neighbouring authorities it shared a boundary with. Where road networks are divided between Kent County Council and another highway authority, local agreements are in place regarding maintenance. In the county of Kent, Medway unitary authority borders with Swale, Maidstone, Tonbridge and Malling and Gravesham. Officers from relevant departments liaise with each other to ensure services are managed to maintain standards required. Other counties such as East Sussex and Surrey follow similar practises with local agreements being the most appropriate method to ensure all authorities successfully maintain their networks.

National Highways

National Highways have numerous motorways and roads within KCC's geographical area. The M25, M26, M20, M2 and trunk roads such as A21 through Southwest Kent and A20, A2 and A2070 in East Kent are all managed and maintained by NH. Each of these roads and motorways has individual land ownership for slip roads and roundabouts. These motorways take a significant volume of traffic across Kent, and it is important we work together to support the free movement on their network. To bring together relevant parties, the Kent Corridor Coordination Group which is led by National Highways is a bi-weekly forum which allows for discussion and dispute of proposed works. Representatives from Eurotunnel and Dover Port also join the calls to discuss any works which may impact on their services. Additionally, the Kent Resilience Forum work as a partnership between KCC, NH and emergency services. During winter service, there is a close liaison between NH contractors and KCC to ensure the respective areas of responsibility are managed appropriately.

Ports

As mentioned previously, The Port of Dover is situated in East Kent, in the district of Dover. It is Europe's busiest ferry port and is an international gateway for the movement of passengers and trade. The Port of Dover handles £144 billion trade per year, 33% of UK trade in goods with the EU and welcomes over 11 million passengers. In the district of Folkestone, Eurotunnel crosses approximately 1.5million freight vehicles every year with 25% of trade between the UK and the EU being via the Eurotunnel. Additionally, 2.1million passenger vehicles pass through the Tunnel each year.

The Network Management Duty

The network management duty is a key requirement under the Traffic Management Act 2004 and applies to all local traffic authorities. The duty came into force on 5 January 2005 and recognises:
- The importance of managing and operating the road network.
- The importance of optimising benefits for all road users.
- The needs of those who maintain the infrastructure, the network itself and the services within it.

Section 16(1) of the Traffic Management Act 2004 states that:
It is the duty of a local traffic authority to manage their road network with a view to achieving, so far as is reasonably practicable and having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives, the following objectives:
(a) Securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network; and
(b) Facilitating the expeditious movement of traffic on road networks for which another authority is the traffic authority.
(2) The action which the authority may take in performing that duty includes, in particular, any action which they consider will contribute to securing:
(a) The more efficient use of their road network; or
(b) The avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network or a road network for which another authority is the traffic authority;
and may involve the exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in the road network (whether or not the power was conferred on them in their capacity as a traffic authority)

The Act principally places responsibility for managing and alleviating congestion on the network upon the Traffic Manager. Congestion can be clarified as more acute that traffic delays, with congestion generally being centred around urban areas or locations where major junctions meet. The increased demand of vehicle movements and lack of capacity on the highway results in locations where delays are often excessive. It is a common frustration for all road users who are subject to congestion on their journey times. Increase unreliability due to unknown journey times creates a loss of support with the council and further frustrates road users. It is important to note that road users are not only local residents driving themselves on the roads. This could be passengers in cars, those using public transport, those driving through the county or those relying on deliveries to their properties or businesses.

There is often more than one cause of congestion taking place at any hotspot location. The primary cause of congestion is as a result of roadworks, lack of capacity at junctions or carriageways, incorrect traffic signal timings, lack of enforcement, lack of restrictions for parking or lack of maintenance to signage and lining.

KCC understands that congestion and the disruption congestion causes is greater than the isolated location. The knock-on impact of delays creates issues for Kent's residents and road users and needs to be improved wherever possible. Kent County Council is committed to taking action to avoid, eliminate, or reduce road congestion

14

or other disruption to the movement of traffic. We will continue to look for new processes to identify reasons why road congestion or disruption occurs. Our various teams considering possible actions that could be taken to address congestion or disruption such as carrying out road improvement schemes.

In Kent, our officers investigate small scale improvements such as lining adjustments or adjusting traffic signals. Other departments work on larger schemes such as major junction redesigns which require longer term investigation and investment. Schemes may be implemented which increase capacity for all vehicles, however KCC also looks to install measures such as bus only lanes which improves reliability for those choosing to utilise public transport. We regularly assess the performance of the network and carry out checks to ensure new arrangements that have been put in place are providing the correct results.

DfT guidance notes that the network management duty is one element of an authority's transport activities and should complement the council's other policies and actions. The network management team work to embed desired outcomes and appropriate policies and plans under the network management duty within the council's other relevant polices to achieve a coherent approach.

Kent's Traffic Manager

The Traffic Management Act outlines the following responsibilities and expectations.

A network management authority shall make such arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the network management duty. The arrangements must include provision for the appointment of a person (to be known as the "traffic manager") to perform such tasks as the authority consider will assist them to perform their network management duty. The traffic manager may (but need not) be an employee of the authority. The arrangements must include provision for establishing processes for ensuring (so far as may be reasonably practicable) that the authority—

a) identify things (including future occurrences) which are causing, or which have the potential to cause, road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network; and

(b)consider any possible action that could be taken in response to (or in anticipation of) anything so identified;

This legislation does allow for some flexibility with how each highway authority organises their highway and transportation operations. In Kent the Traffic Manager holds responsibility for the Network Management Team which includes, but is not limited, to matters of traffic enforcement, parking, TRO's, innovation, freight and transport modelling.

The Traffic Manager provides representation for Kent in several local and national forums. This supports partnership working between organisations to improve efficiencies on the highway network. Internally, the Traffic Manager supports reviewing travel choices, increasing capacity and network utilisation and understanding other methods of network management. This Network Management Plan aims to clarify the various functions carried out by Kent's officers which support the overall objections within the Network Management Duty.

An important role of the Traffic Manager in Kent is identifying strategic diversion routes alongside our partnering authorities. It is imperative that alternative routes be identified during times of incidents where traffic is stopped or diverted. The strategic diversion routes are created alongside relevant parties such as National Highways to pre-plan routes traffic can be diverted to, to cause as minimal disruption and wider impact as possible.

In June 2022, KCC were devolved powers for Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. As the Act relates to the free movement of traffic on road, this amendment enables the County Council to carry out enforcement of specific moving traffic offences. Kent has many restrictions on traffic in place, many are to promote safety such as one-way streets, some are to reduce congestion from larger vehicles traversing through routes such as weight restrictions and some restrictions aim to reduce journey times and congestion such as bus gates and lanes. In Kent, the Traffic Manager carries out this function of enforcement on these restrictions. The Act enables 26 traffic signs to be enforced, Kent is currently in the process of setting up this enforcement to support the safe and expeditious movement of traffic on the highway network.

The Traffic Manager also carries out other roles such as reviewing Kent's record of Traffic Sensitive Streets (TSS). This allows the council to assign streets as being sensitive to traffic flows which cause congestion and delay. Roads which have TSS status are given a higher a priority for these locations to be clear of roadworks or incidents which impact the wider network. This is a function which is carried out every few years, with all roads in Kent with TSS being reviewed and proposals made for new locations. Kent's Street Gazetteer custodian will ensure all roads with TSS status are uploaded as such to the street register managed by the Department for Transport.

Incident Management

KCC are required to comply with legal and regulatory duties to provide emergency and business continuity. The requirements emergency and incident management within highways and transportation are multi-faceted and can relate to a huge variety of issues. Most emergencies are completely unpredictable, but we do implement emergency plans so resources and experienced officers can respond quickly and as efficiently as possible. These are generalised in our main emergency plan so we can be assured that any action taken is the best possible response. We also look after specific plans for emergencies which have their own various concerns but would

16

impact on the highway network. These include locations such as the Channel Tunnel, but also weather events such as flooding.

The Kent and Medway Resilience Forum brings together all risk information and how agencies work together during these times. The KMRF is a partnership of organisations made up of responders based on categories from the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. KCC's officers form part of the Resilience Team to ensure KCC's priorities and functions are reflected in the wider approach.

Within Highways and Transportation, we have undertaken a full Business Impact Assessment which supports business continuity planning. Our Plans outlines all core services, business critically ratings, recovery requirements and number of essential fuel users required. Business Continuity Plans are managed by each head of service within H&T and include the relevant BIA to the role. The key ongoing risks regularly reviewed include

- Severe weather events
- Budget reductions and our ability to deliver published levels of service
- Health & Safety incidents at roadworks sites
- Supplier's meeting performance standards
- Cost increases for suppliers and lack of availability of materials
- Increased volumes and backlogs of works requiring road space and permitting following Covid 19
- Outsourced internal services under performance

Further details on our countywide approach can be found within Kent County Council's Major Emergency Plan on the KCC website.

Specific functions

It is acknowledged that the functions and responsibilities undertaken by the highways and transportation department at KCC are extremely varied. Below provides a snapshot into some primary roles and is not intended to be a full explanation of all the work undertaken by the various teams.

Streetworks

Within Kent County Council, there are five Streetworks teams. Four of these are geographically divided (Streetworks West, Streetworks West Central, Streetworks East Central and Streetworks East), with a central Streetworks Compliance team which works to ensure all Streetworks officers carry out their role in accordance with the relevant legislation. The primary legislation followed by the Streetworks teams is the New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991. Part three of the Act outlines how a highway authority should carry out the management of streetworks, the definitions relating to this and matters concerning the operation of a streetworks register. It also

confirms specifics such as notification periods, reinstatement requirements and charges payable to those who misuse the Act. This includes charges under Section 74 of the Act, 'Charge for occupation of the highway where works unreasonably prolonged.' This enforces any undertaker of works must prioritise the expeditious completion of works to reopen any highway as being fully available for the road user. The aim of this specifically being to ensure movement of travel and reduction of congestion is prioritised by works promoters. The Act also requires authorities to maintain records of works and outlines working relationships with authorities such as National Rail.

The Traffic Management Act Part 3 was brought in at a later stage to clarify requirements using permit schemes to keep a streetworks record. Kent County Council was one of the first highway authorities to create a permit system. The Kent Permit Scheme processes over 120,000 permits each year.

KCC also have a Lane Rental scheme in force which enables the streetworks authority to identify a small section of the overall Kent network that is the most impacted by roadworks. Many of our roads carry tens of thousands of vehicles each day and the presence of disruptive roadworks causes delay and congestion to all who use the network. The Kent Permit Scheme charges the works undertaker a fee for each day said road is worked on with disruptive traffic management. The aim of the KLR is to promote works to be completed in innovative ways which may reduce the time on site causing congestion.

It is important to recognise that the NRSWA is clear with its definitions regarding types of works. The streetworks authority cannot refuse works take place but can work with works promoters and statutory undertakers to ensure projects are completed at the best time possible such as during half terms or avoiding peak tourist times.

The team carry out works to not only manage roadworks, but also manage certain licenses which cause obstruction to the highway such as private skips being placed on carriageway, scaffolding on property frontages or hoarding. Additionally, events are managed by the officers who assess traffic management proposals and impact of attendees on the wider road network. KCC work alongside district councils, emergency services and other interested stakeholders within the district-led Safety Advisory Groups (SAG). These SAGs are an advisory board, who assess the impact of certain events and make suggestions and comments on proposals. The role of the streetworks officers at the SAG is to assess the traffic management plans and understand the volume of attendees to correct identify the best approach to reduce congestion from events.

Traffic Operations

The Traffic Operations and Technology teams use computing and communication technology to improve how the road network runs. Through using a central point of

control of transport systems, congestion is managed and reduced. The team carry out various functions including monitoring and adjusting certain traffic signals to minimise delays. They monitor general levels of traffic congestion through the network through the use of real time information and CCTV systems in key locations.

By using urban traffic management control on traffic signals, traffic can be reduced with the impact of particular junctions causing significant delay levels around the county. Signal controlled junctions improve safety of through traffic by ensuring conflicting movements are controlled appropriately. The team is responsible for day-to-day management of traffic signal installation and systems throughout the county. The team also supports the design and implementation of new systems, working alongside developers and others within KCC to ensure any new traffic light systems work with best optimisation.

The Traffic Operations Centre works to inform the travelling public of incidents and appropriate alternative routes, liaise with appropriate partners to support where possible and keep routes clear using centralised urban traffic management and control. Incidents may be in various forms such as accidents, unplanned works, vehicle breakdowns, events or public protests. In addition to activating any plans using the UTMC system, the team also utilise Vehicle Messaging Signs with key information and advice. Officers also make note of any faults with signals to pass onto the signal's contractors for attendance to ensure full efficiency with any signalled junctions.

Public Transport

Kent's Public Transport department is divided into four teams as below:

- Public Transport Planning and Operations
- Client Transport Planning and Operations
- Fastrack Development
- Public Transport Business

KCC do not run any bus services directly but have an important role to play with respect to a number of public transport issues including - school transport, concessionary fares, bus stop infrastructure and working with private operators to support the commercial network as far as possible for the benefit of Kent's residents.

With respect to local buses, commercial bus operators which exist in Kent run their own services for profit privately. KCC do, on occasion, subsidise some routes or services which are not viable for private operators to run, but this is a discretionary activity. The public transport planning and operations team assist with coordinating public transport and working with operators to ensure services can run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. Officers also manage Concessionary Travel under the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007. This includes our Older and Disabled persons bus pass (ENCTS) for which there are over 240,000 passholders, the KCC Traver Saver pass and KCC 16+ Travel saver, for which there are approximately 30,000 passholders.

The Planning and Operations team also seek to support the public transport network as far as possible through the provision and maintenance of bus stop infrastructure, support of the Community Transport sector, provision of our own CT scheme called the Kent Karrier and through other policy work such as responses to planning applications.

Recently the team has reacted to the requirements of the Government's National Bus Strategy, forming a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Enhanced Partnerships (EPs) with operators in response and securing over £35.1m of funding to deliver a number of positive public transport improvements such as bus priority lanes, Real time information and a new information portal. The Public Transport Team also arrange home to school transport for those entitled to it under legislation. In Kent, if a child is a certain distance from their nearest age and ability appropriate school, they can receive free transport. They must be either, over eight years old and live more than three miles from the school using the shortest available walking route or, under eight years old and live more than two miles from the school using the shortest available walking route. If a child attends a mainstream school, the public transport planning and operations team manage their transport. This is done for approximately 5,000 students. If the student attends a special educational needs school, their transport is managed by the client transport team. The client transport team manage around 7,000 SEN student transport requirements each year.

Within the Thameside area, Fastrack is an established and high-quality bus rapid transit system which provides fast, reliable and efficient transport across Dartford, Ebbsfleet and Gravesham. Officers support the expansion of Fastrack to support ongoing local development and are launching a new Fastrack scheme in Dover in 2024. The team are actively looking to bring innovation to public transport where possible, including onboarding a Mobility as a Service platform. This aims to provide one easily accessible mobility service for various modes of transport and includes information and payment built in.

Planned Maintenance

In recent years, we have significantly developed and improved our approach to highways asset management and introduced various measures to implement the Well-managed Highway Infrastructure (WMHI) code of practice. As a result, we have been able to demonstrate consistently that we are a competent highway authority, make the case for additional funding, and optimise our ability to defend claims. We have developed a new Highways Asset Management Plan (HAMP) to identify a clear investment strategy and associated action plan for the future that is fit for purpose and recognises the challenges and opportunities ahead.

The new plan is a forward-looking document covering the next five years which:

- includes a vision statement

- sets out how highways asset management, as a key enabling service, contributes to achieving strategic outcomes and delivering Kent's interim strategic plan
- describes how we go about asset management and risk-based decision-making
- explains what we know about the condition of our assets both now and going forward based on various investment levels
- sets out our service levels in terms of what we do and what we do not, alongside an assessment of associated risks
- outlines our asset management and WMHI improvements and achievements in recent years
- includes a five year forward works programme for specific asset groups
- lists the future actions we will implement to further improve our approach to asset management, maximise asset lifespans, reduce lifecycle cost and improve future maintainability, in order to deliver on our vision and strategic outcomes

In addition to being an asset management plan for highways, the document is an Investment Strategy and Action Plan for the next five years. It seeks to move towards treating the management and maintenance of our highway assets as a multi-year endeavour, rather than an annual one. The document highlights the importance of consistency of (broad levels of) funding and approach over that longer period, to enable us to deliver a more efficient service with better condition outcomes.

The Highway Maintenance Plan also defines roads in tiers of maintenance hierarchy. More information on the Highway Maintenance Plan can be obtained through the Kent County Council website.

Our highway inspectors and operations team carry out the day-to-day monitoring of the condition of our carriageway and footways across the county. KCC's have a statutory requirement under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain highways which are maintainable at the public expense. This applies to all users of highways. Our highway inspectors carry out this requirement with yearly, bi-yearly and monthly inspection schedules based on the priority and classification of the road and footway.

Our operations team operates a 24-hour a day, 365 days a year highways service, Incident Response Officers managing weather emergencies and other incidents such as fly tipping which is obstructing carriageways or oil spills from RTCs. The first priority is to ensure highway users are safe from any incident and disruption. Once this has been confirmed as a safe environment, officers then prioritise the most appropriate way to clear hazards and obstructions to keep the network moving. The team's in-hours services respond to enquiries regarding matters such as potholes, overhanging trees, verge damage and blocked gullies.

It is important to note that planned maintenance includes many other vital teams in Highways at KCC. This includes, but is not limited to, streetlighting, drainage, structures and soft landscapes. Each of these teams play a vital role in the management of the road network and our assets.

Winter Service

KCC have a statutory 'duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice' Section 41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980, notified in 2003 by Section 111 of the Railways and Transport Act 2003. The County Council recognises winter service is essential in aiding the movement of highway users and enabling everyday life to continue. KCC carry out salting on carriageways to prevent the formation of ice (precautionary salting). Once snow has settled, post salting occurs on carriageway and footways to remove ice and snow. Routine precautionary salting is carried out on pre-determined primary routes which include Class 'A' and 'B' roads and other roads in the top three tiers of the maintenance hierarchy (Major Strategic, Other Strategic and Locally Important Roads). In addition to these, Senior Highway Managers can identify further roads based on local knowledge and experience that have particular concerns hazardous frosty/icy conditions.

Snow clearance through ploughing is completed to prevent injury or damage caused by snow, to remove obstructions caused by the accumulation of snow and to reduce delays and inconvenience caused by snow. This is completed on a priority basis. Snow clearance also takes place on certain minor route carriageways by local farmers and plant operators under agreement with the County Council. The Council also provides Salt Bins in some locations to give motorists and pedestrians the means to salt small areas where ice is causing difficulties. Further information on our Winter Service can be found on the Kent County Council website.

Parking Services

The regulation and authority for parking in Kent has been devolved to the responsibility of the 12 district councils. KCC still retains a countywide Parking Manager to oversee each districts parking arrangements. Given each of Kent's 12 districts do vary so significantly with different urbanisation, retail areas and tourism, it is seen as currently most appropriate for districts to manage their own parking. The management of parking does vary between the districts with their approach to on-street and off-street facilities. All aspects of formalised parking (i.e. council run facilities) are carried out by the district councils including recruitment of officers, budget management and handling of penalty charge notices. KCC are highway authority do have agreement to install and manage traffic regulation orders in addition to the district authorities, with the district authorities as consultees. It is noted that this is a flexible arrangement and Kent may look to centralise parking countywide if deemed more efficient in the future.

Traffic Regulation Orders

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTRA) gives the highway authority the power to regulate and/ or restrict traffic on the Kent network. A Traffic Regulation Order is a legally binding order which states which type of restriction is controlled and on which

roads. These orders can be generally categorised into three types, speed, movement and parking. As above, parking is a function carried out by district councils in KCC, however we can create and amend orders for parking under the RTRA. Moving traffic offences and speeding offences are enforced by Kent Police. There are some restrictions KCC can enforce under the TMA Part 6 agreement. All TROs are required to be advertised and consulted on, with anyone being able to object, or support, proposals. Kent is one of the first authorities to develop a map-based TRO system supporting a modernisation of recordkeeping and creating a visual aid to enable wider understanding of restrictions in the public forum.

Road Safety and Active Travel

The Road Safety and Active Travel Group prioritise KCC's approach to promoting safety for the road user. The Highway Improvements Team is part of the Road Safety and Active Travel Group and is split into West Kent and East Kent, with three different, but interconnected, workstreams making up each team:

- Community Engagement – works closely with County Members, Parish and Town Councils on all aspects of the Highway Improvement Plan (HIP), liaising with internal teams to ascertain what is physically and technically possible and where possible find a solution/ funding opportunities to address the concerns being raised
- Planning and Advice – provides technical advice for HIP priorities and to internal H&T colleagues, leads on the analysis of Crash Remedial Measure (CRM) sites and determines the feasibility of schemes being requested. CRM is a process wherein a priority list of changes to locations is developed. These changes are hoped to be completed in 12-18 months from this development. The changes are safety focused prioritised, with data used from personal injury information to ensure resources are focused in the most necessary locations.
- Design and Delivery – designs schemes to meet Kent's highway standards, CDM Regulations and Department for Transport (DfT) policy and works with KCC's contractors to deliver the work on the ground

The team's main focus is on the analysis of crash cluster sites and delivery of schemes through the casualty reduction programme, as well as delivery of Local Transport Plan funded schemes, such as amendments to junction layouts and pedestrian crossings.

The team also delivers small-scale highway improvements as identified by members of the public, County Members, Parish and Town Councils and internal H&T colleagues. Schemes can include, but are not limited to, new requests to have white lines painted and the installation of brown tourism signs, warning signs, roadside safety barriers/bollards, mobility dropped kerbs, village gateways, traffic calming etc.

23

The team also leads on requests requiring a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) not associated with new developments, such as weight, width and height restrictions, one-ways, changes to the speed limit and the implementation of waiting restrictions.

Within the wider Road Safety and Active Travel Group, the Active Travel team includes Kent Active Travel, Safer Active Journeys, Interventions and Infrastructure. They work on prioritising active travel sites in terms of changing the layout of the road or installing new physical measures for improving active travel usage. The Safer Active Journeys team are focused on providing training and resources to those either looking to start, or who are already carrying out journeys either on foot or by bicycle. The Active Travel Strategy available on the Kent website provides more information into our approach.

Furthermore, the Intelligence and Innovations team within the team manage the Highways Asset Digital Management System, which holds information on a GIS map linking speed data, traffic surveys and incident data. This system ensures all within H&T have access to vital information to inform design for future improvement schemes. The database is updated as and when new information comes in to ensure records are as current as possible.

Development and Local Transport Plans

The Transport Planners at KCC work with each of the 12 district councils to help them form their local plans as statutory consultees for applications which may have an impact on the road network. This applies to household, commercial or industrial building works. Regarding waste, minerals and county council developments, these are managed by KCC directly. In addition, any changes which impact the public highway require formal agreement through the planning and developments team.

Transport officers are supported in their decision making and evidence base through the Kent Transport Model. This is a strategic transport simulation model developed and managed by Jacobs, for which KCC are the custodians of. Through the modelling of proposed developments or mitigation county-wide, we are ensuring the bigger picture is managed and observed throughout the planning process. The model has also been redeveloped to include Medway council's remit, and officers work directly with Medway council for projects which require strategic modelling. KCC also work directly with developers with proposed land development to understand implications and decide on how best to mitigate any potential impacts to the wider network. Within the KTM, we can predict changes following development over future years linked to local transport plans.

Our local transport plan explains how we expect to achieve our transport vision to 2031. LTP4 Delivering Growth without Gridlock incorporates transportation policies, alongside local schemes and issues. It considers both countywide and national implications.

The development agreements team work to ensure any changes required to the highway support our core values alongside the Kent Design Guide. This is a document which helps support the development of new designs which will be acceptable to us as the highway authority. The team support works using legislation from the Highways Act 1980. Works which are completed as a condition of planning permission, such as new footways on highway land, or the creation of an entrance from highway land onto a new development is a Section 278. New roads and routes within a development which become highway land through the adoption process are carried out by legal agreement under Section 38.

Abnormal Loads Management

The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 outlines the legislation regarding how normal motor vehicles and trailers (up to a maximum of 40 tonnes) are built and operate on the road. Any movement of large or heavy loads and cranes which exceed the dimensions stated within the Regulations are can use the public highway provided they follow the Special Types General Orders (Abnormal Loads). An abnormal load can potentially use any road on any network, providing the haulier complies with the law and highway code. This includes compliance with weight or height limits. Throughout the county, it is noted that certain roads are more suitable for larger vehicles to traverse through. Before an abnormal load is moved, a haulier must notify the highway authority of the intentions for movement. Dependant on the type of load (e.g. weight, length or width) they must also notify the Police. If the gross weight or axle weights exceed those specified on the regulations, they inform the Highway Authority and all bridge owners along the proposed route. Loads which exceed 150 tonnes, 6.1 metres wide or 27.4 metres long require Special Orders from the Department for Transport. The County Council works closely with freight and other organisations to ensure the safe and expedient passage of abnormal loads within the County, as the need arises.

Improving the Network

Future Innovation

Part of the responsibilities under the NMD are to work continuously to tackle congestion within the county. KCC see this responsibility as falling in line with ongoing innovation and development in transportation and the highways field. We are constantly actively exploring opportunities for future innovation in various forms. Technology is rapidly advancing, and we are conscious of the need to keep abreast of the latest developments.

The Traffic Management Team's Network Management officers prioritise understanding new and innovative working methods and implementing them where

practical and demand requires. A primary focus of this innovation in the transportation sector is centred around electric vehicles or alternative fuelled vehicles. KCC are facing challenges felt nationally around the management of EVs, how we can support EV charging hubs and what charging at home looks like.

Further changes relating to vehicles include The Automated Vehicles Act 2024. Whilst this legislation may be introduced, it is the responsibility of the highway authority to support the delivery of this law into day-to-day life. The aim of the act is to improve road safety by reducing any human error involved in driving. Whilst new technologies are important for certain matters, we must ensure these are being carried out safely and appropriately.

The Network Management Team are working on developing an urban transport digital twin which will allow for precise modelling and planning of situations based on routing and data. The Innovations team within the Highway Improvements Team are continually pursuing methods to improve road safety through means of technological systems. This includes understanding connected vehicle data which shows what is happening out on the network and supports the methods used by the wider team to improve safety.

KCC are committed to working with any governing bodies to facilitate trials linked to new technologies or the development of policies. It is a priority of the county to ensure we are ahead of any legislation changes where possible and can support government with any changes as they come forward.

Modal Shift and Active Travel

A modal shift represents a strategic realignment in transportation, where goods or passenger movements transition from one mode of transport to another. This is typically from less efficient or more environmentally taxing options, such as road or air transport, to more sustainable, cost-effective, or efficient alternatives like rail, maritime, or public transit systems. This shift is often driven by objectives related to reducing carbon emissions, alleviating congestion, optimising logistical efficiency, and enhancing the overall sustainability of transportation networks. It plays a pivotal role in modern mobility strategies, promoting long-term economic and environmental benefits by leveraging modes of transport that are better suited for specific types of travel or freight movements.

Currently, one of the key initiatives is the Kent Thameside Smart Transport Project, which is aimed at reducing congestion and improving journey times by upgrading traffic control systems at 41 junctions in Dartford, Ebbsfleet, and Gravesham. The project will also enhance the Fastrack bus priority system, directly supporting a shift to bus travel as a part of broader efforts to encourage public transport use. The Thanet Loop Bus Improvement Project is another project which focuses on upgrading the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital junction in Margate to improve bus times and reliability. The introduction of new bus lanes and pedestrian crossing facilities is designed to make public transport more accessible and efficient, encouraging people to use buses over private vehicles. Additionally

moving forwards, KCC's LTP5, currently under consultation, outlines a vision to balance transport improvements with environmental sustainability. It includes proposals to expand public transport networks, enhance cycling and walking routes, and invest in electric vehicle infrastructure.

The Active Travel team within the HIT at KCC ensure we are focused on changing the level of vehicle use and promoting accessible, safer and well-planned opportunities. Active Travel is defined as walking or cycling as a means of transport, to get to a destination. It does not cover cycling or walking for pleasure or health reasons. It is acknowledged that distances walked have fallen by 30% in the last 40 years due to an increase and preference in car travel. It is noted that this

Climate change

KCC are committed to recognising and understanding the impacts of climate change with regards to the needs of the county and how we run our services. We can only understand this change based on past years comparisons and future years predictions. It is suggested that summers will become hotter and drier with winters being milder and wetter. Soil will become drier, and less snowfall is expected. However, heavy rainfall may be more frequent. Each of these changes presents its own challenges. We must consider how the impact of drier soil alongside heavier rainfall can result in greater risk of flooding as rain is unable to penetrate the surface as quickly to dissipate. Whilst prioritising free movement of travel, we have to consider the cost to the environment any changes may cause and prioritise those which meet Net Zero targets.

Air Quality

The correlation between congestion and air quality is one which is frequently raised and noted. Poor air quality can seriously impact quality of life and we acknowledge the symptoms which can occur from poor air quality. In Kent, the district authorities manage the air quality matters such as producing action plans, assessing air quality and monitoring. District authorities also identify Air Quality Management Areas. However, this delegation of the responsibilities does not take away Kent's duties to improving air quality where possible. It is noted that traffic growth alongside an increase in population and economy can increase poor air quality. Therefore, it is important that any schemes implemented are mindful of any potential changes in congestion. Under the TMA 2004 Part 6, KCC are able to tackle air quality issues directly through the implementation of ANPR enforcement. We hope that future site proposals using this technology will provide another method of improving air quality.

The forward plan for Network Management

This Network Management Plan is intended to explore the current responsibilities and roles being taken by KCC. These are all important to ensure we meet the

requirements of the TMA and in turn our network management duty. We have also reviewed our challenges which must be managed and considered with future proposals.

KCC will continue to carry out our responsibilities as defined in this document. The Network Management Plan remains a live document which is managed and reviewed by the Traffic Manager. The Traffic Manager is committed to ensuring the county carries out responsibilities to the highway network under the Network Management Duty to the best of their ability.

Appendix

Framing Kent's Future.pdf

Local Transport Plan 4.pdf

Active Travel Information.pdf

Asset Management in Highways.pdf

Kent Winter Service Plan.pdf

Kent Design Guide.pdf

Major Emergency Plan.pdf

EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title

Network Management Plan v2

Responsible Officer

Remy Laporte - GT TRA

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

Tim Read - GT TRA

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

Traffic Management

Responsible Head of Service

Tim Read - GT TRA

Responsible Director

Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

The Network Management Plan is a requirement for councils to own and maintain as part of the Traffic Management Act 2004. The Traffic Manager must be able to produce a plan if requested. This updated NMP replaces previous iterations. The role of the NMP is to detail how the county carries out it's functions under the TMA and reiterates what we do as a council. There is no new information or strategy being created as part of this process. The NMP combines various documents together to provide a brief on what activities the council manages.

This EqIA is required as the publishing of this document requires a Key Decision. Whilst some of these documents may have individual impacts, these will have had their own EqIA completed.

The relevant protected characterists deemed relevant relate to disability and the ability to read the document published online with a link to reading literacy levels. Through assessment of the legislation, other local authorities and understanding KCC's existing policies, mitigation has been confirmed. We will ensure the document is produced in plain english language and checked for accessibility throughout. Accessibility will be checked using KCC's guidance and the Microsoft Office accessibility checker.

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?
Not Applicable
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?
KCC existing Accessibility Statement and Guidance provides a high level of detail into ensure documents are as comprehensive as possible for as many individuals as possible. By following the KCC guidance, we can ensure those who struggle with reading certain documents can use features to support their understanding.
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
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
Original EqIA is superceded by this assessment following completion of the NMP. The below is now edited to include images have been used on the front page, and we have followed guidance to ensure these are accessible by using alternative text to describe the image through word. The below has been edited and is now correct. Through carrying out this exercise of combining and collating the functions H&T carry out within the one NMP, this should be a positive for individuals who struggle with certain documents. We are ensuring going forward that this information is clear and accessible.
Those with disabilities relating to how they read and internalise information such as those who suffer from dsylexic, should have an increased ability to understand the document due to the plain language which will be used. Ensuring a document clears the accessibility checker also means text to speech applications can be used for those with issues with sight. KCC also produce stats on reading literacy rates so this will be kept in mind when producing this document.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age
Are there negative impacts for age?
No
Details of negative impacts for Age
Not Applicable
Mitigating Actions for Age
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Not Applicable	
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability	
Are there negative impacts for Disability?	
Yes	
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability	
Inability to understand the terminology of documentation. Difficulties with reading the document.	
Mitigating actions for Disability	
Plain English will be used. Documents will be checked for accessibility with KCC's policy which includes using Microsoft Accessibility Checker. Alternative text applied to front page imagery.	
Responsible Officer for Disability	
Remy Laporte	
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex	
Are there negative impacts for Sex	
No	
Details of negative impacts for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Sex	
Not Applicable	
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
No	
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race	
Are there negative impacts for Race	
No	
Negative impacts for Race	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	
No	
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	

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

From: Rob Thomas, Cabinet Member for Environment

Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment and Transport

To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 14 January 2025

Subject: Waste management update

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: N/A

Future Pathway of report: N/A

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This paper provides Members with an update on the national waste reforms and considers impacts to KCC performance and budgets, including the latest position regarding the funding due to KCC from Extended Producer Responsibility.

The paper also proposes an overarching focus on residual waste given the current and future cost associated with this material through increasing recycling at kerbside.

This will require working in partnership with district and borough councils in new and innovative ways that share risk and reward. Work is underway to review the whole waste system taking a Kent taxpayer view on opportunities for cost reduction and mechanisms to fund this activity on an invest to save basis.

Recommendation:
The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to COMMENT on and NOTE the report.

1. **Background**

1.1 The current roles and responsibilities for managing household waste are changing, however the current arrangements are set out in the 1990 Environmental Protection Act. In two tier local authority areas such as Kent, responsibility is divided between the county council who is the waste disposal authority and district and borough councils who are the waste collection authorities.

1.2 Kent County Council as the waste disposal authority is responsible for reprocessing the material collected by district and borough councils and operating a number of sites for householders to dispose of their waste materials. District, borough and city councils are responsible for collecting household waste (and waste of a similar nature to household) and must collect at least two types of recyclable material separately from the rest of the household waste.

1.3   Within this legislative framework, KCC operates 19 household waste and recycling centres (HWRCs), which receive around 2 million visits per year.

1.4   KCC as the waste disposal authority disposes of c660,000 tonnes of material per year, which is managed through the HWRC and transfer station network which is then processed via infrastructure within Kent and beyond. The budget for the service in 2024/25 is £93m.

Performance

1.5   Figures 1 and 2 below shows Kent's performance against the national and regional average for two performance indicators; waste sent to landfill and waste reused, recycled or composted.

1.6   Figure 1 shows that KCC is landfilling less than 1% of the waste collected in Kent, which is outperforming the average across both England and the South East.

Figure 1: Percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill
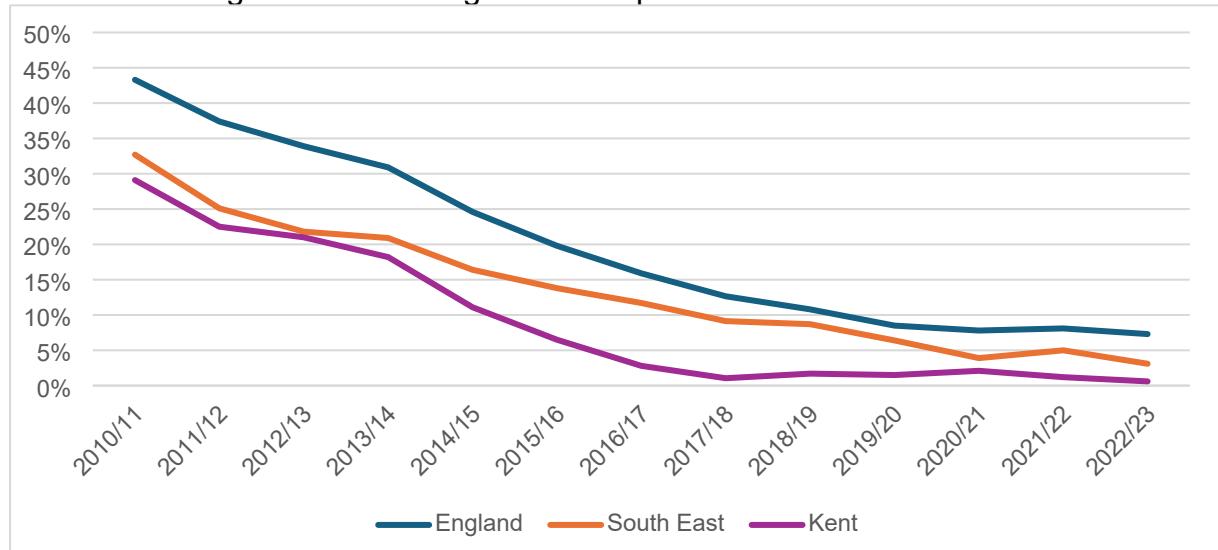
1.7   Figure 2 shows the average recycling rate for both waste collected at kerbside by district and borough councils and waste collected at HWRCs by KCC. It shows that Kent's recycling rate of 42% is marginally higher than the average rate across England but is lagging behind the average across the South East. The best performing counties in the South East are Surrey and West Sussex where the recycling rates are 54% and 53.7% respectively.

Figure 2: Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting

1.8   Figure 3 below shows the difference between the waste collection authority with the highest recycling rate and lowest recycling rate each year since 2010/11. Over that period, the lowest performing authority has increased their recycling rate from 14% to 24%, whilst the best performer has increased from 46% to 51%. The difference has therefore closed, however there remains a 27percentage point difference between the highest performing and lowest performing collection authority in the county.

Figure 3: Kerbside recycling rates across Kent waste collection authorities
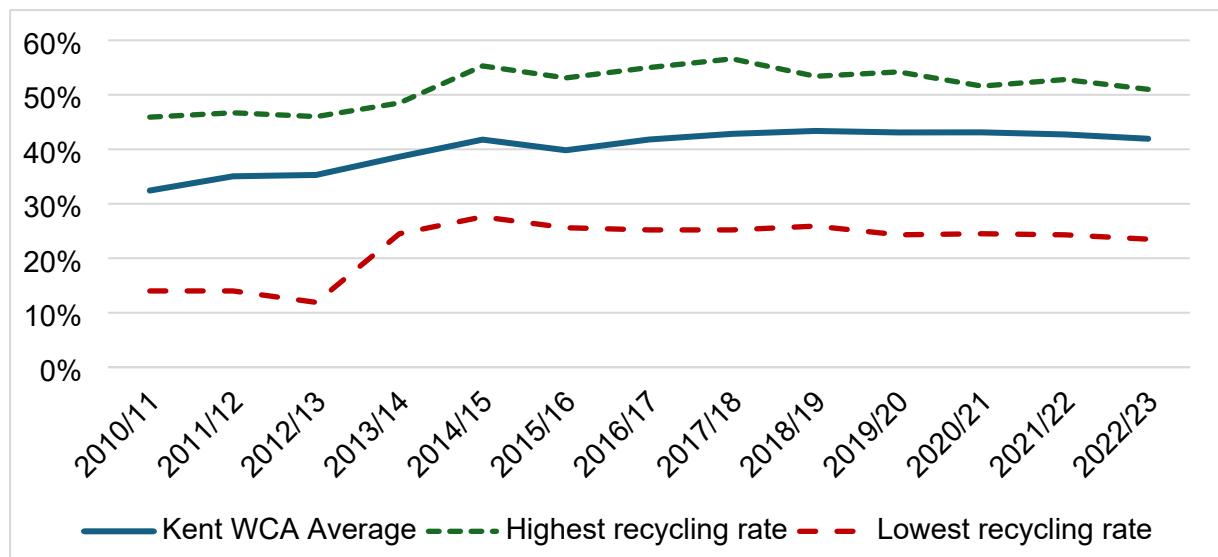
1.9   KCC's waste budget is shown in table 1 below. You can see that this year, KCC is projected to spend over £50m treating residual waste, and around £6m composting food and green waste and reprocessing recyclables.

Table 1: 2024/25 budget spend areas

Budget area	2024/25 Budget
Treatment of residual waste	£52.4m
Composting food and green waste	£4.8m
Reprocessing recyclables	£1.1m
Incentives to collection authorities to recycle more material	£3.9m
Operation of transfer stations and haulage of materials	£18.1m
Operation of HWRCs and haulage of materials	£10.9m
Management of closed landfills	£0.52m
Other	£1.4m

1.10   Figure 4 takes those reprocessing costs from 2023/24 and divides them into the spend on materials that are taken to KCC's HWRCs and those materials collected at kerbside. The image shows that KCC spent £6m reprocessing materials collected at HWRCs and £50m on materials collected at kerbside. Of this £50m, £44.9m was spent on reprocessing residual waste.

Figure 4: KCC disposal costs versus materials collected in 2023/24

1.11   Over the last few years, the increasing amounts of residual waste and stagnating recycling rates within Kent have put pressure on KCC's ability to deliver our statutory waste services within the available budget envelope.

1.12   If the recycling rate in Kent moved from 42% to 60%, it would reduce the amount of residual waste needing to be reprocessed, saving KCC an estimated £11m per year.

1.13   The material with the greatest potential saving is food waste. With a significant difference in disposal fees, the potential saving from moving all food and garden waste that is in our residual waste stream into composting would save KCC c£8m.

2.   Legislative changes

2.1   The Resources and Waste Strategy for England 2018, Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Order 2020 and Environment Act 2021 will see the largest changes to the waste and resources agenda for over 30 years. There are four key changes that will have the largest impact on KCC.

Simpler Recycling

2.2   This reform mandates that, by 31 March 2026, kerbside collections must include the collection of glass, metal, plastic, paper, card, food waste and garden waste for recycling or composting from households (businesses must comply by March 2025). Collection authorities will still be able to charge for green waste collections.

2.3   DEFRA recently issued an update to this reform, whereby collection authorities must provide containers for:

- residual (non-recyclable) waste
- food waste (which can be mixed with garden waste)
- paper and card
- all other dry recyclable materials (plastic, metal and glass).

2.4   There are however exemptions that a collection authority can seek for collecting paper and card, which should be collected separately unless it:

- is not 'technically practicable'
- is not 'economically practicable'
- has 'no significant environmental benefit'.

2.5   Collection authorities must prepare a written assessment to explain why one or more of these options apply.

2.6   Dartford Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council will need to introduce food waste collections as a result of this legislation. It is estimated that this will save KCC in the region of £820,000 per year as a result of food waste moving from residual waste into composting.

2.7   To support collection authorities in Kent with the new collection requirements, KCC has carried out the following activities to increase capacity and ensure that we enable the disposal requirements associated with Simpler Recycling:

- Opened a new Waste Transfer Station in Sevenoaks
- Submitted a planning application for a Waste Transfer Station in Folkestone and Hythe as there is currently no facility within this district
- We are working with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to carry out a feasibility study to increase the operational capacity at Pepperhill Waste transfer station.

Extended Producer Responsibility

2.8   The Extended Producer Responsibility framework is based upon the 'producer pays' principal, whereby the producers of packaging waste will pay for the material to be managed once it has been discarded by the consumer. This should incentivise the producers of packaging to use the minimum amount of packaging required to protect the product and ensure that the materials used are recyclable as this will reduce their cost overhead.

2.9   Extended Producer Responsibility solely refers to packaging waste and currently includes paper, card, glass, plastics, wood and metal with other materials potentially being considered in the future.

2.10   Drinks containers made of any material other than glass and drinks containers made from polyethylene terephthalate (PET), steel, or aluminium between 150ml and 3l in size, are not included in the calculations.

2.11   However, all drinks containers will be in scope from 2028 if a Deposit Return Scheme is not in place by that time.

2.12   Binned waste and littered packaging waste, business waste and packaging collected within food and garden waste services are also currently not included.

2.13   For local authorities, the legislation says that they will receive the 'full net cost recovery' of the collection, haulage, recycling or disposal of these packaging wastes if there is an 'efficient and effective' waste management system in place. This would apply to an estimated 92,000 tonnes of materials managed by KCC. The payment and definition of what an efficient and effective system looks like will be determined by a scheme administrator that DEFRA will appoint.

2.14   From October 2024, waste transfer stations are required to sample and evaluate mixed recycling, in line with the amendments to the Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016). This will be part of the process to determine whether the management of these materials is 'efficient and effective' and adds an additional cost to KCC of £133k per year.

2.15   The diverse set up of local authority budgets present difficulties for DEFRA in applying calculations to determine 'full net cost recovery'. As a result, to calculate this payment, all local authorities have been placed into predetermined family groups for the first year's payment calculation. Calculations for subsequent years will differ as the system embeds.

2.16   The minimum payments for 2025/26 have been shared with all local authorities. Some of the principles that underpin these amounts have been shared and local authorities have been invited to challenge the assumptions if there are any errors.

2.17   For KCC, subject to any further refinement, the minimum payment in 2025/26 will be £13.288m. Payments in future years will be subject to additional modelling work from the incoming scheme administrator.

2.18   We anticipate that the 'efficient and effective' requirement will become more important with regards to future payments, with Local Authorities expected to utilise the Extended Producer Responsibility monies to ensure that services are meet these requirements to ensure future payments are maintained. The definition of these terms is due to be developed and shared in 2025.

Deposit Return Scheme

2.19   There has been a further delay to the Deposit Return Scheme until October 2027. This scheme will introduce a deposit on single use drinks containers (except for glass), which is refunded upon the return of the container.

2.20   A Deposit Return Scheme is likely to reduce the amount of these materials that are littered and will likely reduce the volume of waste collected at the kerbside. However, the scheme will also change the composition of the materials within the kerbside collected materials and many of the valuable materials will be removed. This will likely negatively impact contract costs, as the value of the recycling basket will reduce with less valuable items in there, which would result in an increase to gate fees. Whilst the tonnage may be lower, the increase in costs may outweigh the reduction in tonnage.

Emissions Trading Scheme

2.21   The budgetary incentive for KCC to continue to increase recycling rates is further compounded by energy from waste plants being added to the Emissions Trading Scheme from January 2028.

2.22   This scheme is a cap-and-trade scheme designed to limit the total amount of greenhouse gases that certain industries can emit. Limits are set in line with the UK's net zero targets. This cap reduces year on year and consequently the cost of the permits required to emit will increase.

2.23   Any additional cost associated with this will be passed through to KCC.

2.24   The cap-and-trade scheme (and therefore charge) is based on the amount of fossilised carbon contained in the residual waste sent to energy from waste facilities.

2.25   KCC currently disposes of around 370,000 tonnes of residual waste per year. It is estimated that over 90,000 tonnes of the residual waste stream consists of fossilised carbon, in plastics, textiles, absorbent hygiene products and other similar materials.

2.26   Based on today's tonnages and UK Emissions Trading Scheme prices, the additional cost to KCC (on top of EfW disposal fees) will be an estimated £12m-£17m per year.

3. Considerations

3.1   KCC currently spends over £50m on reprocessing residual waste, of which over 90% comes from residual waste collected at kerbside by waste collection authorities.

3.2   Increasing the recycling rate for Kent to 60% would reduce this spend by c£11m, with food waste being the largest opportunity for improvement.

3.3   Whilst the new Simpler Recycling legislation will increase the range of materials collected for recycling by some collection authorities in Kent, it does not currently incentivise collecting more of these materials.

3.4   Energy from waste facilities being added to the Emissions Trading Scheme in January 2028 will mean that the differential between dealing with residual waste and recycling will increase even further.

4. Proposed priority

4.1   In light of these considerations, the proposed priority is to focus on reducing residual waste at kerbside by increasing recycling.

4.2   KCC is working with district and borough colleagues through the Kent Resource Partnership to review the whole waste management system, focusing on what is most cost effective for the Kent taxpayer. The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), who are DEFRA funded, has agreed to fund a project that considers:

- The full cost of waste collection and disposal
- The likely impact of legislative changes on the materials in the waste stream
- Potential savings from increasing recycling rates
- Where costs and opportunities sit across waste collection and disposal
- The carbon reduction opportunity from delivering system improvements.

4.3 This work will then enable the partnership to develop a strategy and programme of work aimed at ensuring both collection and disposal systems are efficient and effective from both a financial and carbon perspective, mechanisms for funding improvements are developed that share risk and reward and opportunities for developing new infrastructure that would save money are identified.

4.4 This work is due to be completed in March 2025.

4.5 Whilst the detail will emerge from this piece of work, the division has been working on behaviour change activity for some time. The Centre for Behaviour Change at University College London has developed a behaviour change model called Com-B. This model proposes three necessary components to any behaviour: capability, opportunity and motivation. It then uses these three components to identify policy categories and intervention functions that can be used to encourage behaviour change, as shown in figure 5 below.

Figure 5: The Com-B Behaviour Change Wheel
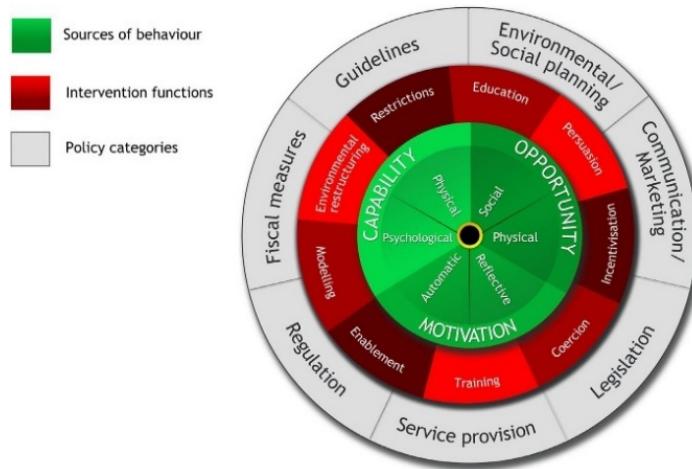
4.6 Most recently, this model has been used to design and deliver a behaviour change campaign in partnership with Dover and Folkestone & Hythe district councils, which has achieved a 11% increase in food waste capture from the kerbside.

4.7 Whilst behaviour change is complex, the key to diverting residual waste into recycling will be to work in partnership with collection authorities in new and innovative ways that share risk and reward across three main areas:

- Communications and engagement
- Improving waste systems
- Infrastructure improvement and delivery.

4.8 The monies coming into KCC through the extended producer responsibility payments provide funding to pump prime projects on an invest to save basis across these areas, which will reduce spend on residual waste in future years.

5. Next steps

5.1 KCC will work through the Kent Resource Partnership to complete work on opportunities to improve the waste system in Kent.

5.2 Once complete, the Kent Resource Partnership will use this evidence base to revise the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy, which is a statutory document that sets out how Kent authorities will work together to deliver improvement.

5.3 Alongside strategy development, the focus will be on developing and creating a timeline for delivering invest to save opportunities that will increase kerbside recycling in advance of energy from waste facilities becoming part of the emissions trading scheme in January 2028.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 In 2024/25, the waste budget is £93m, of which £52.4m is projected to be spent on reprocessing residual waste through energy from waste and £5.9m, on recycling and composting.

6.2 Extended Producer Responsibility brings a cost recovery income of £13.2m to KCC and Simpler Recycling an estimated £818k cost saving through the additional residual waste diversion.

6.3 The key risk is from the Emissions Trading Scheme of between £12m and £17m per year. This begins in January 2028, which means there will be a £3m per year effect which has been included in the MTFP as a pressure.

6.4 The receipt of the Extended Producer Responsibility money is an opportunity for KCC to increase performance, which will not only have subsequent budget reductions, but will also help to limit the financial liabilities in 2028 from the Emissions Trading Scheme.

6.5 As described within this paper, the opportunities for the service to impact both performance and the budget position positively come from working in partnership with district, borough and city councils and encouraging the public to think about waste differently and reduce, reuse and recycle.

7. Legal, Equalities and Data Protection implications

7.1 This paper is an update paper only.

8. Conclusions

8.1 The reforms that are currently taking place are monumental, and a massive shift for local authorities in not only the way the waste is managed, but also funded. The reforms have complex interactions with each other and as a result, the impacts are not fully understood.

8.2 This paper aims to inform Members with regards to these changes and actions that are taking place to mitigate risk and work with our partners, the Waste Collection Authorities.

8.3 Whilst through the introduction of Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility, KCC will experience some upturns in potential savings/cost reimbursement, the financial burden of the Emissions Trading Scheme will not only consume these benefits, but also provide an added on-going pressure.

8.4 As work progresses and as new elements require new policy decisions, Members will see individual papers and updates over the coming months and years

9. Recommendation

> The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to COMMENT on and NOTE the report.

10. Contact details

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From: **Neil Baker – Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport**

               Simon Jones – Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport

To: **Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee 14 January 2025**

Subject: **A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme**

Non-Key Decision

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: 25 June 2021

Future Pathway of report: For committee update only

Electoral Division: Maidstone Rural North - Paul Carter
                               Maidstone North East – Ian Chittenden
                               Malling North East – Andrew Kennedy

Is the decision eligible for call-in? *N/A*

Summary: This report updates the Committee on the current position of the A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme.

Recommendation(s): Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the content of this report

---

1.   **Introduction**

1.1   The A229 Blue Bell Hill is a section of dual carriageway which runs between Junction 6 of the M20 in Maidstone and Junction 3 of the M2 at Blue Bell Hill village. This section of road is a key link between the M20 and M2, and between Maidstone and Medway.

1.2   A feasibility study was undertaken to assess the key routes in Kent against the objectives of the Major Road Network. This study ranked this part of the A229 as the second worst section of A road in the county against criteria of traffic levels, delays, collisions and journey time reliability. It also determined that the M20 and M2 junctions have a significant role in the delays and collisions on Blue Bell Hill.

1.3   Road users of Blue Bell Hill have long experienced high volumes of traffic which result in significant congestion issues and concerns about road safety. These congestion issues are likely to be made worse by future housing developments in the surrounding area and the potential new Lower Thames Crossing, which will both generate additional traffic.

1.4 Previous proposals have not been able to sufficiently address the identified issues and as such more significant improvements to Blue Bell Hill are required to improve journey time reliability, reduce delays and improve road safety across this section of the road network.
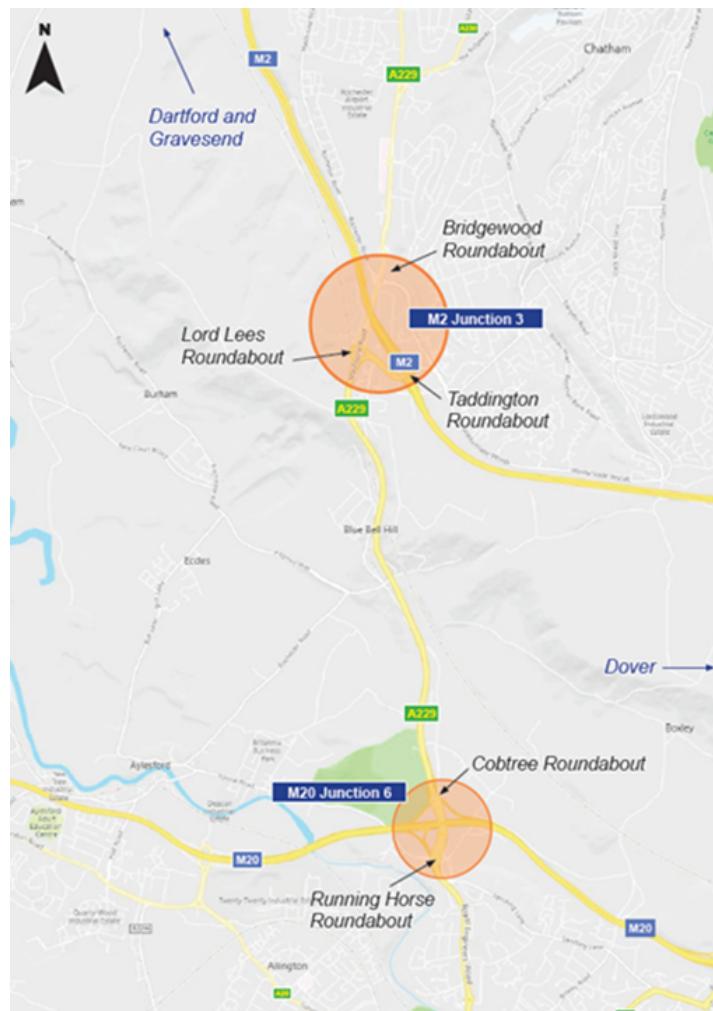
Figure 1 - Plan showing the location of the proposals

2. Scheme Description

2.1 The overall aim of the scheme is to improve journey time reliability and road safety. This will allow the road to accommodate an increase in future traffic, whilst also supporting active travel choices.

2.2 The aim of the scheme is supported by a set of objectives, agreed by the key stakeholders:
- To improve journey time reliability at M2 Junction 3 and M20 Junction 6 interchanges of the A229
- To reduce congestion along the route
- To enable the local area to develop in accordance with population and housing growth predicated under Local Plans
- To reduce the impact of additional traffic from the Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) and allow LTC to maximise potential benefits it can provide for the Kent area

- To improve road safety and address known collision hotspots
- To make best use of existing assets including land and highways
- To provide suitable routes and facilities for public transport
- To provide safe and improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- To improve air quality
- To protect and enhance the local environment.

2.3 A process was undertaken to establish options for the scheme. This involved idea generation workshops with stakeholders followed by a sifting process (making use of traffic modelling) to determine the potential impact of the different solutions upon traffic levels. The works were also assessed against a number of criteria as laid out by the Department for Transport (DfT).

2.4 The options were submitted to DfT as part of the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for funding from the Large Local Majors Programme. The SOBC was submitted in December 2020.

2.5 Approval from Government to proceed to the next stage of the project was received in October 2023.

2.6 KCC has been gathering further information to support the onward development of the scheme and has also returned to review the previously defined options and to consider feedback from the consultation in 2020.

2.7 As a result a preferred scheme has been established. A plan for the preferred scheme is provided in Appendix A and the key elements summarised in the table below.

	Option 1	Option 2	Preferred Scheme
Northern end of Blue Bell Hill			
Improvements to the slip road onto the A229 southbound at Lord Lees Roundabout	✓	✓	✓
Increase the road width between Taddington and Lord Lees Roundabouts to four lanes	✓		
A new slip road onto the M2 (westbound) from the A229 immediately after Lord Lees Roundabout	✓	✓	✓
Upgrade of the current signalised junction at Taddington Roundabout allowing traffic travelling from the M2 eastbound to A229 via a new bridge over the M2	✓		
A new separate left turn lane from the M2 westbound to the A229 at Taddington Roundabout	✓	✓	✓
A new slip road from the M2 eastbound to a new junction arrangement at Bridgewood Roundabout		✓	
A new slip road from the M2 eastbound to the southbound A229 with the A229 southbound from Bridgewood roundabout rerouted via an enlarged Lord Lees roundabout.			✓

	Option 1	Option 2	Preferred Scheme
A new roundabout at the A2045/Taddington Link junction.	✓	✓	
Modification to the existing traffic signal controlled junction at the A2045/Taddington Link junction.			✓
Southern end of Blue Bell Hill			
Enlarge the Running Horse Roundabout to the west and signalise most arms (replacing the existing 'Turbo' style roundabout)	✓	✓	✓
Improved the merge arrangement onto the M20 motorway at Junction 6.	✓	✓	✓
Along the length of Blue Bell Hill			
Widen the A229 to three lanes when travelling southbound towards Maidstone (between Lord Lees and Cobtree Roundabouts)	✓	✓	✓
Amended access arrangements around the southbound petrol station			✓

2.8 Discussions remain ongoing with National Highways in regard to the interface between the motorways and slip roads including limits of responsibility.

2.9 Traffic using the A229 together with the Strategic Road Network (either the M2 or M20) make up almost 70% of the journeys with only around 30% making journeys on the local network only. The preferred scheme now provides free flow links in both directions between the A229 (south) and the M2 (west) for a significant proportion of the strategic traffic which uses the A229, freeing up capacity at both Lord Lees and Taddington Roundabouts for local traffic.

2.10 Following feedback from the 2020 consultation and arising from further development work, the proposed roundabout on the A2045 Walderslade Woods has been removed from the design and instead the existing junction will be improved.

2.11 The proposals at the south of the route at M20 J6 remain the same.

2.12 Further work has been carried out to develop a proposal for maintaining access to the petrol station located off the A229 southbound carriageway and improving the arrangements for joining and leaving the A229 in that area. The proposal maintains access to Rochester Road and Chatham Road. The new arrangement will improve safety and creates the space for the additional lane on the A229 that is required.

2.13 Traffic modelling has shown that the preferred scheme will improve journey time and congestion to a greater extent than the previous options.

2.14 KCC are seeking to take this preferred scheme to public consultation starting on 21 January 2025.

3. Programme

3.1 KCC plan to deliver the Improvement Scheme prior to the opening of the Lower Thames Crossing to traffic. A decision is due from the Secretary of State on the Development Consent Order for the new infrastructure by 23 May 2025.

3.2 Based on the current expectations the indicative programme is:

- Public consultation on the preferred scheme – January 2025
- Submission of the OBC to the DfT including details of the preferred scheme – Mid 2026
- Submit planning permission and consents – Late 2026
- Further detailed design – Late 2026 to Late 2028
- Submission of Full Business Case (FBC) to the DfT – Late 2028
- Construction to begin – Mid 2029
- Completion of scheme – Mid 2031 (aim to be completed before the Lower Thames Crossing is scheduled to be open to traffic in 2031)

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The project is currently within the existing KCC budget book 2024/25 (Appendix B – Capital Investment Summary Row 52 Pages 17 and 21) at an estimated cost of £202.082m. As a result of delays in the approval process through the DfT and the recent inflation challenges, the current estimated total cost for the scheme is £250m.

4.2 KCC is bidding for funds for the project through a competitive process from the Large Local Majors funding programme. The DfT expects contributions from Local Authorities for the development of these schemes and in line with the original criteria, it was expected that the DfT would fund 85% of the project costs. The remaining 15% would need to come from other external funding sources such as developer contributions (s106). Opportunities for these additional funding sources are being pursued by KCC but the level of match funding for a project of this size presents a considerable challenge and to date no s106 contributions have been secured. Under the previous Government, the Network North announcement from October 2023 indicated that the project could benefit from up to 100% funding. It is expected that there will be an announcement about whether this will apply to the project in the Spring Statement 2025 when further details on the unfunded transport projects review (announced in July 2024) are also expected.

4.3 KCC has forward funded the scheme to date, as is a requirement of the DfT and the Large Local Major fund, with £1.6m from its feasibility reserve capital line for the development costs. This will be reimbursed should the DfT funding be secured and the scheme progress. If the funding bid is not successful, the feasibility costs to date will be abortive and a cost to KCC.

4.4 Following approval of the SOBC and development grants of £300,000 for the 2023/24 financial year and £6.1m for the 2024/25 financial year being received

from DfT, KCC has commenced the next stage of the scheme development work. A further review of the scheme will be carried out by the Government and reported at the Spring Budget. This will confirm how the remaining development costs and overall scheme budget will be funded. DfT has to date indicated that they will only provide two thirds of the OBC development costs leaving a potential shortfall at this stage of £3.5m, in addition to the £1.6m already committed to the project from the feasibility reserve.

4.5 Officers are working closely with appointed consultants to find cost savings and have already benefitted from nearly £0.5m worth of services provided by others, namely through the development of the LTC. Project Officers are also exploring other funding opportunities such as s106 and CIL.

4.6 Should KCC be successful with the funding bid to DfT (which will be confirmed on acceptance of the OBC), the costs for developing the scheme through the next stages will be covered by future grant from the DfT.

5. Legal implications

5.1 There are no immediate legal implications. Legal advice will be sought from Legal Services as the scheme moves forward for elements such as DfT funding agreement review, any compulsory purchase order and agreements with National Highways, preparation of construction contracts etc.

6. Equalities implications

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and approved. This will be regularly reviewed as the scheme develops and the design is progressed. A copy is included in Appendix B.

7. Other corporate implications

7.1 The construction of new highway will require ongoing maintenance and will become an additional maintenance liability to KCC. At this stage it is not possible to quantify the costs of maintenance. They will be calculated once there is more detail and form part of an asset management plan going forward. The route may be trunked under current proposals by the DfT which would transfer maintenance of the route to National Highways.

8. Governance

8.1 A key decision for the scheme was taken in June 2021 (21/00046). The scheme will be presented for further key decisions prior to submission of the Outline Business Case and on receipt of a funding proposal.

9. Conclusions

9.1 The DfT Large Local Majors funding programme offers KCC an opportunity to undertake a significant major project that addresses existing congestion and safety issues on the A229 Blue Bell Hill and its key junctions while allowing for future growth.

9.2 The scheme is still at an early stage and further work needs to be carried out through consultation with key stakeholders and other parties to develop the preferred scheme before the OBC can be submitted to DfT.

9.3 The current programme is reliant on confirmation of funding. Following approval of the SOBC and receipt of grants for the 2023/24 and 2024.25 financial years, KCC has commenced the next stage of the scheme development work to meet the current programme. There is a funding gap for the Outline Design and OBC, with the DfT, to date, indicating that they will only provide two thirds of the development costs leaving a potential shortfall at this stage of £3.5m. Additional funding or cost savings are therefore required to ensure that the OBC can be completed to present this scheme as positively as possible to unlock the Large Local Major funding.

9.4 The current programme of delivery highlights that this scheme can be in place prior to the opening of Lower Thames Crossing.

10. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s):
10.1 Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the content of this report

11. Background documents
Appendix A – Preferred Scheme Plans
Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

12. Contact details

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EQIA Submission
Section A

EQIA Title
A229 Blue Bell Hill Improvement Scheme

Responsible Officer
Victoria Soames - GT TRA

Approved by (Note: approval of this EqIA must be completed within the EqIA App)
Tim Read - GT TRA

Type of Activity

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

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate
Growth Environment and Transport
Responsible Service
Transportation
Responsible Head of Service
Tim Read - GT TRA
Responsible Director
Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

The A229 Blue Bell Hill is a section of dual carriageway which runs between Junction 6 of the M20 in Maidstone and Junction 3 of the M2 at Blue Bell Hill village. It is a key link between the M20 and M2, and between Maidstone and Medway.

Road users often experience high volumes of traffic which result in significant congestion issues and concerns about road safety. These congestion issues are likely to be made worse by future housing developments in the surrounding area and the new Lower Thames Crossing, which will both generate additional traffic.

Improvements to Blue Bell Hill are therefore required to improve journey time reliability, reduce delays and improve road safety across this section of the road network.

Scheme objectives:
•   To improve journey time reliability at M2 Junction 3 and M20 Junction 6 interchanges of the A229
•   To reduce congestion along the route
•   To enable the local area to develop in accordance with population and housing growth predicated under Local Plans
•   To reduce the impact of additional traffic from the proposed Lower Thames Crossing (LTC) and allow LTC to maximise potential benefits it can provide for the Kent area
•   To improve road safety and address known accident hotspots

•	To make best use of existing assets including land and highways
•	To provide suitable routes and facilities for public transport
•	To provide safe and improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists
•	To improve air quality
•	To protect and enhance the local environment.

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?

We undertook a consultation in 2020 on the scheme options and have used the feedback generated to develop the preferred scheme. Consultees:
General public / road users
Local residents and businesses
AONB
National Highways
Maidstone Borough Council
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Medway Council
Local interest groups
Local Members of Parliament
Gravesham Borough Council
Local Parish Councils

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

No. The previous EqIA was dated August 2020.

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

Improved pedestrian and cycle facilities for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer's Responsibilities.

Better access to public transport with improved journey time reliability for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer Responsibilities.

More reliable journey times for Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity and Carer's Responsibilities.

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
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops. There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating Actions for Age
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners. Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised. Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Victoria Soames
20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
Yes
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
Impacts during construction due to changes in normal routes for both vehicles and non-motorised users as well as relocation of public transport stops. Potential for delays due to traffic management impacting routes to medical appointments. There may also be impacts from dust, noise and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Disability
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners. Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to be designed to minimise disruption and avoid confusion. Any changes will be advertised. Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Disability
Victoria Soames
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sex
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Sex
Not Applicable
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
No
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender

Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
Not Applicable
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
Are there negative impacts for Race
No
Negative impacts for Race
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Not Applicable
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief
Yes
Negative impacts for Religion and belief
Possibility of delays for reaching local places of worship during the construction period. Routes to reach local places of worship may change (depending on where travelling from/to) during the construction phase and once the scheme has been constructed.
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
Construction phasing and traffic management to be planned to minimise disruption and delays. Changes in traffic management to be advertised. Alternative routing during construction and once the scheme has been constructed will be advertised and clear temporary diversion signs used when needed.
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief
Victoria Soames
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
No
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Yes
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops. There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners. Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised. Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Victoria Soames
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Yes
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
There will be an impact during construction due to disruption to normal routes and temporary relocation or closure of footways/cycleways and bus stops. There may also be impacts from noise, dust and vibration.
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Access to individual properties to be maintained other than in exceptional circumstances which will be discussed with the owners. Construction phasing and traffic management layouts to take into account impacts to pedestrian/cycle routes and bus stops to minimise relocation and disruption. Any changes will be advertised. Noise, dust and vibration impacts will be monitored and maintained within required limits.
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Victoria Soames

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PREFERRED SCHEME OVERVIEW PLAN
Scale - 1:10000

Key

Proposed new construction

Road to be closed

Road markings to be modified/removed

Alternative route

Note
1. All alignments shown are indicative only and are subject to variation.

Walderslade

M2

Chatham

Taddington Roundabout

Bridgewood Manor Hotel & Spa

Blue Bell Hill

Bridgewood Roundabout

Buckmore Park Kart Circuit

Lord Lees Roundabout

M2 End

Petrol Station

Sandling

Rochester Road Junction

Along the A229

Aylesford

Cobtree Roundabout

Running Horse Roundabout

Village Hotel

M20 End

Maidstone

M20

Page 201

File Name: 6063352S-ACM-HML-A229_SW_ZZ_ZZ-DR-CH-0077_P02

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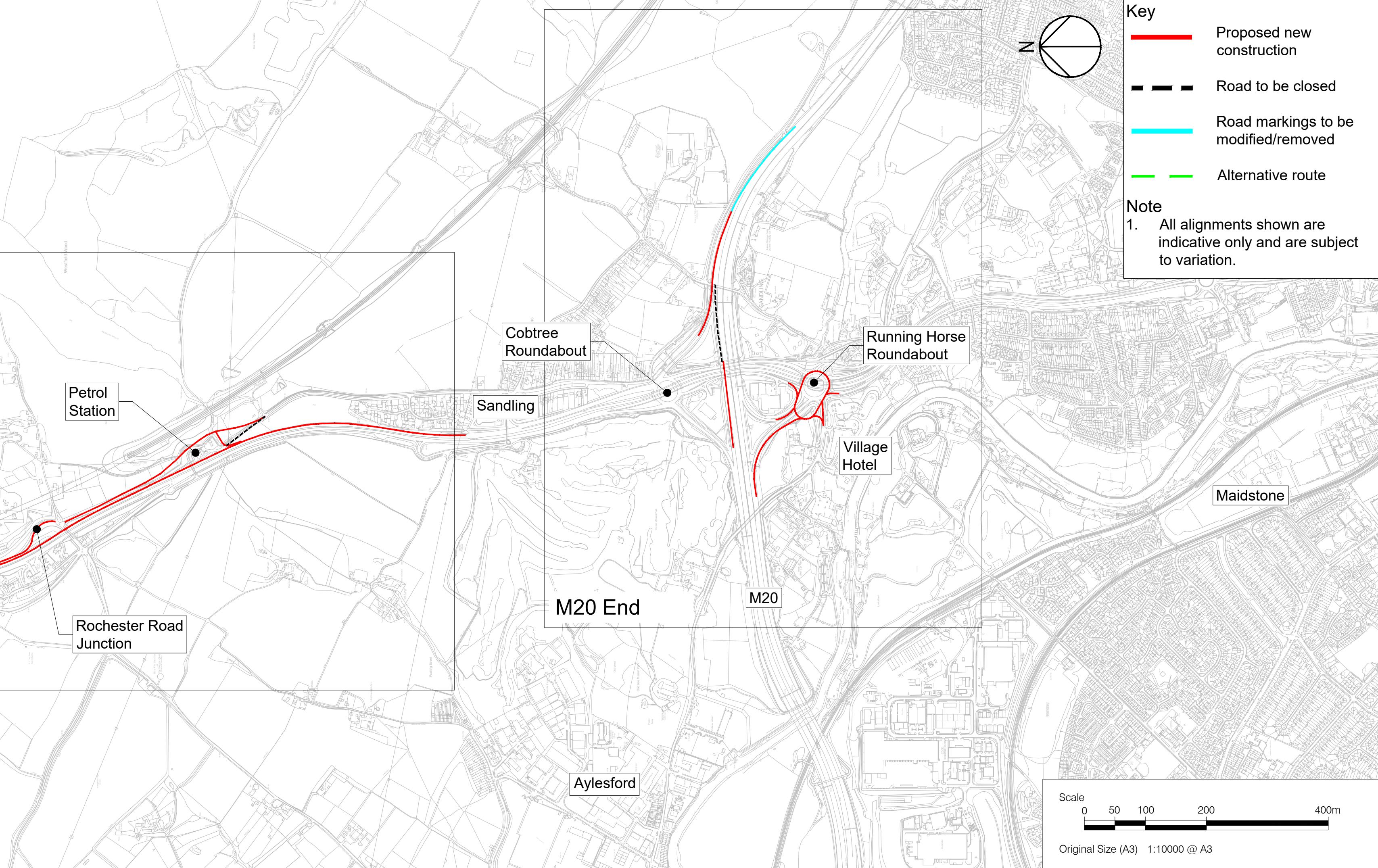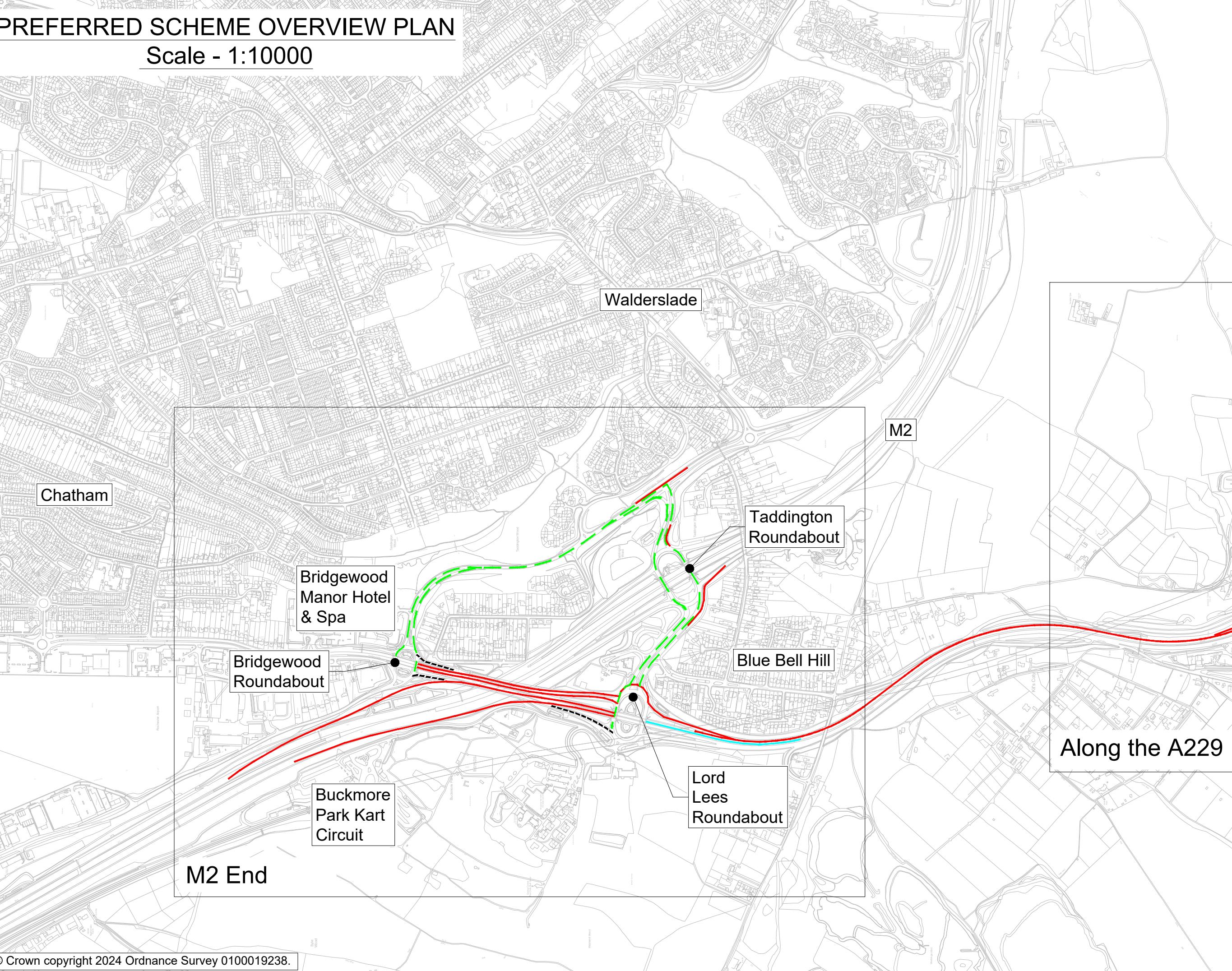
Scale

0 50 100 200 400m

Original Size (A3)   1:10000 @ A3

Key

- Proposed new construction
- Road to be closed
- Road markings to be modified/removed
- Alternative route

Note

1. All alignments shown are indicative only and are subject to variation.

PREFERRED SCHEME PLAN
M2 END
Scale - 1:5000

N

Scale

0   25   50   100   200m

Original Size (A3)   1:5000 @ A3

Improvements to the existing traffic signal junction at A2045 Walderslade Woods

Widen the A2045 approach to the Taddington Roundabout to three lanes

Pedestrian and cycle facilities to be maintained.

Taddington Roundabout

New A229 link from the Bridgewood flyover to Lord Lees Roundabout

A new separate left turn lane from the M2 London bound to the A229 at Taddington Roundabout

Lord Lees Roundabout made larger to accommodate the new A229 route

Bridgewood Manor Hotel & Spa

Closure of A229 link roads between Bridgewood and Lord Lees Roundabouts

Blue Bell Hill

Bridgewood Roundabout

A new slip road from the M2 Dover bound to the A229 Maidstone bound

Lord Lees Roundabout

M2

A new slip road onto the M2 London bound from the A229 Chatham bound

Widening of the existing A229 Maidstone bound under Lord Lees Roundabout to two lanes

Buckmore Park Kart Circuit

New route for A229 via Lord Lees Roundabout

Change the A229 Maidstone bound slip road to fit with the third lane after the junction

Add a third lane to the A229 Maidstone bound (between Lord Lees and Cobtree Roundabouts)

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PREFERRED SCHEME PLAN
ALONG THE A229
Scale - 1:5000

Key

— Proposed new construction

- - - Road to be closed

Note

1. All alignments shown are indicative only and are subject to variation.

Footway, Cycleway and Bridleway routes to be maintained

Chatham Road

New link at Rochester Road to access A229 towards Maidstone and Chatham Road (Sandling)

New arrangements for exiting the petrol station onto the A229

Existing slip road onto the A229 to be closed

Petrol Station

The Lower Bell Pub

Improved access layout for petrol station

Add a third lane to the A229 Maidstone bound (between Lord Lees and Cobtree Roundabouts)

Rochester Road

Scale

0   25   50   100   200m

Original Size (A3)   1:5000 @ A3

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Plot Date :18 December 2024 12:25:47

Key

━━━ Proposed new construction

▬ ▬ ▬ Road to be closed

━━━ Road markings to be modified/removed

🚦 Traffic Signal

Note

1. All alignments shown are indicative only and are subject to variation.

Sandling

Cobtree Roundabout

Widen the slip road to two lanes onto the M20 Dover bound from Cobtree Roundabout

Road markings to be changed to accommodate 2 lane slip road merging onto the M20

M20

SANDLING

New slip road onto M20 Dover bound carriageway

M20

Running Horse Roundabout layout made larger

Running Horse Roundabout

Village Hotel

Maidstone

Page 204

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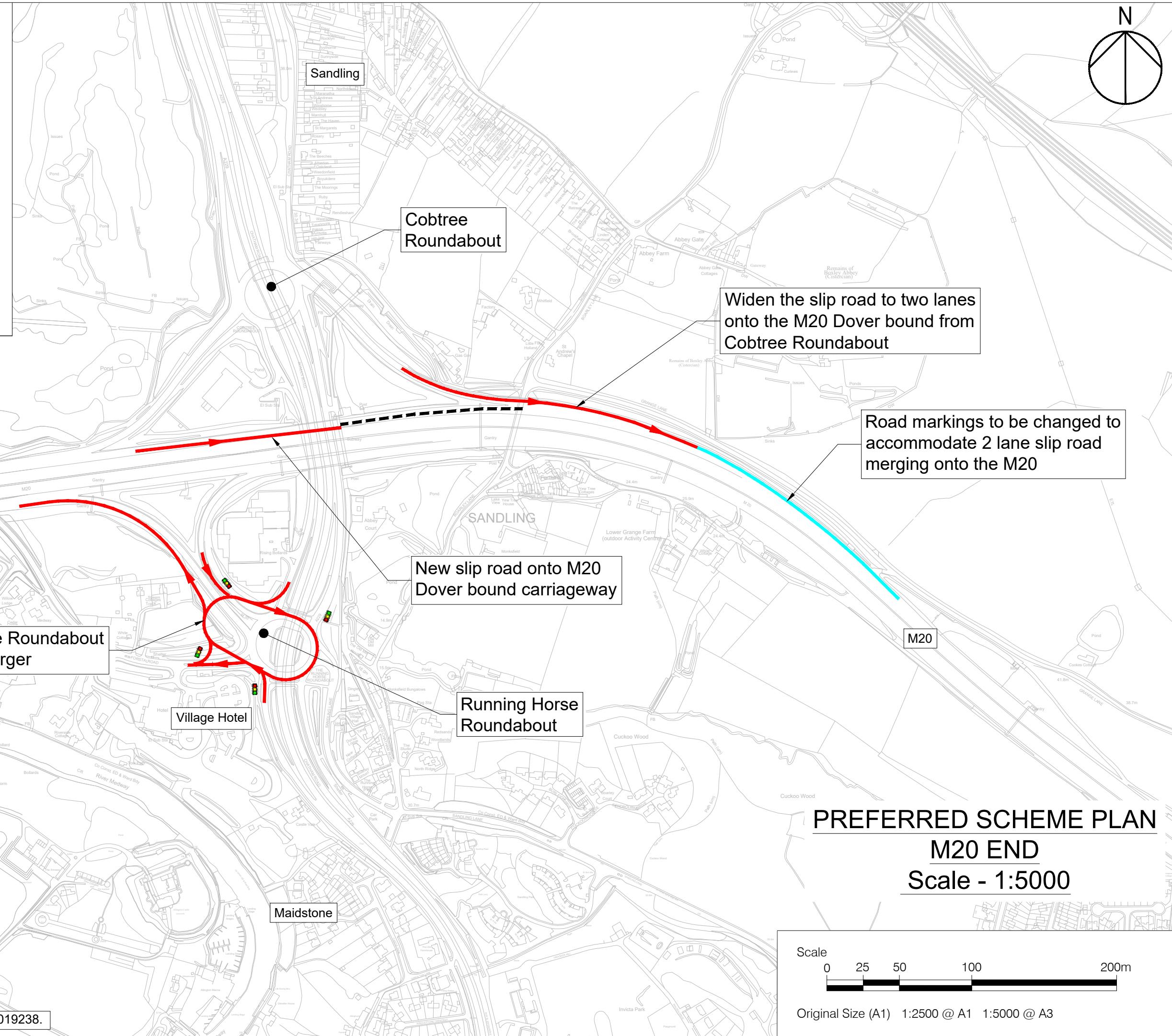
KENT COUNTY COUNCIL –PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NO:
Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport	24/00123

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) Funding 2025/26

Decision: As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport I agree to:

i)   ACCEPT Kent's BSIP and BSOG Government funding allocations for financial year 2025/26. This consists of £10,120,289 Revenue and £11,926,302 Capital BSIP and £1,087,788 BSOG funding

(ii)   DELEGATE authority to the Council's Corporate Director of Growth Environment & Transport, and the Section 151 Officer to formally accept this funding and related terms and conditions through the completion and return of anticipated formal award documentation from Government.

(iii)   DELEGATE authority to the Council's Corporate Director of Growth Environment & Transport, and the Section 151 Officer to agree and submit Kent's Delivery Plan in response to the funding offer, working to the principles of Value for Money (VfM) and consistent with the principles and potential initiatives in Kent's 2024 BSIP.

(iv)   DELEGATE to the Corporate Director of Growth Environment & Transport to take necessary actions including but not limited to entering into relevant contracts, or other legal agreements to implement this decision

Reason(s) for decision:
In January 2024, Government announced that all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) were required to develop a revised version of their Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for 2024. As considered previously by this Committee, KCC developed and submitted its updated BSIP in response to this requirement in June 2024.

On 17th November 2024, KCC learnt of a new indicative BSIP allocation for 2025/26 along with its allocation of Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) funding for the same period. KCC has been allocated a total of £23,134,379. On 20th December, KCC received its formal offer of this funding and the associated Memorandum of Understanding which confirmed this allocation which is collectively referred to as "the Bus Grant

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The proposal is being considered by Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 14 January 2025..

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
To forego the funding award. This is rejected as the funding represents a significant investment into Kent's bus offer.

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

....
signed   date

National Bus Strategy

Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

July 2024

CO_2

**Kent County Council &
Kent local bus operators**

**Find out more
kent.gov.uk**

Kent
County
Council
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Foreword

Neil Baker, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Buses are a critical part of our infrastructure. They are vital for the communities and users they serve, and to our schools, towns, local economy and the environment. Having used buses to get to school myself, and through my role as a Kent Constituency Member I knew this already, but my time as Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport has brought home to me just how important buses are. Our residents and my local government colleagues also tell me this frequently.

The bus industry was privatised in the 1980s, so as a Council, we do not run most services. Instead, we support and influence the commercial network as far as we can for the benefit of our residents. When the Government launched the National Bus Strategy (NBS) in 2021, it provided new opportunities to work with our commercial partners. I believe we have done so successfully, using our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and Enhanced Partnership Schemes (EPSs) to strengthen relationships with operators, protect the network and deliver a range of NBS-funded initiatives. I am now very excited to look further to the future with this, our 2024 BSIP.

The bus industry continues to face serious challenges in the form of rising costs, reduced usage and lower passenger revenue since the pandemic. Our network in Kent, and elsewhere in the UK, has been seriously compromised, and our commercial operators have had to make some really difficult decisions to reduce and even cancel some services. This is a significant concern for me and my KCC colleagues, which is why we have been so enthusiastic about the NBS and what it sets out to achieve. Like many Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) KCC is facing a significant financial challenge and we recently set out our plans for Securing Kent's Future as we seek to ensure we can continue to deliver the most vital services for our communities. We want to support Kent's bus offer as far as sustainably possible, but additional external funding through the NBS has been and will continue to be vital to do so.

The NBS has provided much-needed focus and some vital funding to support our bus network. In our initial BSIP we set out a clear plan for how, in conjunction with our operators and supported by Government, we wanted to sustain the network in Kent in the face of the challenges we face, and how we would like to subsequently improve all aspects of Kent's bus offer, should external funding through BSIP come forward.

Our first BSIP was well received and resulted in the award of £35m from Government, recognising the strength of our vision and our commitment to buses in Kent. Through our EPSs, this funding has enabled us to protect services at risk of withdrawal, and work on delivering a range of positive initiatives across the County including freezing the cost of our student bus passes, a number of fare and ticketing offers and promotions, improved bus information, better infrastructure and delivering numerous large and smaller scale bus priority and highway schemes to make it easier for buses to move around. Delivering BSIP funded initiatives will continue into 2024 and 2025.

NBS funding has also enabled us to protect the most critical commercial bus services that were at risk of withdrawal, ensuring thousands of children can carry on using them to get to school. Continuation of this funding beyond March 2025 is vital if these services are to keep operating.

With the same challenges still affecting the industry, our 2024 BSIP reviews our previous plan, considers its successes and the current bus offering, and what is needed to support the network. It also looks to the future and identifies what else we would like to be able to do to improve Kent's buses for our residents in the longer term, should we be awarded additional Government funding through the NBS process.

Neil Baker,
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Contents

The appendices can be found at: kent.gov.uk

Appendix A – Engagement Report from 2021 BSIP
Appendix B – 2024/25 Current Network Table
Appendix C – Supporting Maps and Data
Appendix D – 2029 Indicative Future Network Table
Appendix E – Letters of Support from Kent Bus Operators

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

① Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

Introduction

Buses are important. We use them to get to work and to school, to go the shops and the doctor's. They help to improve air quality and ease traffic congestion – and unlike cars, they're accessible to everyone. But these are challenging times for buses, both here in Kent and across England, with fewer people using them since the pandemic, together with increased operational costs and a widespread shortage of drivers. As most bus services in Kent are commercial, they have to overcome these challenges and be profitable for operators to keep running them.

So we were pleased when in March 2021, the Government launched its National Bus Strategy (NBS) for England. Called "Bus Back Better" this included proposals to help the bus industry to recover and grow. At Kent County Council (KCC), we continue to support the NBS, working with the county's bus operators to deliver the best, most commercially viable service we can for Kent residents given the current difficult financial climate.

The NBS set out an ambitious vision for improving all aspects of bus services across the country, backed by significant national funding. In

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

October 2021, KCC and Kent's bus operators published our own Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for the county, which we submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT). The BSIP was our local response to the NBS, setting out the current state of Kent bus services and our successes to date, the challenges facing local bus operators, our vision for future recovery and growth, and bold ideas to support and increase bus usage and performance in Kent, based on the funding we receive from central government.

We asked the DfT for £213m to fully deliver our BSIP. The Government responded in April 2022 with an outline funding allocation of £35.1m. This was a positive result for Kent – and the ninth-highest award in the whole of England – but was of course a lot less than we needed to deliver the full plan and solve all the significant operational and financial challenges affecting Kent's bus services. The nature of the funding, the majority of which needed to be allocated to physical measures, such as bus priority lanes, meant that it could not be utilised fully to react to the challenges facing the industry with respect to service viability. The Government also initially put restrictions on funding, preventing its use for sustaining any existing services that, although still useful to people, were not viable long-term.

The good news is that we've now been able to use other support funding in the form of Local Transport Fund and BSIP+ funding to protect around 50 services that would otherwise have been withdrawn by operators.

In March 2023, we received the first £18.9m of our allocated funding to support the rollout of an accelerated delivery programme in 2023/24. This funding came with a number of terms, conditions and restrictions on its use, but KCC has sought to utilise it to deliver measures in line with our initial BSIP and later DfT instructions. These measures support the Government's aims and policies, while striking a balance between reacting where possible to the industry's immediate pressures whilst building for the future. We also managed to negotiate some flexibility with the Government around network funding, allowing us to use £2.5m to sustain 49 bus services, mainly serving schools on the network, which would have otherwise faced withdrawal by operators. We expect to receive the rest of our £35.1m allocation shortly, for the delivery of a further set of initiatives during 2024/25.

This 2024 update to our BSIP sets out the current offer to bus passengers and the continuing challenges facing the industry. It also provides detail on our programme for 2023/24, plans for 2024/25 and how, depending on the funding we receive from the Government, we would like to grow Kent's bus offer in the years 2025-2029 and beyond.

Page 212

**1. Introduction, Context
& Our Bus Vision**

2. Current offer to Bus
    Passengers

3. Improvements
    Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals
    for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance
    Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Context

The Government published the NBS on 15 March 2021, setting out an ambitious vision to improve bus services across England. The strategy aimed to provide greater opportunities for local leadership and looked to reverse the shift away from public transport and encourage people back onto the bus.

The NBS covered a range of key areas which are integral to a positive experience of bus travel for passengers. This included network development, fares and ticketing, service integration, infrastructure, accessibility, innovation, service information, customer service standards and highway management. The Government called for improvements in all these areas to a) support the bus industry's recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic, and b) grow bus usage across England to encourage more sustainable travel.

The Government initially committed £3 billion of new funding, although this was later reduced to £1.2 billion. Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) and bus operators had to commit to the requirements of the NBS to obtain a share of the pot.

Delivering the National Bus Strategy
The two main NBS requirements for LTAs and bus operators were:

1) To produce and publish a BSIP by 31 October 2021.

2) To introduce a new statutory system for setting up and regulating bus services in the county by April 2022. This included using franchising or Enhanced Partnerships (EPs), as made possible under the 2017 Bus Services Act.

KCC and bus operators met both these requirements, submitting a BSIP in October 2021 and establishing an EP for the county in April 2022. Like most LTAs, Kent chose the route of EPs to build on existing relationships with commercial operators and to seek to improve bus provision in the county using a partnership approach.

Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
The Government described BSIPs as strategic documents setting out how LTAs and operators could achieve the goals of the NBS. In 2021, BSIPs were also partly bidding documents setting out the Government funding required to deliver the programme.

In October 2021, KCC, and the county's bus operators produced the first BSIP covering the whole of Kent. Through significant data led analysis of the network, the plan described Kent's existing bus offer and highlighted the barriers and challenges that may have been restricting greater bus use. Based on feedback from bus operators, Kent residents and other key stakeholders, the plan also considered potential areas for improvement and future development, laid out in a set of key principles and more detailed initiatives. You can read our 2021 BSIP here – Bus Service Improvement Plan – Kent County Council.

The 2021 BSIP included commitments we could deliver without additional funding. Where appropriate, these were reflected in our EPs, alongside a number of ambitious plans for other improvements that would require funding through the Government's NBS programme. We were determined that our BSIP would reflect local needs and circumstances, so we produced it in-house, with our public transport officers supported by external specialists where necessary. Although the timescales were tight, we were also determined that our BSIP would be based on high levels of engagement. Our public engagement platform generated almost 3,500

Page 213

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

responses, which we combined with comments from stakeholder groups including Kent's Districts, the Department for Work and Pensions, the Chamber of Commerce and Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC), as well as findings from seminars with KCC's elected Members.

We also held workshops and surveys with operators, and more detailed discussions with nominated operator representatives. You can see our market engagement report in Appendix A.

We used this engagement activity to develop key principles to support our vision for Kent's BSIP. Further engagement activity was utilised to develop a set of specific initiatives to support enhancements across all areas of bus service provision, and the funding required to deliver them.

Details of our funding allocation in response to the 2021 BSIP, how this funding was subsequently awarded and the initiatives we delivered in the 2023/24 financial year can be found in Chapter 2 – *Current Offer to Bus Passengers* and Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025.*

Our 2024 BSIP brings the original 2021 document up to date, providing information on the current bus offer and challenges facing the industry, initiatives introduced in 2023/24, and our programme for 2024/25. It also sets out our vision for 2025-29 and beyond. This is ambitious (depending on the external Government funding we receive) but also pragmatic, given the continued financial challenges facing the bus industry and Local Authorities, including KCC.

Neighbouring authorities

Kent has borders with four other LTAs: East Sussex, London, Medway (Unitary Authority) and Surrey. In 2021, we held conversations with all of them about our overall approach to our BSIP, issues we had in common and where we could work together on cross-boundary matters. We agreed that the different characteristics and circumstances of each authority meant a joint BSIP was not appropriate. Kent's bus operators support this approach. There was, however, a genuine willingness to work together with our neighbours on areas like ticketing, cross-boundary implications of passenger charters, planning and parking. We have worked with our partners since the start of our EP: in Medway, for instance, we held a BSIP funded free weekend travel promotion in June 2023.

Kent's Enhanced Partnership (EP)

The Government describes EPs as statutory agreements between LTAs and local bus operators in their operating area. They are designed to set out how the partners will work together to deliver the objectives of the NBS, and detail any commitments funded externally through the NBS agenda. EPs are designed to enable strong partnership working on areas such as highway improvements, customer service, vehicles, and fares & ticketing.

However, they do not fundamentally change the commercial nature of the bus industry. In Kent, the majority of bus journeys are not covered by any contractual relationship with KCC. Instead, EPs are about providing a governance set up designed to promote bus service provision through close partnership working and high levels of engagement. They consist of an EP Plan, which sets out the strategic approach and ambition for development that depends on the availability of additional external funding, and EP Schemes, which include initiatives that are viable with existing funding. Kent's EP was formally "made" in April 2022: you can view the documents at <u>Kent Enhanced Partnerships</u>.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Kent's Enhanced Partnership Approach

Kent is the most heavily populated non-metropolitan authority in the UK. The county has a mixture of larger urban centres, such as Canterbury and Maidstone, smaller towns and villages and more rural areas, with 12 Borough and District authorities operating in a two-tier administrative structure. Certain locations have unique characteristics: the Gravesham and Dartford areas are close to London and the Dover and Folkestone & Hythe areas are heavily affected by cross-channel traffic. There are also wide variations in key indices such as employment, levels of deprivation and education. Bus services and operators also vary, with Stagecoach the major national group operator in the east and Arriva and Go-Ahead operating in the west of the county.

This diversity and complexity meant a single EP arrangement for the whole county was not practical. Therefore in 2022, KCC produced an EP Plan covering its entire geographical area (see figure 1) but with three separate EP Schemes tailored for different local circumstances, needs and operating territories.

Kent's EP Plan is essentially a supplementary version of the BSIP, outlining the strategy and

initiatives which would be delivered if significant external funding was available. The individual EP schemes contain commitments achievable within existing budgets, and with the BSIP funding awarded to Kent.

The EP Scheme areas are:

East Kent: Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe, Swale, Thanet

West Kent: Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells

Kent Thameside: Dartford, Gravesham

Figure 1. Kent's BSIP area and EP Schemes

East Kent
West Kent
Kent Thameside

Page 215
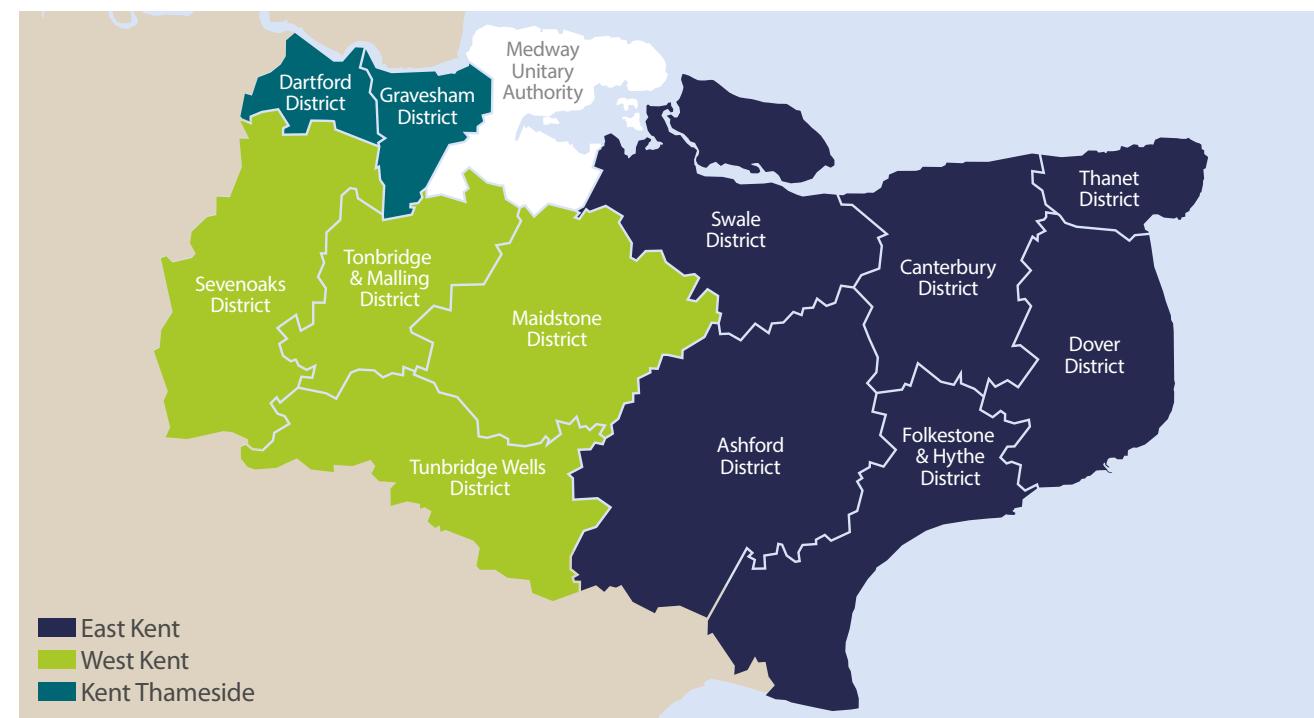
Introduction

Establishing Kent's Enhanced Partnership

Kent established its EP in line with national guidance supporting the NBS. This process began in 2021 through an informal discussion between KCC and local bus operators, with a Notice of Intention to prepare an EP published on 28 June 2021. Once we had submitted our BSIP, we held a full statutory consultation which concluded on 1 April 2022 with advice sent to all operators and statutory consultees that our EPs had been formed.

The April 2022 version of Kent's EPs included an EP Plan, aligning with the 2021 Kent BSIP, and the three Kent EP Schemes. When we published it, we did not know how much funding we would be allocated. We therefore included commitments and initiatives that, whilst ambitious, could be delivered within existing Council and operator budgets.

We published a further version of our EPs in April 2023 with changes made to reflect Kent's BSIP allocation for 2023-24.

We have a meeting hierarchy to support the running of Kent's EPs, as described in our 2021 BSIP. You can find further information on this hierarchy in Chapter – 5 *Targets, Monitoring and Reporting.*

Strategic Position at Kent County Council

KCC has a number of strategic and operational plans in place relating to this BSIP and its EPs. The most important is our Local Transport Plan (LTP) which sets out policies to promote and encourage safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within our area. Kent's current plan – LTP4 Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031 – identified buses as a key strategic priority. KCC is currently producing its next plan – LTP5 – and consulted on its development in winter 2023. This updated LTP will align with and complement the BSIP, ensuring a consistent bus vision in the context of wider strategic transport priorities. Alongside the BSIP and LTP are other Highways plans and strategies, such as the Kent Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan and the Kent Rail Strategy. All are shaped by Kent's overall corporate strategy, Framing Kent's Future. The relationship between them is shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. The relationship between Kent's plans/strategies

Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan | Kent Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan | Kent Highways Proposal Pipeline | Kent Vision Zero Road Safety Strategy | Kent Highways Asset Management Plan | Kent Rail Strategy

Local Transport Plan
(proposals and initiatives in the Kent LTP are generated and delivered across the responsible functions in the Council. The LTP sets out the case for this consolidated long term capital plan)

KCC Corporate Strategies: *Securing* and *Framing Kent's Future*
(provide the golden thread to guide delivery of KCC's core aims of short to medium term financial stability, levelling up, infrastructure for communities and an environmental step change)

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Engagement Activity

Although we were not formally required to consult on our 2021 BSIP – partly because the timescales were very tight – we wanted to ensure it was as locally driven and informed as possible. We undertook large-scale public engagement in summer 2021, which attracted over 3,500 respondents, together with wider engagement activities, including stakeholder events and forums with bus operators. You can see our market engagement report summarising this activity in Appendix A. The results clearly showed that service levels, reliability and cost were most important to Kent residents. We used the feedback from this engagement activity to inform the 2021 BSIP's Key Principles and subsequent initiatives.

Figure 3. Summary of 2021 BSIP Engagement Results

Question options

- Quicker journey times and more bus priority measures (bus lanes etc.)
- More modern buses with WiFi and stop announcements
- More frequent services that run for longer each day and at weekends
- Better waiting facilities with improved accessibility for passengers such as raised kerbs with better wheelchair access
- Improved reliability
- Better information that's easier to access
- Lower cost fares and different payment options
- Better environmental standards
- More integrated and innovative services such as flexible, bookable services that offer direct journeys to a wider range of destinations
- Better levels of customer service and the chance to have your say

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Kent's 2024 BSIP, and particularly Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond* again draws heavily on this engagement work, and has also used Kent's EP meeting structure – see Chapter 5 – *Targets, Performance, Monitoring and Reporting* to inform its content. As before, the timescales were tight, but KCC has engaged with its partners as far as possible to produce the initiatives in Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond* This has included engagement with Kent's 12 Borough and District Councils and Kent's bus operators through Enhanced Partnership Scheme Monitoring Groups (EPSMGs). We also used Kent's Passenger satisfaction survey, conducted in summer 2023, taking into account the correlation analysis shown opposite in figure 4 for the 2025-2029 initiative pipeline.

Figure 4. Correlation analysis from 2023 Bus Satisfaction Survey

Correlation analysis conducted highlights the underlying importance of:

• Frequency of service/how often they run
• Punctuality/arriving on time

It also highlights potential improvements required in these ares as well as:

• Real-time information
• Timetable information provided
• Access to bus information in general

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Duration and Arrangements for Review

This is the second version of Kent's BSIP following its initial publication in 2021. To inform this review and future proposals, in line with Government guidance, we have used our EP meeting structure – see Chapter 5 – *Targets, Performance, Monitoring and Reporting* – to collect feedback from key stakeholders, District and Borough councils and operators. We also used stakeholder feedback gathered for the 2021 BSIP, and results from KCC's bus satisfaction survey run during summer 2023.

A further review of Kent's BSIP is likely in 2025, after which we will seek to align updates with our emerging LTP5. We may also make intermediate updates should circumstances in the county change, or there are any new or changing policy and national requirements.

Once published, Kent's 2024 BSIP will be reflected in our EP Plan and Schemes, with progress and performance monitored through the EP meeting structure.

Our Bus Vision

This new version of the BSIP includes a joint vision for buses formed through Kent's Enhanced Partnership Board (EPB) between KCC and its operators:

To protect existing bus services and to develop a core network that is sustainable, fast & frequent, innovative, reliable and fully accessible, complemented by a range of rural transport solutions – connecting our communities with essential services. Our passengers and residents will travel on modern, environmentally friendly vehicles accessed using dynamic and readily available information, high quality bus stops and infrastructure and using flexible, economic tickets that are easy to pay for.

We will seek to achieve this by working collaboratively through Kent's Enhanced Partnership and by utilising any emerging National Bus Strategy funding or other external funding sources.

This vision recognises that Kent is keen to recover and grow its bus offering in line with the NBS. We will seek to do so while being pragmatic about the funding available to KCC and bus operators. The vision ultimately becomes achievable with a long-term national funding settlement for buses.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Introduction

Key Principles:

1. Regulation
Use Kent's EPs to work collaboratively to deliver the best bus offer possible with available funding. We will monitor all parties' EP Scheme commitments through the EP meeting hierarchy to help meet EP targets.

2. Customer
Put the customer at the heart of everything we do by developing a passenger charter agreed through the EP and by reviewing opportunities for stakeholder feedback.

3. Network developments
Work collaboratively to use any available funding sensibly and sustainably to ensure Kent's bus offer is as comprehensive as possible in the current financial climate.

Use outputs from the DfT's Bus Connectivity Assessment to inform enhancements to the core network whilst developing transport solutions for rural areas with the overall intention of improving levels of connectivity for all Kent residents.

4. Innovation and digital accessibility
Examine and embrace innovative transport solutions as potential alternatives to the private car and alongside other travel modes, including expanding bus rapid transport (BRT) services where appropriate.

5. Fares and ticketing
Work collaboratively to use any available funding sensibly and sustainably to deliver flexible, value-for-money ticketing options. Provide smart, cashless and ticketless solutions across Kent's network.

6. Public transport information
Provide easy to find, good quality and accessible public transport information, including a single source for live bus times and other new technology e.g. for voice announcements.

7. Accessibility
Strive to improve physical and digital provision both on board buses and within infrastructure to ensure the network is fully accessible to disabled passengers.

8. Environment and air quality
Promote the role of buses in addressing air quality issues and work with operators and other stakeholders to seek and use any available funding to make improvements on key transport corridors.

9. Infrastructure, network management and bus priority
Put buses at the centre of decision-making on new road schemes and planning developments, and support bus reliability and priority under KCC's role as the highway authority. Where external funding permits, seek to improve bus journey times on key congestion corridors to deliver related air quality, reliability, passenger usage and other benefits.

10. Schools transport
Continue to promote the bus network as a convenient, cost-effective and sustainable means for travel to School and College. Work collaboratively to provide suitable and reliable journeys for all significant demands wherever possible. As funding allows, look to support the costs of travelling to school.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

2 Current Offer to Bus Passengers

This chapter sets out Kent's current offer for bus passengers, providing an update since the original 2021 BSIP. It considers the general status of buses in Kent, the challenges facing the industry and the complex financial considerations. It then examines the BSIP's initiative areas in turn, based on the key principles and discusses the current offering for each, outlining progress made since 2021.

Buses in Kent

In a large rural county like Kent, the bus network plays a major role not just in urban areas but in connecting less populated locations with key services. KCC acknowledges this important role that buses play in the county's overall transport offer which is why we have sought to support Kent's buses as far as possible, often under difficult circumstances, over many years. This support has included significant discretionary financial support – such as the popular Kent Travel Saver scheme and subsidised bus services etc- working with the county's numerous commercial bus operators.

Since the bus industry was deregulated in the 1980s, most core bus services in Kent have been provided on a commercial basis by operators,

who run routes because of the revenue they generate from passenger usage. This means that most bus provision is provided outside of KCC's direct control. Operators can provide services at their own discretion and make commercial decisions on issues such as routes, timetables, frequencies and fares, with operators and their services licensed by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Kent has traditionally had a relatively strong bus offer. It combines a significant commercial urban and inter-urban network with services to rural areas as geography and finances permit, supported by effective concessionary ticketing arrangements and good levels of infrastructure. The county is also home to one of England's most successful Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) schemes –

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

Fastrack, which is due to become zero-emission in 2024. The brand will shortly be applied to a new BRT service in Dover.

Kent's bus offer has also faced substantial challenges in recent years. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact, with reduced usage partly driven by changes in travel patterns causing lower revenue alongside increased operating costs (e.g. fuel, parts, insurance etc)

and driver shortages. Although the Government and KCC have supported buses through these difficult times (e.g. through sustaining ENCTS reimbursement at pre-Covid levels for a significant period), commercial operators have had to make tough decisions on the services and frequencies they can operate. KCC has also had to review its support for buses due to its own difficult financial position in which it continues to operate.

Kent's Bus Network

Kent's bus network (excluding cross-boundary services operating mostly outside Kent and Transport for London (TfL) services) currently consists of 426 services provided by 23 different operators, including large national companies and small to medium-sized local operators. National group operators provide 47% of all services and 83% of all kilometres: Stagecoach dominates in the east of the county, with Arriva and Go-Ahead running many of the services in the west. Most core bus services operate on a commercial basis with the remainder requiring financial support. Commercial services tend to operate six or seven days a week: while KCC-supported services operate mainly on weekdays only and are predominantly focused on school provision. A few of these supported services cross the county boundary and are jointly funded by KCC and the relevant neighbouring authority. Kent also has regular train services to London and sees some commuter coach operations.

The West Kent area of Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells is semi-rural with several small to medium-sized towns. It is bordered by the remainder of Kent, Medway, East Sussex, Surrey and the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley. Its population

Page 222

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

of over 500,000 is slightly older than the national average and relatively affluent compared with the rest of the country.

The largest local bus provider in this part of Kent is Arriva Kent & Surrey, which provides services from its depots in Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells: most other services are provided by locally based independent companies. Buses used include minibuses and full-sized single- and double-deck vehicles, with a number of Euro V and Euro VI specification vehicles now in everyday use.

A large proportion of bus users are students attending the area's numerous secondary schools, many making longer, more complex journeys to grammar schools which attract students from across the county and from neighbouring authorities, including London. In Sevenoaks District, a popular Demand Responsive Transport scheme operates with KCC support alongside conventional registered local bus services.

The Kent Thameside area covers the urban Dartford and Gravesham Boroughs including the riverside market towns of Dartford and Gravesend, and rural areas to the south.

The urban area is part of the Thames Gateway regeneration project with substantial new housing and business developments underway including The Bridge, Eastern Quarry, Northfleet Embankment and the Ebbsfleet Valley. To ensure that the new populations do not cause the road network to become highly congested, the popular Fastrack bus rapid transit (BRT) system is in place and demonstrates how truly public transport-orientated development can be planned and built around an efficient transport network. The area's bus network is largely operated by Arriva, with TfL buses linking in from the London Boroughs of Bexley and Bromley. Services here are amongst the most frequent in the county with largely commercial evening and Sunday services operated. However, the rural area is more challenging to serve. In 2023, it was announced that Go-Ahead London won the contract to operate the Kent Thameside Fastrack network from 2024. The service will be operated with a fleet of Zero-Emission electric buses, extending services to more of the area's new development sites.

The East Kent area comprises the Districts of Ashford, Folkestone & Hythe, Dover, Canterbury, Thanet and Swale. Here, most bus services are provided by group operator Stagecoach. In

contrast to West Kent, there tends to be less commercial competition, particularly for off-peak services, with only a handful of independent operators running largely tendered or peak school routes. The exception is in Swale, where independent operator Chalkwell provides most of the local network, partly on a commercial basis. East Kent is dominated by several large towns with their own well-established bus networks connected by numerous inter-urban services. Of note is the city of Canterbury, which is a focal point of the East Kent network, with its central bus station acting as an interchange where passengers can connect to an array of services serving the area. The Thanet area towns of Ramsgate, Margate and Broadstairs have their own comprehensive network including The Loop, Kent's single most-used bus service. However, coverage in rural areas is more limited and there is little commercial service outside the inter-urban corridors.

In both West and East Kent there are a number of cross-boundary services, which we monitor and manage with neighbouring authorities.

The Challenge Facing the Industry
Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the bus industry has faced significant issues both nationally and

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

here in Kent. Commercial bus operators are working in an environment where usage and therefore revenue have fallen, while the costs of fuel, parts and insurance have all increased. A nationwide shortage of bus drivers and mechanical engineers has meant that operators have sometimes struggled to provide the services they are registered to run. As a result of this, a number of commercial operators across the county have had to make difficult decisions about which services to keep running at existing levels, and which to reduce or withdraw entirely. The Confederation for Passenger Transport (CPT), which represents UK bus and coach operators, vehicle manufacturers and other suppliers to the industry, has outlined the challenges and future priorities in its 2024 CPT bus manifesto. See: www.cpt-uk.org

Likewise, many Local Authorities across the country are facing significant financial challenges. KCC is no exception. Rising demands in areas such as Adult & Children's Social Care and Home to School Transport mean we have had to focus on meeting our statutory responsibilities and protecting and prioritising our most vital services. In February 2024, KCC approved its 2024-25 budget proposals, which included protecting current funding for bus support. However,

support for buses remains discretionary spend activity in a number of areas, so we must ensure our support for buses, alongside spending in other Council areas, provides best value for Kent residents and ultimately works towards the Council's policy of *"Securing Kent's Future"*.

During and after the pandemic, KCC has worked closely with operators to build and sustain strong partnerships. From a financial perspective, we have aimed to make best use of all Government Covid support funding, LTF, BSIP and other sources to support the bus network as far as possible. Through the pandemic, we maintained payments to operators for contracted bus services, and concessionary fares scheme reimbursement at pre-Covid levels, in line with Government guidance. Together with other Government support, this ensured buses continued to operate, avoiding any significant reduction to service levels in Kent for a significant period. As post-pandemic bus usage patterns are becoming clearer, operators have had to make tough decisions about their services, even with some government support funding still in place.

BSIP and wider Government Covid-19 support funding has been crucial in sustaining as much of Kent's bus network as possible. In 2023/24, we

used BSIP funding to support 49 bus services, predominantly catering for school movements on the commercial bus network, which would have otherwise been withdrawn by the commercial operators. These services are planned to continue in 2024/25, again with BSIP funding secured from Government through the NBS process. There is still uncertainty around funding for these services beyond March 2025: this will be an important part of our NBS funding request for 2025-29.

Looking ahead, KCC has outlined its aspirations for its bus network and wider areas such as fares, infrastructure and passenger information in Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond*. Delivering these aspirations, which show how important buses are for our county, will depend on securing significant, long-term external funding. We also need clarity on the future of national initiatives such as the £2 fare cap and Project Coral, the DfT's support for multi-operator ticketing.

In 2021, we noted that we wished to use the NBS and BSIP process first to maintain Kent's bus offer as far as possible, with any additional funding used to grow it through initiatives in areas such as public transport information, ticketing and innovation. This remains the case

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

for our 2024 BSIP. Wherever possible, we have used, and will continue to use, 2023/24 and 2024/25 BSIP funding to sustain services and support the ticketing offer, and deliver some longer-term benefits to support growth, subject to funding confirmation and award conditions. For 2025-29 we have proposed a set of further positive initiatives to grow Kent's bus provision, but again, this will depend on securing external Government funding.

Council Involvement

While much of the bus network in Kent is commercial, KCC still provides significant discretionary support for buses, and currently employs around 25 people to deliver its bus-related services.

Unlike many other authorities, KCC continues to spend approximately £5m per year on supporting services which are not profitable but are socially necessary.

Alongside this direct funding, KCC has fostered strong, positive working relationships with its bus operators over many years. Before the NBS was published in March 2021, these relationships were often formalised in voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreements. QBPs brought

together KCC, the local District or Borough council and the primary commercial bus operators, focusing on and setting targets in areas such as new planning developments, parking policy, service delivery and scheme identification. The NBS and EP introduced a new meeting structure that maintains these existing local relationships alongside more formal meetings, such as Kent's Enhanced Partnership Board (EPB). Please see Chapter 5 – *Targets, Performance, Monitoring and Reporting* for more information on the meeting structure.

KCC also supports the bus network by providing and maintaining bus stop infrastructure, competing for funding and priority for highway and other schemes, and supporting operators to improve their environmental standards and innovation.

Our most significant direct financial support, though, is to passengers, mainly by subsidising fares through our concessionary travel and school travel schemes. This includes the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) scheme, a statutory national initiative offering free transport to around 235,000 elderly and disabled passholders. On top of this, KCC also offers discretionary free passes for qualifying companions.

For many years KCC has provided its Kent Travel Saver Schemes on an entirely discretionary basis to help parents and young people with the cost of travel to and from school. The £5.7m subsidy KCC allocates to the schemes, complemented by BSIP funding that has enabled KCC to limit the cost to pass holders is estimated to reduce the cost of bus journeys by about half compared to the cost of season tickets purchased from bus passengers. Although effectively a passenger subsidy, the scheme is acknowledged by bus operators as being positive since it encourages bus use for journeys to and from school that can become a lifelong habit.

KCC also provides free bus travel to around 4,100 children entitled to free travel to school on the bus network. This is a statutory responsibility placed on Local Authorities under the Education Act. KCC has a policy of making use of the existing public transport network whether possible. As well as benefitting the pass holders themselves, it is considered that this policy and the funding it represents helps to sustain the network in a number of ways. One example is that it enables some vehicles to provide cost-effective off-peak services, supporting the wider bus network and the communities it serves.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

Taken together, these schemes help underpin a strong peak-time offer, which in turn supports a greater-than-usual number of services operating throughout the day by commercial operators, resulting in increased competition for tendered and commercial bus work.

KCC has also developed an active working relationship with the community transport sector and has formed a Community Transport Toolkit to help organisations introduce and operate small transport schemes in their communities. Over the last two years, we have provided just under £1m in grants to 19 different organisations, almost all in the form of one-off funding to launch very localised schemes, followed by ongoing support and advice to sustain them. KCC remains committed to this approach and will continue to support the sector where viable.

Funding for Buses

Although most bus journeys in Kent operate on an entirely commercial (i.e. unsubsidised) basis, some services, infrastructure and financial support for bus users is heavily funded through KCC and Government. We have to consider our spending carefully to prioritise our most vital and statutory services, but we continue to put as much support into buses as possible. We

currently inject approximately £35m per year into the Kent bus network, both directly through subsidies for unprofitable but socially necessary bus services, and indirectly through subsidies to passholders and fare reimbursement to operators.

Our funding comprises both statutory and discretionary spending and includes subsidies to operators and passengers and other financial support for schemes and projects. Capital budgets can vary significantly each year and ultimately tend to be reliant on external funding streams.

Despite this funding, the bus network in Kent and across the UK still faces significant challenges as it recovers from the pandemic, both to attract the passenger numbers required to sustain services and deal with rising operational costs. Government support during and since the pandemic, together with keeping concessionary travel payments at pre-Covid levels – and, more recently, BSIP network funding – has enabled much of the bus network to be maintained. However, there continues to be concern across the bus industry about what happens when this current external funding period ends in March 2025. This presents a significant risk to the

industry and the travelling public. KCC's 2025-29 initiative proposals emphasise that continued external funding is vital to support the bus network and deliver any more progressive service enhancements.
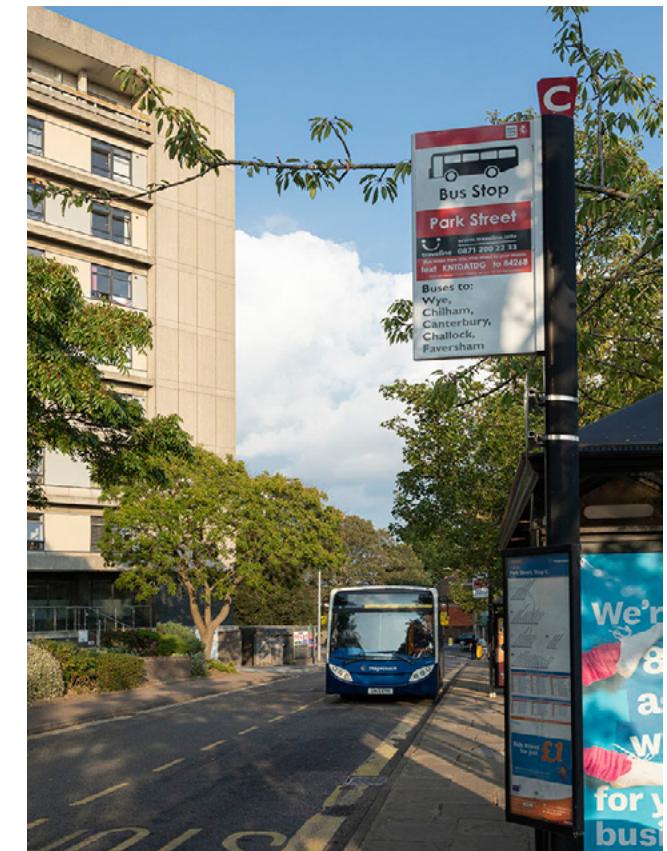
Buses in Kent

KCC's budgets and spend for supporting buses in Kent in 2022/23 and 2023/24 are detailed below.

Baseline Budget Category	Funding Source	2022/23		2023/24	
		Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital
Supported Bus Services & Kent Karrier	KCC	£4.84m	£0	£5.33m	£0
ENCTS Concessions Budget dictated by demand and re-imbursement	KCC	£13.84m	£0	£12.97m	£0
Kent Travel Saver Concessionary Ticketing Scheme Payment to operators	KCC	£11.35m	£0	£14.56m	£0
Bus Stop Infrastructure Maintenance Contract	KCC	£100k	£0	£100k	£0
Fastrack Infrastructure	KCC	£0	£243k	£0	£243k
Bus Service Policy, Community Transport and New Bus Stop Infrastructure	KCC	£329k	£0	£329k	£0
BSIP Funding	Dft	£0	£0	£6.53m	£12.46m
LTF/BSIP+	Dft	£0	£0	£2.3m	£0
Local Authority BSOG	Dft	£1.08m	£0	£1.08m	£0
Zero Emission Bus Grant (ZEBRA)	Dft	£0	£0	£7m	£0
Housing Infrastructure Fund (for bus projects) Funding to DDC for Dover Fastrack – KCC Delivery Partner	Dft	£0	£7.63m	£7m	£7.63m

The table above shows the total original BSIP allocation for 2023/24. Some initiatives have completion dates extending into 2024/25 but have seen some spend in 2023/24: these therefore appear within Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025* initiative areas as '2023/24' projects. For some other initiatives full expenditure will be in 2024/25 due to programme changes agreed with the DfT and as such are now shown as '2024/25' spend in each initiative area.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

Funding for Kent's BSIP

In 2021, KCC and operators submitted an ambitious BSIP containing a range of initiatives aimed firstly at making Kent's bus offering as sustainable as possible, and secondly at moving forwards with measures to grow overall bus use. The submission highlighted that KCC and operators were focused on protecting the existing network as far as possible; accordingly, the ability to support anything other than fairly modest initiatives was very limited without additional external funding.

For these reasons, and in line with initial BSIP guidance, KCC and operators actively looked for initiatives we could deliver using existing funds and dependent entirely on new funding delivered through the NBS process. Our 2021 BSIP funding requirement, based on revenue support and capital costs, totalled £213m.

Indicative BSIP Allocation & Subsequent 23/24 BSIP Award

We published Kent's BSIP in October 2021. The Government assessed submissions from LTAs across England before making indicative funding allocations. On 4 April 2022, we learnt we had been allocated £35.1m, consisting of £12,454,840 capital and £6,530,895 revenue funding. This

was significantly less than the £213m we had requested and would not deliver our ambitions in full. That said, only 31 out of 79 LTAs received any allocation at all, and ours was the ninth highest in England. The DfT also praised the quality and ambition of our BSIP.

The DfT was clear that funding came with conditions. Firstly, it had to be used on initiatives supporting Government priorities – bus priority schemes for capital funding, and fares and ticketing schemes and service initiatives for revenue funding. Secondly it was noted at the time that funding could not be used to sustain unprofitable services facing reduction or withdrawal.

Following the announcement in April 2022 a formal funding offer was not subsequently made to KCC until February 2023. Following a Key Decision from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport KCC accepted £18.9m of funding in March 2023. This represented two years' funding in one (BSIP tranche 1) with the DfT seeking an accelerated initiative programme across the 2023/24 financial year. We therefore needed to identify works that met the grant's terms and that were deliverable in the reduced timescale available. You can find details of the initiatives

delivered and their current status later in this chapter.

As part of the award process, we managed to negotiate the flexibility to use revenue funding to sustain existing unprofitable services if necessary. This allowed 49 registered bus services, mainly serving school movements, to continue for the 2023/24 financial year. They would have otherwise faced withdrawal by commercial operators.

On receipt of its 2023/24 BSIP funding award, we worked hard to roll out the agreed initiative programme. Details of the initiatives delivered and their current status, can be found later in this chapter. In June 2023, the Government announced that KCC should expect to receive the balance of its indicative allocation totalling £4,379,500 revenue and £11,707,904 capital for the delivery of further initiatives in 2024/25. The DfT have advised that this funding should be released in June 2024. The initiatives we will deliver in 2024/25 are detailed in Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025*.

KCC has also been able to use £2.3m in BSIP+ funding provided by Government through this process which recognised the challenges faced by

Page 228

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Buses in Kent

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KCC has also been able to use £2.3m in BSIP+ funding provided by Government through this process which recognised the challenges faced by the industry. The combination of BSIP and BSIP+ funding has enabled us to protect 49 services that would otherwise have been withdrawn by commercial operators.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Initiative Specific Updates

Initiative Specific Updates

In our 2021 BSIP, we developed a number of initiative areas based on our Key Principles. This 2024 update considers the Government's revised list of initiative areas. This section considers each of these initiative areas in turn and explains Kent's current position. It includes information on progress since the 2021 BSIP, detail on how we have used 2023/24 BSIP funding where appropriate to deliver improvements, and any EP commitments introduced to support the initiative area concerned. Details of our 2024/25 programme follow in Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025*.

Longer-term proposals for further improving the offer across all initiative areas, should we secure additional external funding, appear in Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond*.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

Network Development

Introduction:

Kent's buses are essential for connecting communities, providing links between and within 15 major Towns and 40 Town Centre locations, and giving people access to reach local healthcare, employment and education.

School bus services are particularly important, supporting Kent's student Travel Saver schemes, reducing 'school run' congestion and promoting sustainable transport to secondary schools including Grammar and Faith Schools and Further Education establishments in the County.

Although the network's sustainability has been compromised in recent years, the current bus offer continues to provide services all-day, five-, six-or seven-day-a-week operations on key corridors. Schooltime-only services, off-peak shopper buses and Dial-a-Ride and Community Transport ensure all parts Kent have access to key facilities, albeit limited for some more rural areas. In FY 2023/24, the network recorded over 44 million bus passenger journeys, underlining its importance and indicating that despite some reductions and cancellations it continues to cater effectively for residents' needs. Kent also has

regular train services to London and supports a commuter coach network.

Supported by BSIP funding and KCC grants, the Community Transport Sector has played an increasing role in local, particularly rural, provision. The KCC-funded Kent Karrier network also provides bookable transport at least one day a week for all parts of the county.

Challenges and Barriers:

During and since the pandemic, commercial bus usage has been compromised by reduced off-peak usage and passenger revenue, increased fuel, maintenance and salary costs and shortages of skilled and licensed staff. The 44.8 m bus journeys completed in Kent in FY2023/24 represents around 85% of pre-Covid levels: in the same period, operators' overheads increased by around 30%.

These factors have resulted in over 77 net service withdrawals and further reductions in mileage since the start of 2022. Despite this, direct and indirect Government support has helped KCC and bus operators to sustain the core network.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

However, the challenges persist. In Kent, 49 services are currently operating only with financial support from KCC through DfT (BSIP and BSIP+) funding, which is assured only until March 2025. The priority for us and our bus operators, as reflected in this BSIP, remains to stabilise the current network beyond March 2025. At the same time, we are establishing a clear vision to expand the core bus network and compliment this with solutions for rural communities using a combination of off-peak shopper services, Community Transport Schemes and DRT services that collectively offer greater connectivity through faster, more reliable services that are easier to use, well publicised and use greener, more accessible vehicles and infrastructure. However, doing so will require assured, longer-term funding.

Kent's buses provided around 32.5m kilometres of bus network in FY23/24, about 80% of the total operated in 2019. Despite this contraction, further analysis shows the inter-urban network on Kent's better-used strategic bus routes remains comprehensive, validating the National Bus Strategy's focus on investing in these strongest parts of the network. The school bus network is also robust, showing we were right to use available funding to protect these services where they were at risk of withdrawal by operators.

Analysis of the current network against the pre-pandemic network demonstrates that the areas most adversely affected by the 20% contraction of the network are rural communities and others

Figure 5. Impacts of changes to the Kent Bus Network 2019-2024

KCC Bus network Off peak accessibility 2019_2024
isochron
- 45 min _ 2019
- 45 min _ 2023

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1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

that are located outside of urban areas and away from the most core parts of the network. The areas highlighted in red in figure 5 suffer from reduced off-peak (midday) bus accessibility to Town Centres and this intelligence will be used to inform the use of future funding in seeking to improve connectivity for areas that have been adversely affected by the industry challenge and recent changes to the network.

Overall, the proportion of urban populations within 45 minutes of a town centre by bus has not significantly decreased. However, bus accessibility for short journey (less than 15 minutes) has fallen for 20% of the urban population in this same midday period. Clearly, while these stronger parts of the network have been maintained, some now offer reduced frequency and service levels. We need to recognise that the

most compromised parts of our network and services are outlying rural areas off the main bus corridors. Serving these smaller, rural communities sustainably is a challenge for this BSIP, since limited or non-existent services for these communities is clearly a barrier to greater bus use in Kent.

Public/Stakeholder Feedback Summary:
Public and stakeholder engagement used to inform our 2021 BSIP identified improvements to the network itself as the main priority for existing and potential bus users. Of 10 areas identified, including cost, reliability, accessibility, environmental considerations and information, what responders wanted most was more frequent services that run longer each day and at weekends.

In 2021, 68% of responders identified the services available as their priority for improvement. More detailed suggestions included new services, reduced journey distances, better integration, better rural services, earlier and later buses, more weekend services and improved frequencies.

Our 2023 BSIP passenger satisfaction survey also highlighted network and service improvements, with 40% of interviewees wanting to see improved routes, services, journey opportunities or frequencies.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

The feedback from surveys completed two years apart and for different reasons provides a consistent message: while passengers welcome improvements to information, fares, infrastructure and bus priority, it is improvements to services themselves they most want to see.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers:
Despite its recent contraction, Kent's bus network currently consists of 426 services, excluding

TFL service and cross boundary services mostly outside Kent, DRT and Community services. The bus network is delivered by 23 different operators, including large national companies and small to medium-sized local companies. Two national group operators provide 47% of all services and 83% of all kilometres: Stagecoach dominates in the east of the county, with Arriva running many of the services in the west.

Over half of bus services in Kent are school routes operating 8% of the mileage in Kent. The rest of the network consists of strong urban and interurban routes and account for the majority of the mileage in Kent. There also a very successful BRT service, a number of rural services and 3 DRT operations.

Total scheduled bus mileage in FY2023/24 was over 32.5m kilometres. 44.8 million passenger trips have been made in the Kent Bus services in FY23/24.

Figure 6. Kent bus mileage by service type

Number of services by type

- **1.** School/college: **238**
- **2.** Urban: **73**
- **3.** Interurban: **57**
- **4.** Rural: **52**
- **5.** BRT: **4**
- **6.** Park & Ride: **2**
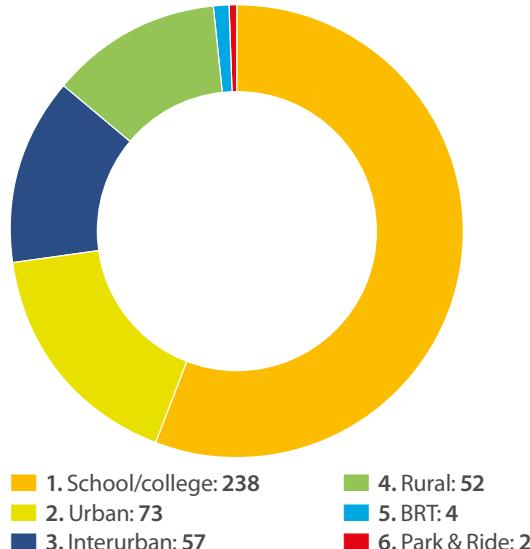
Kilometer by Bus service type

- **1.** Interurban: **45%**
- **2.** Urban: **28%**
- **3.** Rural: **11%**
- **4.** School/college: **8%**
- **5.** BRT: **7%**
- **6.** Park & Ride: **1%**
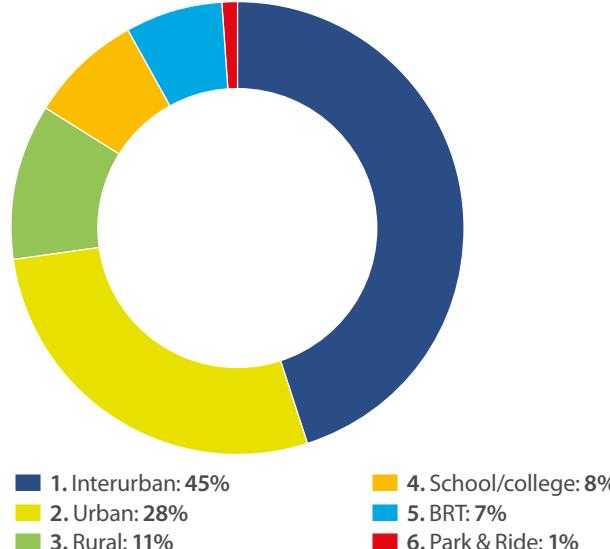
Figure 7. Proportion of network by funding type

Km and service breakdown by funding streams

- Commercial
- DFT funded
- KCC funded:
- Partially Commercial/DFT
- Partially Commercial/KCC
- Other (privately sponsored or funded by other council)

Page 234

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

The majority of bus mileage and bus routes are operated commercially, but around 20% of the network mileage is currently subsidised, predominantly supporting school routes. There is a minority of routes funded privately or by other local bodies.

Spatially, the subsidised services are mostly supporting rural connectivity and predominantly focusing on school transport, mostly operating on weekdays only.

Analysis of March 2024 passenger data shows fully subsidised services represent almost 10% of bus usage in Kent, with the partially subsidised

network accounting for another 5%. The rest of the Kent bus patronage is generated by the commercial services.

Combined bus frequencies across Kent vary significantly between urban and rural areas. The illustrative maps below demonstrate that strategic corridors have stronger frequency and

Figure 8. Spatial Analysis Data

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
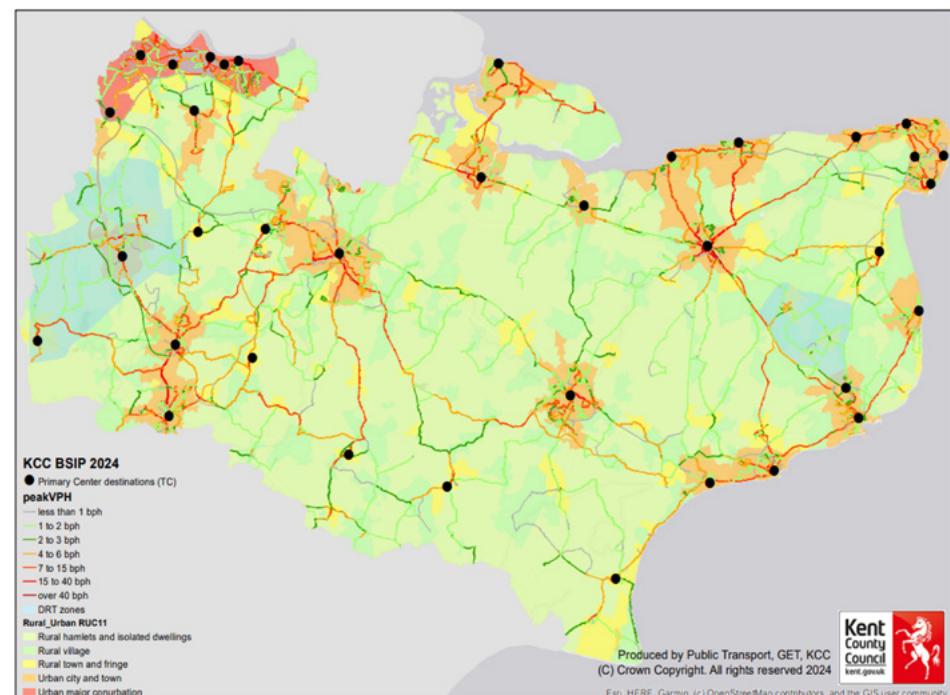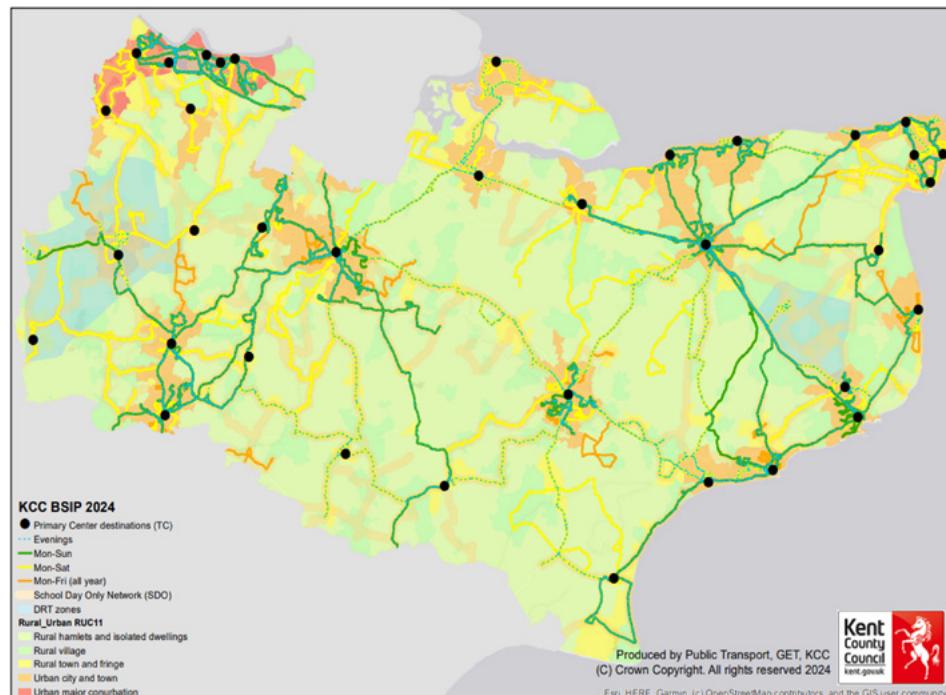
Network Development

more comprehensive services operating 6 to 7 days a week, and not surprisingly sensibly less frequent bus services in rural areas.

The spatial analysis demonstrates some gaps/inconsistencies with the provision of Sundays and evening services – figure 8 and Appendix C.

A table categorising bus services operating in the county as at March 2024 by Route number, Operator, Service Type, Operating Period and Funding source Is shown in Appendix B. Appendix C provides a series of maps presenting the same information geographically as well as wider supportive data.

The current network provides 82% of Kent's population with public transport access to a main Town Centre within 45 minutes in weekday peak hours. This falls to 48% on Sundays.

Early assessment of the outputs from the DfT Connectivity Assessment shows that, while the commercial network has clearly been compromised by service reductions and cancellations, core services have been sustained and protected. This means around 80% of residents in urban areas or with access to inter-urban parts

Figure 9. Percentage of population with access to town centre by bus within 60 mins

Page 236

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
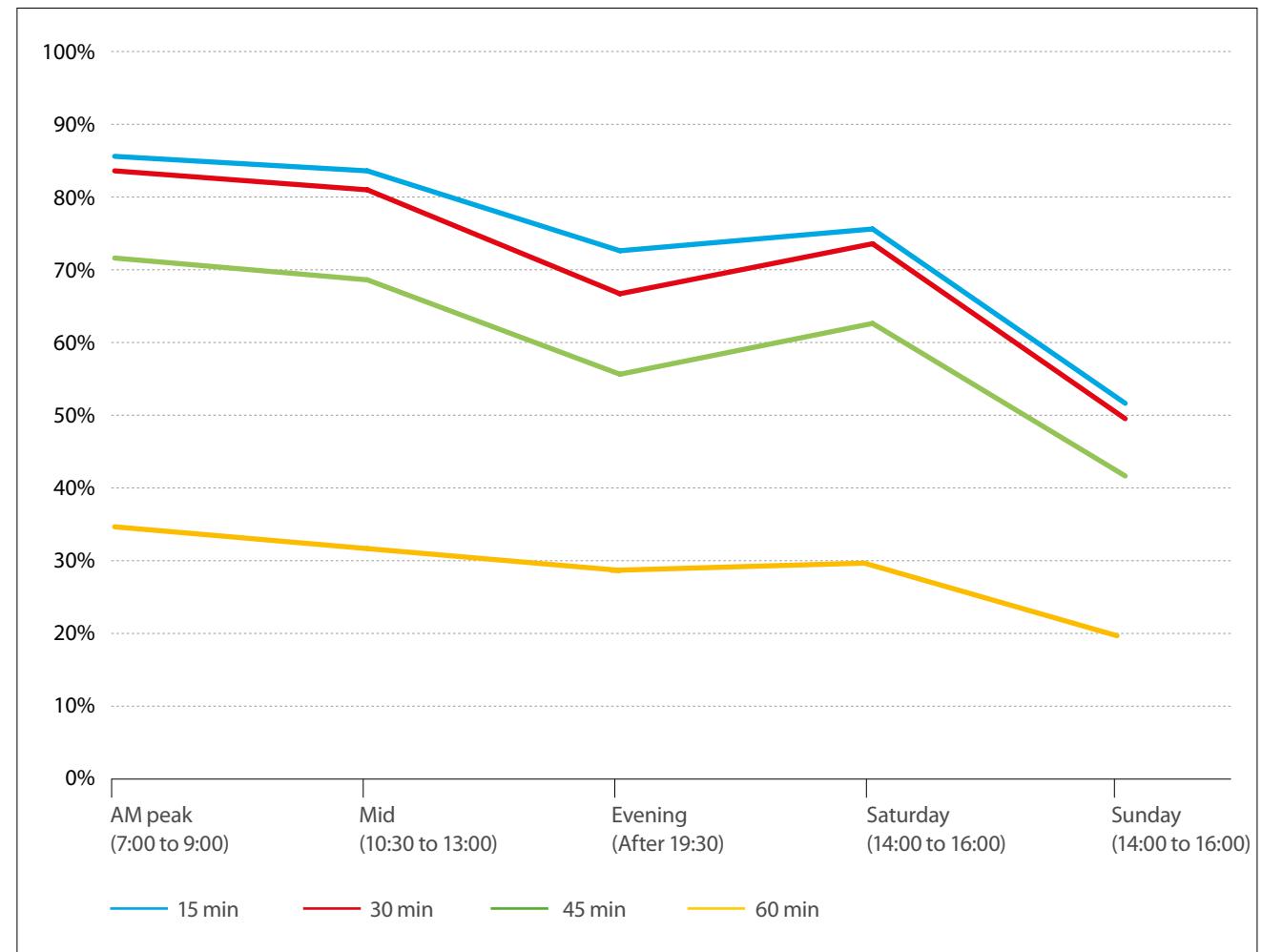
Network Development

Figure 9. Percentage of population with access to destination by bus within 30 min – AM Peak. (This aligns with outputs from Kent's BCA)

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
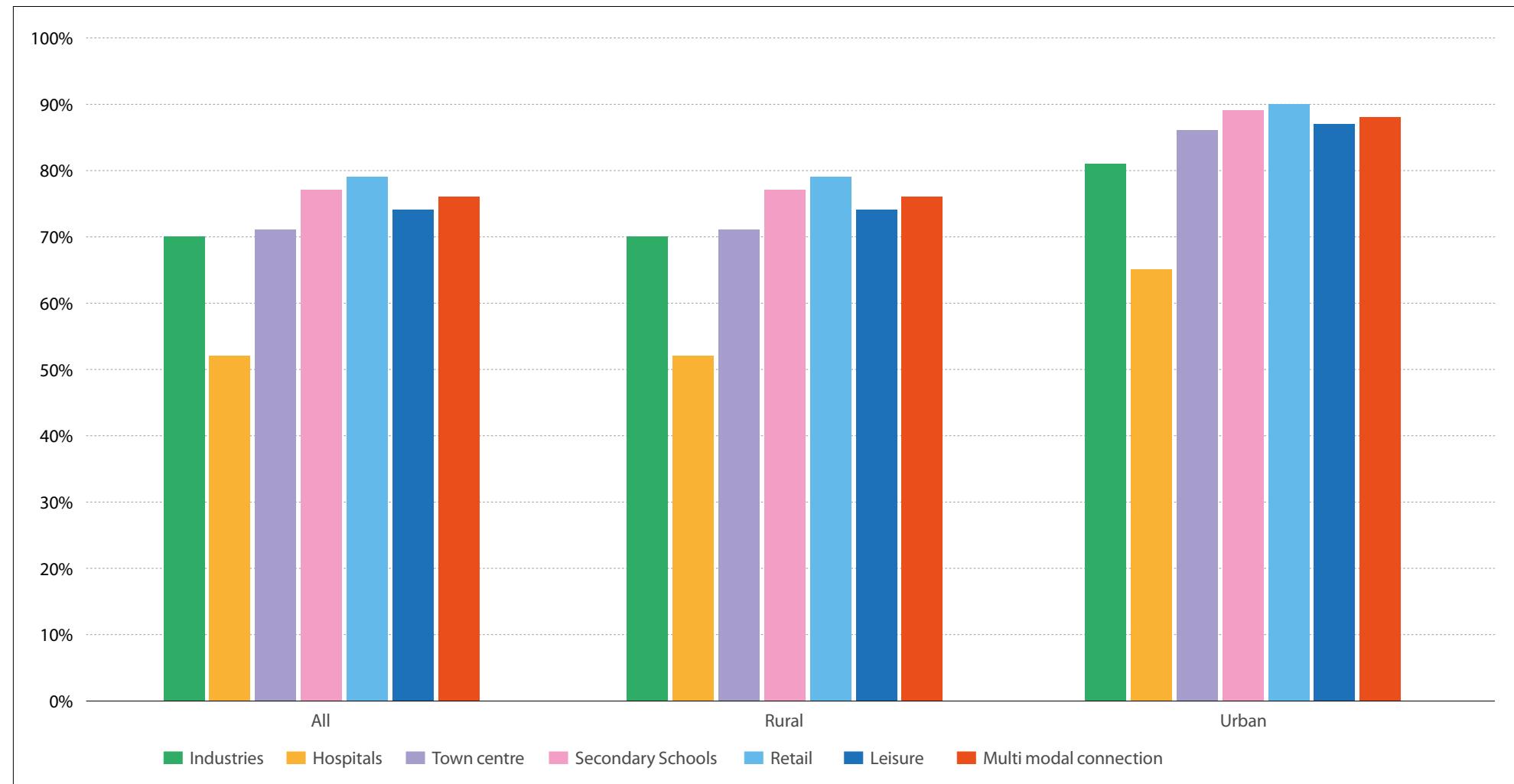
Network Development

of the network have good access to all destination types within 30 minutes, except for access to major hospitals which are identified as having poorer levels of connectivity for both urban and rural areas. Further details are included in Appendix C.

Protecting the current network and supporting services at risk of withdrawal has been the main focus of BSIP funding support in 23/24; this will continue into 24/25. Clearly, while shortcomings remain in certain parts of the county and at particular times of the day, overall accessibility to key destinations supports this approach. Connectivity for rural communities is significantly lower, with fewer than 50% of residents having access to the same destination types within the same journey parameters.

Unsurprisingly, connectivity for all areas diminishes at evenings and weekends. Providing sustainable solutions at these times is a challenge. It is also clear that access to local hospitals is particularly problematic for both urban and rural communities. While this can be partly explained by increasingly centralised provision, this will be a focus of future development should funding become available.

Although not included in connectivity assessments, the Community Transport Sector and KCC's Kent Karrier (Dial-a-Ride) services often meet more localised transport needs not covered by bus, rail or taxi services. Kent Karrier provides door-to-door transport for people with mobility issues or who live more than 500m from a bus stop. It operates across the county and in the year to March 2020 accounted for over 13,000 passenger journeys.

Since 2018 and up to receipt of BSIP funding, KCC has awarded approximately £1m of community transport grants which have supported a number of schemes across the county.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Network Development

Network Development and Kent's BSIP

We originally intended to use our BSIP allocation to introduce new services and enhance existing ones, where they could be self-sustaining in the future and provide greater connectivity where we had identified gaps or shortfalls. However, between the funding allocation being announced and actually arriving, it became clear that reduced bus use and revenue and increased costs were undermining the network's sustainability and service continuity more than we could have anticipated. In this period, a very significant number of services were reduced or threatened with complete withdrawal by operators.

To date, we have protected 49 critical services, most enabling children to travel to school, using BSIP and BSIP+ funding. Using the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process a proportion of our 2023/24 allocation has been rolled over to 2024/25 to ensure that these services can continue until March 2025 at least. Without this support, they would not be operating, but the estimated cost, of over £3m per year has exhausted the funding and, therefore, our capacity to significantly improve services more widely.

Community Transport Grant

KCC has built active working relationships with

Community Transport providers since the 2021 BSIP. We developed our Community Transport Toolkit to help organisations understand how to introduce and operate smaller-scale transport schemes. In 2023/24, we used BSIP funding to make grants totalling over £500k to 11 organisations to support projects in their communities, building on the positive work we already carried out before the launch of the NBS. We intend to continue to support this sector which is viewed as having an increasing role in providing for rural communities.

Network Planning Tool

We allocated a smaller proportion of the network funding to secure network planning and accessibility assessment tools. We are using it to complete the DfT Connectivity Assessment Survey, identify shortcomings in the current network and inform our approach to future network planning and the 2025–29 network initiatives identified within this BSIP.

1. Introduction, Context
   & Our Bus Vision

**2. Current offer to Bus
   Passengers**

3. Improvements
   Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals
   for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance
   Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
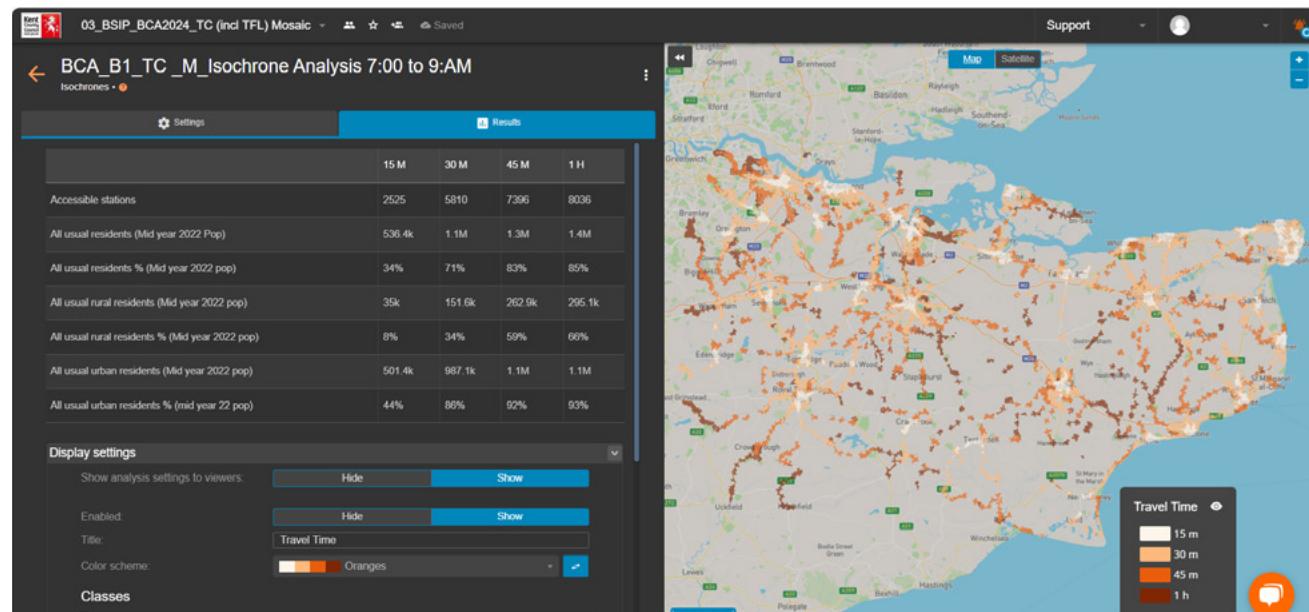
Bus Priority and Highway Management

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Introduction
This section summaries the current bus priority offer in Kent and also considers the important relationship between highway management and bus reliability.

When it comes to bus priority in Kent, KCC as the Local Transport Authority (LTA) has typically looked to provide measures in locations where they provide the biggest benefit to the highest number of people, carefully considering the impact on other travel modes and road users. Investment in a countywide traffic model for Kent has helped to identify areas where there are significant delays for buses and to consider these delays in terms of the number of users affected. We like to see bus priority in locations where operators can offer up return investment on their networks – i.e. through journey time savings or additional journeys on the corridors concerned.

Kent has some very good examples of bus priority, including as part of the award-winning Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme – Fastrack, which uses a range of bus lanes, signal control and other measures to support timely and attractive

service operations. In other cases, small tweaks to the network provide benefits to buses such as transponders to trigger traffic signals and small bus only sections to link two localities. In the National Bus Strategy, the Government noted their wish to see bus priority on strong performing bus corridors, enabling services on those corridors to improve further still with respect to frequency offering and journey time.

When it comes to highway management, in a perfect scenario, bus operators would run every journey on a road network which was free from congestion, which had no maintenance or access issues, and which could provide guarantees with respect to end-to-end travel times. In reality however, all road networks are subject to disruption. They must cater for a range of travel modes, react to variances in demand and be maintained and developed appropriately to ensure they are meeting the needs of a growing population with increasingly dynamic travel requirements.

Highway management is key to bus reliability and Kent's bus operators frequently tell us about the importance of issues such as roadworks management, and road closure numbers in facilitating punctual bus services. Kent looks to

address issues affecting bus reliability through its Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIPs) which seek to tackle strategic issues and identify pinch points on the highway which can be tackled to improve bus reliability. The two-tier authority nature of Kent also means that support from our district and borough council partners is required in areas such as parking enforcement.

Below we look in more detail at the current position with respect to both of these important areas and discuss progress made to date in delivering improvements since Kent's 2021 BSIP.

Existing Challenges and Barriers
Kent is a well-populated county and has many roads in major town and city centres which suffer from traffic congestion at peak times. Whilst bus priority measures can alleviate some of these issues, these locations often have a lack of physical space to deliver the necessary improvements, particularly in a way which considers the requirements of other road users appropriately. Bus priority schemes often have to compete or work with other sustainable transport schemes such as cycle lanes or active travel initiatives. Lack of physical space also often means that difficult decisions are sometimes required over where to physically install infrastructure.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Bus priority is of course designed to speed up bus journey times and in doing so provide benefit to the hundreds (and often thousands) of bus users who utilise the corridor concerned. There is often a need to balance the benefit provided to these users with the wider impact on overall traffic flow and other road users, which in some cases may be negative.

When considering appropriate bus priority locations, Kent looks to utilise traffic data and operator feedback to identify locations with significant delay for buses, with high levels of bus usage and with high potential for reciprocal benefit. Consideration is then made on whether there is the physical space to progress a scheme and what the overall impact would be on overall traffic flow and other road users.

With respect to highway management, like many LTAs, KCC is faced with a number of issues and barriers when performing its highways function. Predominantly, demand on the network is increasing at a time when there are diminishing resources, ageing assets and increased public expectation. Whilst we strive to ensure resource and attention is deployed in areas where need is greatest, this is not always possible. There are key network pressure points with respect to

congestion which are difficult to address due to external factors, such as the knock-on effects from queues on trunk roads and the motorway network. Much of Kent is also rural in nature meaning physical traffic solutions can be difficult to accommodate.

As development levels remain high in the county in line with national requirements and other initiatives such as broadband upgrades are rolled out, there is significant pressure on KCC to accommodate roadworks to provide key utility linkups to housing and industrial development sites. Whilst KCC strives to co-ordinate roadworks at times when there is least impact on the travelling public, including bus services, the sheer volume of works requested in this respect means not all work can be conducted during off-peak periods. Many emergency works are also outside of the control of KCC and may be undertaken by utility companies directly, with only retrospective notice required in line with current legal requirements. However necessary Streetworks can have a significant impact on bus services, particularly in rural areas where suitable alternative routes are limited.

We recognise that better bus services and increased use of them, particularly through shift

from private vehicles, will help reduce the impact of these challenges.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary

Feedback gathered through our engagement activity in 2021 highlighted that one of the most important factors for passengers when using the bus is the reliability and punctuality of services. Both bus priority measures and highway management can have a major impact on these issues, impacting heavily on end-to-end journey times and the extent to which buses are impacted by wider congestion.

Figure 10. Percentage of respondents who put this in their top three priorities for buses.

Quicker journey times and more bus priority measures
21%

Better information that's easier to access
21%

Better waiting facilities with improved accessibility for passengers such as raised kerbs with better wheelchair access
18%

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Whilst data shows that the main priority for passengers is the availability and frequency of services themselves, there is also specific reference to these features in feedback, particularly with reference to bus priority. Specific comments included:

"It's making sure that bus priority is first and foremost in transport planning. People aren't going to just wake up one day and decide to travel by bus."

"What's the point if buses have to sit in the same traffic jams as cars? Why would people travel by bus if the bus is there sitting next to them in a jam, there's no benefit."

Bus operators have told us that the provision of a predictable, accessible and efficient highway network is vital if they are to offer reliable and punctual services. Reliability can be impacted by traffic levels on the highway, by pinch points on the network preventing efficient bus access (e.g. buses blocked by parked vehicles) and by how the network is managed during highway incidents. Of course, reliability also requires key attention from operators themselves with respect

to ensuring appropriate resourcing, that vehicles are maintained to a high standard and that timetables are planned and managed efficiently.

Highlighting this, in the 2021 BSIP, 61% of operators ranked it in their top five priorities.

Passengers want to be able to make plans with confidence that the service will turn up on time and arrive at its destination at the time advertised. 38% of respondents rated reliability in the top three areas which would make bus travel easier and more attractive for them. This is a theme that is mirrored in wider national studies, such as research conducted by the independent watchdog for transport users, Transport Focus.

The importance of reliability was also clear from Kent's 2023 BSIP passenger satisfaction survey.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Bus Priority
As noted earlier in this section, KCC recognises the importance of bus priority measures in speeding up journey times for bus, and supports the principles set out within the National Bus Strategy. Effective bus priority, if delivered successfully, can reduce delays significantly and result in quicker journey times in comparison to other transport modes. The knock-on effect of improved journey times may also allow bus operators to deliver higher frequencies or other benefits to services, meeting a number of cross-cutting objectives.

Page 242

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Whilst measures are often difficult or impossible to deliver due to physical road space and the extent of impacts on wider traffic levels, Kent is proud to have some strong examples of bus priority across the county. Measures in use at a number of locations include bus lanes, traffic signal control, priority measures at junctions and segregation.

Some examples of key bus priority infrastructure in Kent include:
- Fastrack (multiple locations in Dartford and Gravesend)
- Canterbury A28 & Town Centre
- Ashford, A28 Canterbury Road
- Tunbridge Wells, A26
- Maidstone A20 & Sutton Road

Kent's 2021 BSIP noted that in line with guidance set out in the National Bus Strategy, we wanted to see further bus priority schemes introduced across the county and wanted to see them delivered in areas which provided significant benefit to bus journey times. We noted that we wanted schemes delivered in areas where operators could offer reciprocal benefits in return, such as frequency enhancements or increased hours of operation.

In order to help inform potential locations for bus priority, we utilised the Kent County Traffic model to identify key congestion locations on the network which also have the highest number of bus movements. This identified a number of corridors of interest. Since 2021 further work has refined this list further and as of 2024 KCC is exploring:
- Dartford – East Hill
- Chalk – Gravesend Town Centre
- Swanscombe to Horns Cross
- Canterbury – Sturry
- Ashford Town Centre
- Tonbridge Vale - Tonbridge – Southborough
- Maidstone to Sandling
- Maidstone to Loose Road

The above is in addition to schemes already in progress using BSIP funding.

We then conducted some analysis work to review these findings to assess opportunities for delivery.

Further discussions with operators and the analysis of existing patronage data also highlighted two further corridors of interest, on the Maidstone Town Centre to Wheatsheaf corridor and along the loop service alignment in Thanet. In Kent's 2021 BSIP we noted that a

potential scheme involving the LOOP corridor was of particular interest due to its principles being in close alignment with the Government's Superbus initiative. The Superbus initiative is based on taking high performing routes and developing them further in conjunction with operators, through a combination of infrastructure improvements, frequency enhancements and fares initiatives combined with good marketing.

A map of BSIP 1 corridors and other corridors of interest is provided in Appendix C.

In Kent's 2021 BSIP, we also noted that should the circumstances be right and if funding was to become available, that KCC was keen to look at opportunities to support Fastrack further, in order to improve end to end priority on both the existing Kent Thameside Fastrack initiative and the new Dover Fastrack project.

Whilst Kent did not receive its full funding ask through the BSIP process, Kent's BSIP award for 2023/24 is facilitating the progression of three bus priority schemes across the county, all of which are currently progressing through the delivery process as part of an accelerated BSIP programme agreed with the DfT.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Dartford – Rennie Drive Bus Priority Scheme.
The Rennie Drive bus priority scheme was chosen due to its alignment with the ambition to improve end to end priority on Fastrack services and due to its deliverability in line with Government requirements. The scheme provides significant benefit to the Fastrack service in Kent Thameside.

Improvements include optimisation of the layout and traffic signals at the junction, which will save Fastrack services an average two minutes of journey time and reduce the impact of congestion at the Dartford crossing. Changes as part of the scheme include:
• allowing Fastrack buses to travel along Rennie Drive in both directions.
• creating a new southbound bus lane within Rennie Drive up to the Fastrack roundabout.
• adjusting footway and cycleway points to improve active travel and cycle use.

Works officially commenced on Monday 4 March 2024 for a 33-week construction period. The scheme will unlock re-investment from Fastrack using resources saved due to the scheme into the provision of an enhanced service between Ebbsfleet Garden City and Gravesend town centre.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Page 245

Dover – Pencester Road Bus Priority Scheme

The Pencester Bus priority scheme was selected due to its ability to unlock direct public transport access to Dover Town Centre from/to Dover Priory station and the Port of Dover.

The scheme involves the construction of a dedicated bus and cycle only contraflow lane will along the western side of Pencester Road as well as new traffic signals.

The scheme will enable:
- The Dover Fastrack Bus Rapid Transit system to seamlessly serve Dover Priority Station
- Significantly improved public transport travel to/from Dover Eastern Docks by creating an additional bus link between Dover Priory Rail Station and the Dover Port via Pencester Road. This is a significant operator-provided reciprocal benefit.

Public consultation occurred during winter 2023 and it is anticipated that scheme construction will commence in summer 2024.

Thanet – Superbus Scheme

The Thanet Superbus scheme targets one of the most popular bus services in Kent and was selected due to the forecasted positive impacts

Figure 11. Thanet Loop Scheme – Location of Sites
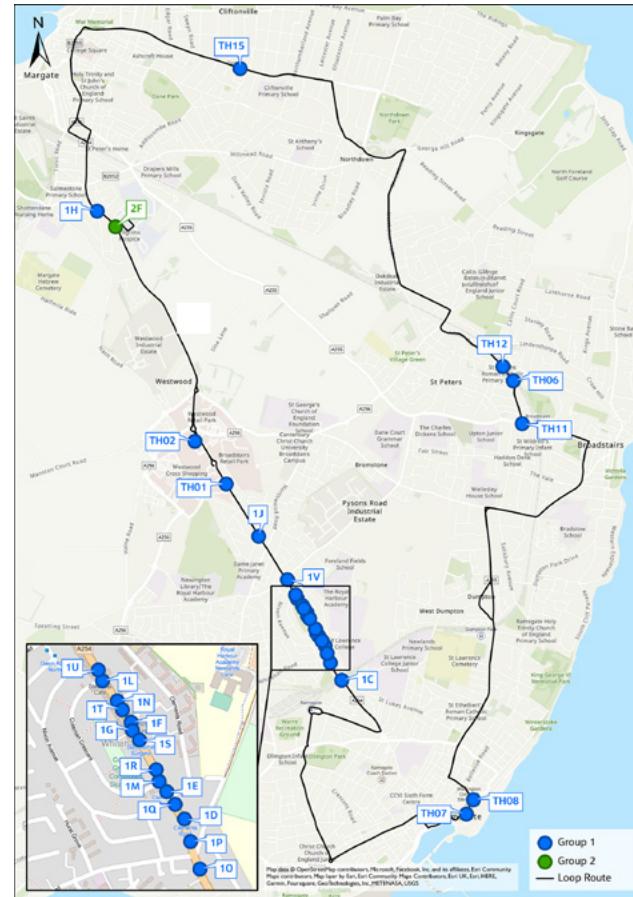
on bus reliability as well as the reciprocal benefits offered by the bus operator in response to the improvements in journey times. The scheme introduces a package of interventions to improve bus journey times and reliability for the Thanet Loop bus service which connects key locations in Ramsgate, Margate, and Broadstairs.

The scheme's design phase started in April 2023 and the delivery of the scheme is split into two distinct delivery phases:

- Phase 1 includes road lining and bus build outs to give better bus priority. Delivery of this element commenced in May 2024 with anticipated completion by summer 2024.
- Phase 2 includes the provision of a new bus lane within the vicinity of the QEQM hospital. It is intended to start public consultation on this element of the scheme in summer 2024, following the completion of full detailed design and the necessary utility works.

The scheme will necessitate the strong enforcement of introduced parking restrictions and as such KCC are working closely with Thanet District Council to enable this as far as possible. The bus operator is reinvesting in the Loop service with a significantly increased bus

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

frequency, starting from June 2024. The journey time saving will be closely monitored through Kent's EP.

KCC also secured further BSIP funding in 2023/24 to conduct feasibility works for future potential bus priority schemes across the county. This work is ongoing with the corridor list produced above providing a key basis for scheme identification, alongside operator feedback through Kent's Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP) meetings. One such scheme includes the Downs Road junction in Canterbury, where improvements are being investigated which would allow buses to turn right onto St Stephen's Hill. The delivery of this scheme would facilitate improvements to the bus network in the area including frequency enhancements.

Highway Management

As part of its function as Local Transport Authority (LTA), KCC has a key role in balancing the demands of all road users, with a view to ensuring Kent's Road network works for all of its residents. The network seeks to enable safe and reliable journeys and whilst doing so looks to support social and economic prosperity. It must not only facilitate public transport services and the private motorist, but also the transport of services essential to health and wellbeing, including emergency services, medical services, and food transportation. The network needs to support the delivery of a carbon neutral system, create sustainable, resilient and accessible places, make transport healthier and grow the economy.

Kent's highway network is made up of a range of assets including approximately 250,000 roadside drains, 120,000 streetlights, 1,500 bridges, 700 sets of traffic lights, two tunnels and over 6,000 bus stops. However, Kent's biggest highway assets, in terms of size and value, are its 5,400 miles of roads and 3,900 miles of footway. The local highway network is the most valuable asset we own in Kent – a like-for-like replacement of which would cost approximately £19.8bn – one of the largest in England.

As a sustainable and important travel mode, buses are a key consideration for KCC when it comes to its network management. We know there is key relationship between levels of bus uptake and the reliability of bus journeys, which must provide confidence and consistency to the end user as far as possible to encourage continued or new use. Reliable bus services require well managed and accessible highway networks. Market engagement activity

Page 246

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

conducted in preparation for Kent's 2021 BSIP established that reliability and punctuality is a key issue for both operators and passengers. The Confederation for Passenger Transport (CPT) have also re-iterated the importance of bus speeds in taking the role of the bus forwards as part of their 2024 manifestos.

Kent has a focus on supporting growth by delivering major projects and traffic schemes and managing development. KCC is responsible for the management and maintenance of highway assets (excluding motorways and trunk roads which are managed by Highways England) and has an obligation to promote and improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the county. This is achieved through the implementation of local transport schemes which support these long- term objectives.

In order to deliver on the above, KCC has a number of strategic and operational plans in place across its Highways and Transportation division. At the forefront of these is Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4): Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031, with LTP5 in development. Sitting alongside the LTP are a number of more detailed plans and strategies such as the Highways Asset Management Plan

2022 – 2026, Kent's Active Travel Strategy and the Freight Action Plan.

KCC's highways activity is delivered through two main service areas, Highway Operations and Transportation. Highway Operations inspect, repair and maintain Kent's highways to keep them safe and to provide the best possible service to Kent's residents, visitors and businesses. The service co-ordinates activity on the highway to minimise disruption to road users (including bus services) and facilitate utility services. There is an important balance required to support asset management principles, local operational/service needs and available resource. Key activity related to bus services includes:

- Reacting to reports from bus operators (directly or via KCC's fault reporting tool) with respect to faults or issues on the highway network
- An experienced and long-standing technical officer dedicated to the identification and rectification of vegetation issues on bus routes
- Roadworks notification processes in place to inform bus operators of upcoming road closures or disruption as far as possible (NB this is not always possible for emergency works)
- Permit/Lane Rental scheme for roadworks which seeks to manage access to the road network to limit impacts on buses and other transport modes.

- The Transportation service plans and improves the highway network to help the Kent economy grow, and to ensure that it is as safe and efficient as possible. Key activity related to bus services includes:
- Liaison with the KCC Public Transport department to inform responses to planning developments, requesting contributions for bus initiatives where appropriate
- Through Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIPs), work with bus operators and other partners to introduce traffic schemes to benefit bus passage e.g. lining, corner protection etc.
- Management of bus signal priority, e.g. on Fastrack BRT scheme and provision of live traffic and travel information on KCC's Traffic and Travel web pages. Provision of a Kent Design Guide setting minimum standards for developers and other scheme promoters with respect to works which affect the highway. Bus stop guidance and bus accessibility requirements are incorporated in the latest iteration of the guide.

KCC is working within resource limitations with respect to funding and personnel when delivering the above. At the same time, feedback from the county's bus operators tells us that

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

this is a vital area from their perspective in the management and potential growth of their networks.

In Kent's 2021 BSIP, it was noted that we wanted to build on the positive relationships already in place with operators and, should BSIP funding be secured, deliver a number of interventions to support areas such as bus reliability pinch points on the highway, ANPR enforcement of bus gates, information on roadworks, enforcement on the highway and accessibility for buses within new developments.

Kent has cemented its commitment in many of these areas since 2021 both through EP Scheme commitments and use of BSIP funding. Through Kent's EP Schemes we have included commitments to use KCC's "new technical approvals process and the Kent Design Guide to ensure that new and upgraded highway schemes fully consider buses with respect to access and design" and for all highways schemes to look to "include improvements which would enhance reliability, service levels and accessibility and incorporate for bus, as funding permits."

KCC has also included EP commitments and related 2023/24 funded BSIP initiatives in

a number of key areas linked to highways management including:

Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIPs) & Related Highways Interventions

In April 2022 we introduced an EP Scheme commitment to re-launch Kent's Punctuality Improvement Partnerships (PIPs) and to subsequently use them to deliver highways improvements which tackle bus reliability issues. KCC has since allocated £625k of 2023/24 BSIP funding to deliver these improvements and is continuing to progress this improvement programme across the county.

Kent's PIPs are a positive forum for managing open communication between Kent's bus operators and KCC officers within Highways and Transportation. The intention of the relaunch was to reinvigorate this line of communication and re-enforce efforts to work jointly for the same outcomes. Through updating on recent changes, identifying problem locations and discussing current challenges, we've been able to find and suggest solutions and acknowledge where improvement may be beneficial. In Spring 2023, we approached operators to request they identify locations where bus journey times were being negatively impacted by congestion, by pinch

points on the highway or by issues such as lengthy loading/alighting times at bus stops.

Officers received nearly 100 locations where problems had been identified following this engagement. A lengthy shortlisting process was carried out to ensure both KCC were the correct authority to manage the concern and that it was feasible to carry out any changes to improve matters. It should be noted that some locations are significantly constrained by the built environment, but full assessments were carried out at every location.

Page 248

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

We are currently progressing with 22 sites for design and construction with some works completed. At Silver Hill Road in Ashford, an extension of the double yellow lines has been completed to allow for the free movement of the bus to pass unobstructed. Examples of other locations currently under progression are as follows:
- Installation of bus stop markings and raised kerbs at Old Tovil Road, Maidstone
- Realignment of kerbing at St Georges Roundabout, Canterbury
- Provision of a bus border kerb at Westgate Court Avenue, Canterbury

Roadworks Management and Information

As noted above, KCC has a duty to carefully manage access to the highway to ensure that:
- reliability of all traffic modes is considered, including buses
- the highway and its related assets are maintained appropriately and safely
- Legal obligations are being met with respect to access by utility companies

We appreciate that our Streetworks teams work hard to ensure our legislative responsibilities are adhered to, as well as ensuring they minimise undue delay where possible. There is a difficult

compromise between ensuring works are safely completed to the best standard the first time and removing obstructive works from the highway as soon as possible. Our PIPs have been invaluable for providing a platform to discuss and explain disruptive works and for operators to clarify the impacts Streetworks cause to bus reliability.

To seek to ensure that the county's operators have up to date and accurate information on road closures and restrictions across the county, KCC is using 2023/24 BSIP funding to invest in the Councils Roadworks Management tool (One. Network) to add the bus integration to dynamically assess the impact of a particular closure and provide direct information to operators along with suggested mitigation (i.e. through diversion routes). The tool also include functionality to produce notices to advise passengers of bus changes.

ANPR Camera Enforcement – Bus Gate Locations

In Kent's 2021 BSIP we also highlighted that Kent wanted to make use of new traffic management legislation (Part 6 of Traffic Management Act 2004) to enforce moving traffic offences where appropriate in order to help with congestion management. KCC has followed through on this

with an EP Scheme Commitment to "use new TMA Part 6 powers to enforce bus gate and bus lanes through ANPR enforcement".

Following the award of BSIP 2023/24 funding in March 2023, KCC is now utilising £450k of BSIP funding to deliver ANPR enforcement at a number of sites across the county. Sites have been identified through engagement with bus operators (through PIPs) and with District and Borough Councils. Since the receipt of BSIP 2023/24 funding, a contract has been finalised to undertake the back-office management function for this activity, with BSIP funding being utilised to fund capital equipment costs at identified sites.

We are currently progressing eight sites in various stages of construction. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Beaver Road, Ashford
- Clive Road, Gravesham
- Greenhithe Station
- Hermitage Park, Maidstone

KCC also had an EP commitment to continue to support buses with respect to soft landscaping issues.

Page 249

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

Fares and Ticketing

This section summarises the current fares and ticketing offering in Kent. In 1986, the Government deregulated almost the entire local bus industry, privatising many bus companies. The result is that bus companies are free to determine the fares set on commercial bus

routes. Fares need to be set at a rate that makes bus travel an attractive prospect compared to other modes of transport, while ensuring they cover operational costs.

Through its work on the BSIP and subsequent surveys, KCC has conducted various public engagement exercises with residents that show bus fares are an important factor when it comes to deciding whether to use public transport. However, Kent's latest sample survey in July 2023 showed higher satisfaction with value for money on buses, no doubt assisted by the government funded £2.00 Fare Cap.

Different ticketing options already exist including commercial operator fares, KCC subsidised tickets and concessionary travel schemes such as the English National Concessionary Fare Scheme (ENCTS) and the Kent 16+ and Kent Travel Saver schemes.

In addition to these fares, Kent bus passengers can benefit from the Discovery Ticket, which allows unlimited daily travel on services for most operators across the South East region. As of February 2024, an adult ticket for the scheme costs £10.00 (£8.00 for children and £20.00 for a family ticket).

Below we look in more detail at the different types of bus fares and tickets available in Kent and outline the initiative areas that were contained in our original BSIP document.

Existing challenges and barriers
There are a number of barriers when it comes to bus fares with the main one being the deregulation of the industry. Legislation restricts the ability of LTAs to be prescriptive on individual bus fares, although there are now mechanisms for some types of fare under the Enhanced Partnership schemes. From an economic perspective, the increased operating costs in respect of fuel, insurance and driver wages have to be covered. This pushes fares in an upward direction and makes initiatives to reduce costs for passengers more difficult to achieve and afford.

The challenge that the industry faces is that in order to support modal shift, bus fares need to be attractive when compared to town centre or other parking charges. In many parts of Kent, we have seen these decreasing and in fact at some out-of-town destinations there are no parking charges at all. This makes it difficult for the bus to compete on cost.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

Finally, there remains a proportion of the bus network in Kent that is provided by operators who do not have sophisticated ticket machines or back-office functions supporting smart or contactless initiatives. This is something that we are addressing through the BSIP.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary

Feedback gathered through our public engagement and stakeholder activity in 2021 told us that one of the most important factors for passengers when using the bus is the cost of fares. In total 41% of respondents to the public engagement selected lower fares and different payment options as one of their top three priorities, with 57% of stakeholders putting the same category as their top priority. The lack of ticket flexibility was also a concern raised through this engagement.

Some comments received in the public engagement regarding bus fares are detailed below:

"Ultimately, they need to be about getting people from A to B, affordably regularly, easily, without adding to

impairment or issues that people have, and not for profit. Kent is exceptionally expensive, and it has to change".

"Bus tickets that allow for wider travel within one payment".

"The price must be lower. It is absolutely criminal how expensive it is compared to a London bus for example. Over £5 for a return to town which is a mile away is absolutely criminal".

"It needs to be regular and reliable 95% of the time. Cost needs to be kept to a minimum to tempt people out of their cars".

"I run a car. For me to use the bus it would be cost and convenience – £1.50 all journeys, any day, any way".

The introduction of the Government's £2.00 fare cap has seen this aspect of customer perception improve. Kent's further sample survey carried out in July 2023 showed an improved value for money satisfaction as a result. However, the

future of the fare cap beyond December 2024 is currently unknown and if the scheme is not continued, this will not be popular with those that are benefiting from it now, particularly if fares have to return to commercial levels.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Commercial bus fares

Bus operators in Kent set their own bus fares, normally using a graduated fare scale, with return and promotional fares often not available at peak times. The deregulated nature of the bus market means that operators have a range of different approaches to fare levels and structures, resulting in disparate and sometimes expensive offerings for passengers, with limited examples of multi-operator ticketing initiatives.

A majority of commercial bus routes in Kent are run by bus operators who are taking part in the Government's Bus Fare Cap Grant which subsidises single fares at a cap of £2.00. This scheme is due to run until the end of December 2024, but it is not known whether any scheme will continue after that date. The scheme does not generally include bus routes that are primarily for home to school journeys and the operators who are not taking part in the scheme are mainly from the West Kent EP area.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

One effect of the fare cap has been to encourage some bus users to trade back to single fares from previous return and period ticket purchases. This has affected the potential effectiveness of some previously intended lower fare proposals whilst the cap is in place as the fare cap has such an impact on operator fare scales.

Buying a weekly, monthly or annual season ticket from a bus company will reduce and simplify the cost for regular bus passengers in most instances. Many operators offer multi- journey or zonal tickets that also offer greater flexibility and better value. There are very limited examples of inter-availability and acceptance of commercial tickets between operators.

KCC-supported bus fares
As KCC cannot compete with commercially provided buses, the regulations essentially demand that fares on KCC supported bus routes are set at the same or very similar levels to that of the commercial services. All KCC tendered bus services make season tickets available and KCC make it a condition of contract that the operator of the service accept valid return and multi-journey tickets sold on other operator services over common sections. However, it is fair to say that with subsidised buses forming a minority of

the overall network, KCC's approach to tendered fares has little influence on the overall offering to the passenger.

ENCTS/Disabled persons bus pass (including companion passes)
The scheme is designed to remove 'cost of travel' as a barrier for significant numbers of passengers travelling off peak, with no charge to the user either for the pass or on-bus. KCC has a statutory duty to provide passes for free bus travel for older and disabled people who qualify under the regulations of the scheme. In addition to those that have a statutory entitlement to the pass, on a discretionary basis, KCC make ENCTS passes available for companions where the disabled passholder requires assistance to travel by bus.

ENCTS entitles the passholder to free travel on any registered local bus service in England during the operational hours of the scheme, 9:30am-11:00pm on normal weekdays (Monday to Friday) and anytime on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Usage of the passes is now significantly lower compared to passenger numbers before the pandemic. In view of this, a promotion took place in August 2023 to offer longer days out by offering passholders free travel before 09.30.

KCC Travel Savers
KCC's Travel Saver schemes offer free-at-the-point-of-use transport for passholders. To be eligible for a pass, applicants must live in Kent, be aged between 11 and 19 and attend some form of full-time learning. The pass offers free transport to and from school or college and includes free evening and weekend travel for those of further education age. Applicants must pay for their pass, but KCC contributes around £5.7m per year to subsidise the scheme which is estimated to reduce the cost of bus travel for the passholder by around half over the course of an academic year. In 2023/24, BSIP funding has been used to freeze the cost of the passes at a time where family budgets have been under severe pressure. KCC remains positive about encouraging students to travel to school by bus through schemes like the KTS but must be conscious that the costs of doing so are now amongst the biggest discretionary spends anywhere in the council.

PlusBus
The PlusBus scheme is a rail initiative whereby a cheap travelcard can be purchased with a train ticket. The travelcard gives users unlimited bus travel around the town or city where they start and/or end their rail journey and is accepted on most bus services in Kent. As well as single and

Page 252

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

return trips, season ticket add-ons are available. There are no peak period restrictions to the scheme.

Fares and Ticketing – Kent's BSIP
As detailed above, there is a lot of positive work already taking place in Kent with respect to bus fares and ticketing. However, in our 2021 BSIP we identified that there was more that could be done, and we are pleased that funding for 2023/24 enabled a number of fares and ticketing initiatives to be introduced in the county, with more planned for 2024/25. This combined with further unfunded initiatives within our EPs has meant some real positive developments have been made. KCC and Kent's bus operators continue to remain excited about the opportunities that the National Bus Strategy is providing and identify that locally, there remain a number of areas where the offer could be improved further should funding permit.

Firstly, we would like to see the introduction of a genuine and fully comprehensive multi-operator scheme covering the whole county. KCC believes that with this sort of scheme that we can influence fares and create a simple, easy to understand, easy to access and lower cost range of ticketing options for the passenger.

When it comes to fares, we want to see more flexible options, such as the flexible bus tickets being offered by Stagecoach in the east of the county where passengers can buy a bundle of five or ten tickets that can be used over a 12-month period with costs generally around 30% lower than average daily fares. We understand working patterns have changed in recent times and we believe bus ticketing should reflect this.

As part of our 2024/25 BSIP initiative programme we are working on rolling out an ETM grant scheme, offering small and medium operators the chance to bid for funding to upgrade ticket machines and back-office functionality. This initiative will now allow technology innovations such as contactless payments for fares, barcode readers and 'tap on tap off' ticketing, to complement the acceptance of cash fares, thus allowing a genuine multi-operator ticketing scheme, making available a range of flexible ticketing options at consistent and better value cost. These would be purchasable through a range of mechanisms including cashless and ticketless solutions.

To deliver the above, and based on feedback received, we developed a range of initiatives in 2021. Some are being delivered without funding

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

from the National Bus Strategy, but many do require financial support, either to implement or to subsidise future fares schemes.

Multi-operator Ticketing and On-bus ticket machines

There is a large number of bus operators in Kent providing both commercially operated and contracted services. This results in the need for many passengers to want to use the services of more than one company. Where routes are contracted, the Council requires operators to accept all tickets and where children and young people hold Kent Travel Saver passes, these can be used on all operators. However, where services are commercially operated, there is not normally interavailability of ticket acceptance, resulting in less flexibility for passengers or the need to pay for more than one product to make many journeys.

KCC are therefore continuing to work with local bus operators to introduce multi-operator bus ticketing schemes, where possible. This will require negotiation with operators and the introduction of fare reimbursement rates for journeys made that must be fair for all operators.

A trial scheme was implemented in Swale in 2023 to maintain through travel opportunities when a through service was discontinued. This scheme was limited with only two bus operators involved and using low-tech solutions. However, these would not be scalable to a county-wide solution and it is not sensible to create a new back office in Kent in view of the wider developments now happening. Therefore, we intend to adopt the nationwide Project Coral back office for EMV bank cards when it is introduced, possible late in 2024, and will require tap on/tap off readers to be fitted to all buses in Kent to be ready for this introduction. We will be using BSIP funding to help to bring SME operators up to the necessary standards to be able to offer ticketing using barcode readers and for tap on/tap off transactions with an exit reader, with the aim of ensuring they are fitted on all buses in Kent by the introduction date and further details of this are given in Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025*.

Outside other initiatives, KCC are using the EP process to gain agreement from operators to accept tickets sold on any service where they run on a common section of route, commencing with return tickets. This is a simple solution that would remove complexity for the passenger and increase the perceived value of tickets.

11-18 Years Travel

The established system of grammar and faith schools in Kent results in a large degree of parental school choice resulting in high demands for sometimes lengthy home to school transport journeys. The Kent Travel Saver scheme has been running for many years where the purchase of an annual pass then grants free travel on the bus network during school hours, primarily for the home to school movement. The scheme is popular, with 27,000 passes issued for this school year, and is aimed at positively encouraging the use of the bus instead of private cars, thus providing a greener transport solution and reducing road congestion at peak period travel points. The school journeys are a vital source of income for most bus operators in Kent and contribute greatly to the sustainability of many bus services.

Significant BSIP funding has been used in 2023/24 to implement a price freeze for the passes to support parents and students with the costs of bus travel through a time of increasing costs of living. The scheme covers two age groups, those aged 11-16 who are of school age and young adults of 16-18 who travel for both further education and employment reasons.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

Whilst the annual pass prices are still substantially below the level that would be required on a purely commercial basis, pressures on council budgets had resulted in a budget decision to implement a price rise for the pass for the 2023/24 scheme year. This would have adversely affected bus usage, particularly by the school age group and resulted in more cars on the road. Therefore, significant BSIP funding of £2.5m is being used up to July 2024 to implement a price freeze for the passes to support the 27,000 parents and students with the costs of bus travel through a time of increasing costs of living.
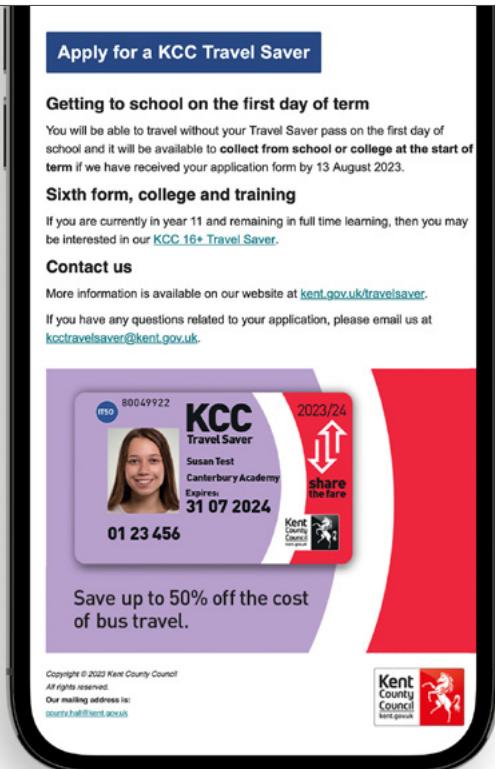
The scheme was backed up this year by a targeted promotion to encourage travel to school on the bus network.

Mobility-as-a-Service
Mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) benefits both the transport network and the user, allowing personalised journeys for the passenger (or close to) across different transport modes, such as bus, rail, demand responsive transport and bike hire. However, journey costs cannot simply

be aggregated. By having a simplified and cost-effective transport solution, passenger share will increase and offset the individual fare concessions needed for each segment of the overall journey. Through an unbiased authority-led scheme, optimised and well-occupied bus routes offer users economy of scale whilst giving participating bus operators a healthy customer base.

BSIP funding is being used to implement a MaaS scheme in Kent Thameside in 2024/25 (see *Chapter 3 – Improvements Programme to 2025*) to complement the Fastrack service upgrade. Our aim is to make MaaS a viable alternative to private car use.

Promoting the Bus
KCC are keen to continue to work with commercial operators to support fares and ticketing promotions in their areas. We are keen to support the introduction of flexible ticketing to compliment changing working patterns (e.g. specified number of journey tickets over a designated time period) or allowing children to travel at a much-reduced rate or for free with a paying adult. Specifically, we are keen to work closely with the local branch of the Department for Work and Pensions to develop fares initiatives that would support job seekers in accessing employment.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

Four promotions were implemented in 2023, utilising £500k of 2023/24 BSIP funding to boost bus passenger numbers and aimed at segments of the bus market which accounted for the areas where reductions in passenger numbers were of most concern. The aim was to both encourage lapsed users to try the bus again and to tempt potential new users to try the bus network, with the expectation that some would return after the promotions ended:

Firstly, a **Free Bus Weekend** was held in June to boost tourism trips, primarily on Kent's comprehensive inter urban bus network. We tied in with the Big Weekend which was promoted by Visit Kent, offering free tickets to venues and attractions in the County. However, the promotion was marketed to a wider audience throughout Kent and Medway for travel on any bus service, not just those to Big Weekend venues. Free travel was offered on both the Saturday and Sunday from first bus until 20.00. After this time, visitor trips have largely been taken and previous experience of free travel on late evening buses had seen cases of unacceptable passenger behaviour. When compared to a normal Summer weekend, the promotion showed an uplift of 33.7%. This represented an increase of 27.6% on the Saturday and 48.4% on the Sunday. Visit Kent asked

their competition participants how they travelled to the venue that they chose, and this showed an increase in the percentage of bus usage, compared to previous years of their scheme.

During the Summer school holidays, we ran two further promotions. The first was named **Bus About Kent** and was targeted at low-income families for travel in the holiday period. Qualifying families were contacted through the Kent Education free school meal dataset to offer the tickets which were then downloaded to mobile phones. Travel needed to be made as a family group, rather than by individual passengers. Despite the use of security measures that could be set up in a short timescale, some cases of fraudulent travel were detected. Nevertheless, an impressive 123,000 family trips were made on this scheme throughout Kent in the six-week holiday period.

It has been clear from operator data that bus travel by **concessionary pass holders** has been much slower to recover since Covid 19 than the overall average bus passengers, despite free travel still being offered. Some advertising to elderly and disabled passholders had already taken place both locally by bus operators and nationally by Government. The promotion sought to widen the available travel day by offering a pre-09.30 free

travel offer on Mondays to Fridays during August to encourage days out at a time of year when buses are generally not as busy without the home to school travel. The promotion encouraged 63,000 trips on these early bus services in Kent.

It is not yet clear which of these four offers has had the greater lasting effect. However, bus patronage continued to increase as 2023 progressed and it is thought that these promotions helped to achieve this trend.

Whilst the 2023 programme of promotions targeted individual market sectors, we are proposing to move to a wider and more general but harder hitting promotion in 2024 but once again aimed at increasing usage of the bus network in Kent.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

This section summarises the current waiting and interchange offer at bus stops in Kent.

Whilst service standards (punctuality, frequency, running days etc.) are vital in encouraging high levels of bus usage, other factors also contribute to the overall travel experience and subsequent passenger uptake levels. bus stop facilities, for example, can have a significant influence on passenger perception. Bus stops & interchanges are typically the first and last point of contact passengers have with the bus network when undertaking their journeys, meaning they can have a high impact on the whole user experience. Boarding or alighting in an area with a dry and safe waiting environment, strong integration, appropriate physical accessibility features, up to date travel information and a high standard of pole, flag and timetable case is likely to be the first step to a positive overall travel experience. In contrast, using a stop which is in a bad state of repair, with no travel information and with physical access constraints is likely to contribute to a negative overall experience or in some cases prevent the use of services at all.

Whilst the rural nature of much of Kent sometimes makes infrastructure provision a challenge, KCC has always aspired to provide high quality bus stops to support Kent's bus services. KCC has also sought to work hard with its partners, including district councils, parish councils, bus operators and Southeastern rail to improve overall bus hub and transport interchange facilities at locations across the county.

Below we look in more detail at the Kent's bus stop offer and discuss progress made to date in delivering improvements since Kent's 2021 BSIP.

Existing challenges and barriers
The rural nature of some towns and villages across Kent can present a challenge when installing and maintaining accessible bus stop infrastructure. Several bus stops in these areas are unmarked or marked in areas that are not pedestrianised, and improvements are not possible due to the nature of the highway network.

Whilst KCC works closely with district councils with respect to bus shelters, there is divided responsibility in this area, and this can lead to differing levels of service across the county.

Some councils are not able to allocate as much resource towards public transport as others, and some do not have a bus shelter contract in place. This can cause a different quality of experience in differing areas of the county and is an issue which KCC is continuing to seek to address through our EPs and regular liaison with Borough and District Councils.

KCC continues to be keen to develop the concept of travel hubs in order to improve integration between travel modes and to work towards a seamless journey for passengers. Many of the county's existing interchanges are however in highly built-up areas or in locations where road space has been carefully managed to ensure optimum traffic flow for all modes. As such retrofitting travel hub sites can prove a challenge.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary
Feedback gathered through our engagement activity in 2021 showed that one of the most important factors for passengers when using the bus is the reliability and punctuality of services. Bus stop infrastructure provision can have a major impact on these issues, with the standard of facilities at bus stops impacting on boarding/alighting times. Furthermore, the provision of accurate real-time information screens can

Page 257

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

provide passenger confidence around the timing of their journey.

Providing a high-quality bus service to the people of Kent is also reliant on the co-operation of developers and planners. Like many counties, Kent has a number of upcoming housing developments following strategies outlined by district and borough councils. Ensuring developers and planners are fully educated on the importance of sustainable bus stop infrastructure is essential to future-proof the network in Kent and provide a high-quality service to bus users.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Bus Stops

Kent is currently home to approximately 6,400 physical bus stops, all of which play an important role in facilitating access to the county's public transport network. Many of Kent's bus stops have been in place many years and at a minimum, typically consist of bus stop poles, flags and timetable cases.

In order to ensure compliance with the Equalities Act 2010, many locations also include areas of hard standing, raised/dropped kerbing and bus stop clearway markings. These measures ensure
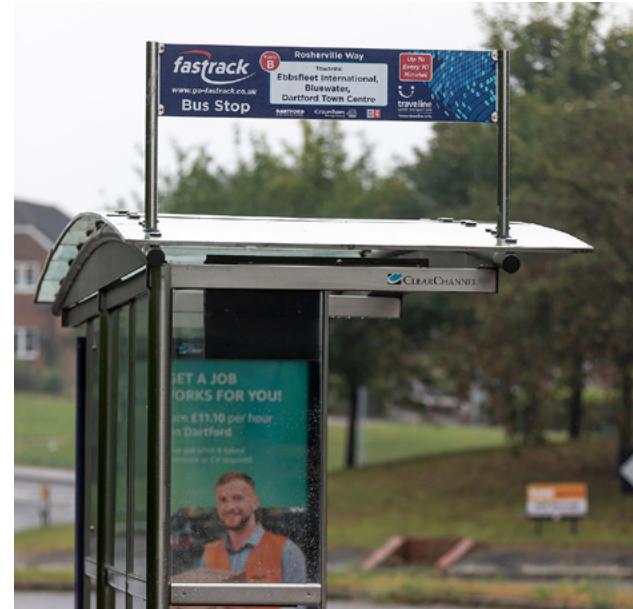
that those with mobility issues or disabilities are able to reach bus stop locations easily, can wait for the bus in comfort and are subsequently able to board/alight vehicles safely. These facilities are provided and maintained by KCC. Kent also has standard and recognisable branding on its bus stop flags to easily indicate approved boarding/alighting points for passengers and works closely with bus operators to introduce local branding for particular services where appropriate, e.g. a number of commercial Stagecoach routes in the east of the county.

KCC is committed to the continuous upkeep and improvement of its bus stop assets. We currently spend a significant amount on Bus Stop Infrastructure & Information Management (BSIIM) contracts that ensure that stops are kept in good order through the repair and replacement of parts and regular cleaning. In addition, through the allocation of internal funding, KCC also has a long history of completing upgrade works on its existing assets, through for instance upgrading flag types, changing poles or adding additional accessibility features and branding. Some examples over previous years have included:

- An initiative to replace all concrete bus stop poles in the county to more modern and safer alternatives
- Flag upgrades on the Fastrack route in Kent Thameside to deliver a consistent and recognisable brand throughout the service
- The introduction of new bus stops within a number of new developments to support service extensions.

In order to react to changes on Kent's bus network and to travel need, KCC also actively considers opportunities for new bus stop locations. Potential new locations are typically identified through liaison with operators, through

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision
2. Current offer to Bus Passengers
3. Improvements Programme to 2025
4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond
5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting
6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

our bus inspectors and through requests from members of the public.

KCC subsequently delivers all parts of the delivery process including safety assessments, public consultation with directly affected properties and subsequent installation. KCC hosts a dedicated email address to provide an appropriate means for operators, members of the public and other stakeholders to request new stops, changes to existing stops and other issues and seeks to react to these as budgets permit. KCC also has a dedicated online form where requests for new or improvements to existing bus stops can be requested.

In Kent's 2021 BSIP, we noted that we would like to see a gradual improvement to all of Kent's bus stop assets and were excited about the opportunity the NBS process could bring to achieve this. We noted that with significant external funding we wanted to see upgraded facilities across a number of Kent's stops, such as high-quality flags with KCC's most recent branding, high levels of accessibility and up to date information in timetable cases at all stops.

Like the majority of LTAs, KCC did not receive its full BSIP funding request in 2021 and as such,

the ability to roll out improvements to stops on a wide scale has been limited. However, KCC has continued to react to customer requests for improvements on a case-by-case basis and is also utilising some of its 2023/24 BSIP funding to deliver stop improvements which improve bus stop reliability as part of its bus highway interventions initiative. KCC has also demonstrated the commitment to improving bus stop infrastructure facilities and accessibility as funding permits through some of our EP scheme commitments. These note for instance that KCC will "introduce new bus stops and upgrade existing bus stops (including poles, flags, timetable cases, raised/dropped kerbing, clearways) to support the network and passenger/operator requests as funding permits." Alongside a commitment that "when conducting civils work at bus stops, KCC will take the opportunity to bring them up to the latest standards with respect to accessibility where practically possible".

In Kent's 2021 BSIP, the intention was also noted to form a bus stop hierarchy in order to categorise Kent's bus stops to enable prioritisation and investment. It was noted that bus stop locations would be ranked in terms of the number of departures, connection with other services,

nearby service provision etc. KCC subsequently committed to deliver this hierarchy in its EP and this has subsequently been used to identify sites for areas such as Real Time Information (RTI) screen deployment. KCC intends to continue to utilise the hierarchy for future initiatives and as such, has made reference to this in Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond.*

KCC also continues to work with district councils and operators to identify areas of concern with respect to bus standing & driver facilities and has an EP scheme commitment in this respect.

Bus Shelters
Whilst KCC maintains overall responsibility for bus stop locations, Bus shelters in Kent are typically provided through district councils. There are a number of separate contracts held between district councils and shelter providers. Typically, shelter maintenance costs are offset by advertising revenue generated as income for providers. In rural areas, parish and town councils provide and maintain additional shelters for their local areas.

KCC has traditionally supported shelter provision in Kent by offering a popular Rural Shelter Grant to such groups, where match funding is provided

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

for new or upgraded shelters. KCC also works to encourage the use of environmentally friendly, sedum roof shelters. In Kent's 2021 BSIP, we noted that we wanted to explore whether there was a better way to provide and maintain urban bus shelters other than through separate contracts with each borough/district council. This was with a view to driving high standards and consistency across the county. We noted the aspiration for Kent's bus shelters to provide dry and safe waiting environments for passengers, with good visibility robust maintenance and delivering strong environmental benefit where possible. Since 2021, KCC has introduced a commitment within its EP schemes to explore this possibility and conversations through the EP meeting structure are continuing.

An EP commitment was also introduced to offer the annual rural shelter grant scheme as funding permits. The scheme was not run in 2023/24 due to the wider BSIP programme but will return in 2024/25, highlighting Kent's commitment in this area – see Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025*.

KCC does directly manage bus shelters to support the popular Fastrack bus rapid transit scheme and in 2023 this contract was re-tendered and a new supplier appointed. The new contract will provide a series of improvements across the Fastrack network during the lifetime of the contract.

At Stop Innovation & Use of Technology

In Kent's 2021 BSIP, it was noted that KCC wished to embrace the use of existing and emerging technologies to improve the customer experience at Kent's bus stops. Public engagement activity carried out with respect to Kent's BSIP also told us that live at stop public transport information was important to bus users. In reaction to this, KCC established an EP commitment following the publication of its BSIP to "trial new technological solutions at bus stops as funding permits".

2023/24 BSIP funding is being utilised to roll out a number of new Real-Time Information (RTI)

screens and totems at key bus stop locations across Kent. These displays will provide live transport information and be capable of displaying important bus updates for passengers. In 2022, a new bus hub opened in Gravesend town centre, representing £2.5m of investment. The bus hub includes RTI screens and marks the start of the increase of this provision coming to the county in the coming years. A tender exercise was conducted across 2023 for this purpose and screens will start to be rolled out across Kent in summer 2024. Kent's bus stop hierarchy has been utilised to inform locations and feedback has been obtained from bus operators and local district councils on the approach to this prioritisation through Kent's EP meeting structure.

KCC intends to roll out further RTI screens in late 2024 and early 2025 utilising further 2024/25 BSIP funding, subject to its final confirmation. Trials of wider technologies such as solar lighting at bus stops and e-ink at stop timetables are also planned for 2024/25, again using BSIP funding. KCC intend for successful technology trials to be adopted as part of its wider offering of bus stop infrastructure if future funding allows. Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025* provides more information on this area.

1. Introduction, Context
& Our Bus Vision

**2. Current offer to Bus
Passengers**

3. Improvements
Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals
for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance
Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

KCC will also be rolling out QR codes at all marked Kent bus stops during 2024/25, utilising BSIP funding from 2023/24. These codes will provide direct links into the relevant information on the Bus Information Portal.

Interchanges/Travel Hubs

There are 130 identified interchange locations in Kent which support public transport network integration and bus operational requirements. When considered in terms of size, links with other modes and other connectivity factors, 18 of these locations are major interchanges, 21 can be considered as medium-sized interchanges while the remaining 70% are minor interchanges with up to two bus stops. Some locations act as single bus boarding points with no link to other services, whilst others are used for connecting bus services or other sustainable transport modes.

Interchanges are essential assets supporting the bus network; these locations should be carefully monitored to ensure opportunities for interchange are maximised. This involves the co-ordination of multiple aspects including infrastructure, information, ticketing and schedule integration.

In Spring 2022, a new bus interchange was opened in Gravesend Town Centre providing close integration with rail, new passenger information and high-quality waiting facilities.

As noted above, KCC has established a bus stop hierarchy in order to identify and prioritise key interchange points with respect to investment. High-priority sites utilise both existing BSIP

2023/24 and 2024/25 funding, subject to confirmation, and more should further BSIP funding come forward from Government. KCC has set out in Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond* how we would like to improve further on Kent's offer with respect to waiting and interchange facilities should additional external funding come forward through future years of the BSIP process.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus information

Bus information

KCC's involvement in the provision of passenger information has reduced significantly in recent years, as operators have taken greater responsibility for printed and digital information, although most operators have reduced expenditure in this area. The council's direct involvement in passenger information has been largely restricted to the coordination of printed information at the roadside and the supply of local data to Traveline, the National database.

KCC has continued to provide a website with key information and the main offers for bus services. In recent months, a summary of forthcoming significant service changes has been included. However, detailed bus service timetables are either provided by the bus operators individually or by national specialist websites such as Bustimes.org and Traveline and further outlets informed by data from the Bus Open Data Service (BODS).

Existing challenges and barriers
While the national Traveline website is likely to exist for the foreseeable future, we have already seen many of Traveline's regional journey planning websites close, including the one for the

Southeast. This has resulted in the loss of certain functionality which the regional sites offered but which the national site does not, such as the ability to attach service disruption messages to timetables. It presents timetable information in a less intuitive manner and, overall, the information it provides is far less complete than the sites it replaced. Traveline does not offer bus maps, which would further aid potential passengers, especially those who are unfamiliar with the area. We must consider the risk that the national site itself will close at some point. While this does not seem likely at present, the possibility remains given that other sources may be developed using the open data generated from BODS.

The Kent Connected site offers some of the same capabilities as Traveline. Unfortunately, at present it is not a public transport journey planner in the generally accepted sense, as it lacks a number of features. For instance, there is no ability to specify a step-free journey, a slower walking speed than average or a maximum tolerable walking distance. Much of this is by design, as it was originally intended as an active travel planner, aimed at encouraging modal shift away from cars by persuading fit, healthy adults to make greater use of active travel options. By contrast, the average local bus user is more likely to be

elderly or to have a mobility impairment or other disability of some kind.

Finally, it should be noted that no option currently available offers a good e-ticketing solution for passengers. Bus operators' websites may only offer their own season tickets, for instance, which is not useful for spur-of-the-moment journeys. Very few multi-operator tickets are offered in Kent and Traveline does not offer an e-ticketing solution at all.

Whilst the ideal situation could be real time displays at every bus stop, this would take an enormous amount of investment. We are therefore implementing other solutions including the use of QR codes at bus stops linking to Real Time Information sources without the need for Real Time Information screens at all but the busiest stops.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary
Surprisingly, feedback through the original BSIP consultation did not identify accessibility to high quality public transport information as a barrier to greater bus use. However, at various conferences on accessible information and open data organised by the Public Transport Information Co-ordination group (PTIC) and by the DfT

Bus information

between 2017 and the present day, passenger advocacy groups such as Transport Focus and Bus Users UK were invited to speak and reported that different passenger demographics prioritise different things.

For instance, young people place a high priority on the cost of the journey. Disabled passengers may require a step-free journey, something that older passengers may also prefer even if they do not identify as disabled. Tourists, who by definition may not be familiar with the area they are travelling in, typically want the simplest journey with the fewest connections, while commuters tend to prefer the fastest one.

The current one-size-fits all approach does not cater well to the needs of these disparate groups. In particular, feedback from the passenger advocacy groups indicates that information about fares is difficult to access at the moment, often requiring visits to multiple websites belonging to different bus companies, if the information is available at all. This makes the cost of a journey very difficult to predict in advance.

Similarly, disabled passenger groups reported that they place a premium on information about the accessibility features at the stops they will

be travelling to. This is especially true in rural areas, where stops are often on grass verges etc. Likewise, visually impaired passengers may have problems accessing digital information, but can also have issues with printed publicity where this has not been created with visual impairments in mind. However, feedback from stakeholders has identified an appetite to see Real Time Information displays at bus stops. KCC will therefore try to support this at key locations by seeking funding for the upfront costs of securing and installing screens and ongoing technical support. We will also look to establish a uniform standard and common identity for roadside timetables at bus stops.

The 2023 BSIP passenger survey showed that 19% of passengers surveyed used printed timetables at bus stops. Passengers in the West EP area were the least satisfied on their access to bus information in general.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Public Transport Information
In KCC's view, the cessation of the Traveline Southeast Service to deliver bus information means there is not currently a localised resource for consolidated information relating to all bus services in the South-East. Whilst there are

national databases, including Traveline and Bustimes, these do not provide information tailored to local users, such as information on service disruptions or comprehensive bus maps.

Most of the operators produce information online and via apps, with some including real time information, but this is just for their own services. One of our priority initiatives has therefore been to create a one-stop-shop for public transport information, potentially including rail and carrying real time passenger information in respect of all bus services in Kent.

In accordance with the KCC Information Strategy, the Council provides public transport information to customers via a number of methods. Ultimately, these are driven by a comprehensive database of information maintained by KCC's

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus information

Public Transport Department, fed by the bus operators who have a legal duty to submit any changes to their services to the council using standard registration and timetable formats. More generally, KCC will work with operators to better promote the bus network, encouraging greater bus use and supporting recovery from the pandemic.

Roadside timetable information

We use the routing and scheduling information that we hold to provide a roadside timetable posting service for those bus operating companies that need it. At present, we allow bus companies to post their own service information if we deem them competent to do so. However, for companies that are unable to meet this customer need themselves, the council provides this service free of charge. The bus services posted this way are overwhelmingly contracted ones. The current software exports bus service data on demand for use in roadside timetables, but the raw output is difficult to read. Formatting it to make it suitable for public consumption is currently a manual task and is often quite time consuming. This work is done within the Public Transport department, and the finished documents are forwarded to our contractor for printing and distribution at the roadside.

Digital Information

The bus service information we hold is exported to two digital information resources. The first of these is called Traveline, which is aimed at the travelling public. Traveline is a national partnership of transport companies, local authorities and passenger groups which takes route and scheduling data feeds from transport operators and local authorities to form a national dataset called TNDS (Traveline National Data Set). A bulk export of the KCC data goes to Traveline once per week. Traveline add this to the TNDS, which is used to provide timetables and journey planning to the travelling public via their website www.traveline.info. and through an app. It also provides real time information where available but does not provide yet fares data.

The second resource is the Bus Open Data Service (BODS) which is aimed at software developers and is a Department for Transport (DfT) initiative aimed at making bus data available in digital form to any interested party with the aim of increasing reliable public transport information through further outlets. Exported data is hosted locally and is linked to by the BODS website, which acts as an aggregator. Feeds aggregated on the BODS site include scheduled bus time data, live vehicle location information and fares data.
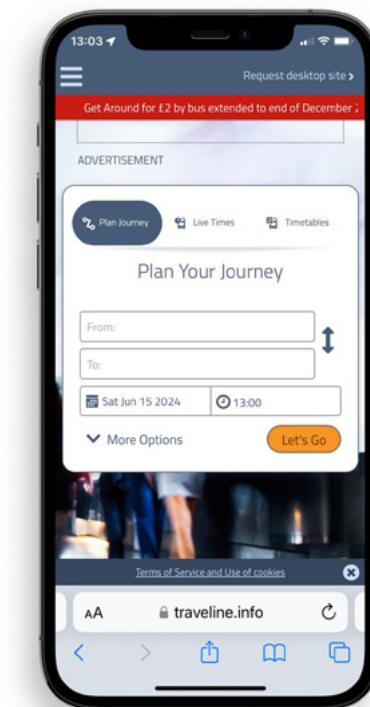
Most bus operators are providing data in the correct format to BODS, but the technical hurdles to doing so can be daunting for smaller companies. Consequently, KCC also act as a BODS data supply agent for a number of SME bus operating companies across the Southeast, in addition to the route and scheduling data which we supply to Traveline. This includes producing and hosting fare chart data for the client, linking to a real time location feed for their vehicles and providing any other technical advice they require to discharge their open data responsibilities.

Page 264

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus information

BODS is still in its infancy and is not yet fully populated. However, use of BODS is expected to grow and it could eventually be the main source of data supply to the Traveline dataset.

Feedback from stakeholders during the BSIP process has identified an appetite to see Real Time Information screens at bus stops. At present this is limited, largely on the Kent Thameside Fastrack services, with 50 electronic signs around Kent but work is in hand to increase this provision during 2024. This is covered further in the Waiting and Interchanges section of this document.

Lastly, the council currently offers the Kent Connected journey planner. This is an active travel planner which promotes the use of public transport, cycling and walking by offering online cross-boundary journey planning and comparing factors such as calories burned, and CO^2 produced. The Kent Connected journey planner uses the Google Direction Service, so does not benefit from local input.

Internally, KCC has developed its own interactive map of the bus network which can be used for planning purposes. As well as the map itself providing a visual representation, the database behind this can be used to answer a number of

questions which currently cannot be answered in any other way. However, it is not suitable for public use and an alternative solution is needed to perform this task.

Better Bus Information: Kent's BSIP

To make digital information more easily accessible, KCC are currently procuring a bus information portal for Kent public transport information including an interactive bus map which is due to go live during 2024. Funding for this will include £140k of capital and £100k of revenue funding from the 2023/24 BSIP award. It will also feature pop up timetables, access to e-ticketing, links to bus operator websites and fares information available via web and app platforms.

The portal will include interactive and static maps of the bus network in Kent, showing the routes of local bus services along with the locations of bus stops and other public transport services, such as rail stations and taxi ranks plus information on stops and services such as accessibility information, timetables and fares. Service disruption alerts will also be displayed as a pop up when a route is selected.

An interactive county map can be used to answer different questions from the ones typically

answered by a journey planner. Instead of answering the question "Starting at point A, how can I reach point B", interactive maps answer the question "Where is easy to get to from here?". This information is of particular interest to tourists, who represent a significant source of income in some areas of the county. However, it is also of use to local residents wishing to know which schools are easiest to reach by public transport, or which areas would offer the simplest commute when seeking employment.

Within such a system and linked to and from the journey planner and the interactive map, each bus stop in the County will shortly be given a link to its own landing page via a QR Code. The available information will include the accessibility features at the stop, a map of the local area and its amenities such as tourist attractions, public conveniences, schools, hospitals, police stations, rail stations or taxi ranks nearby. It would also include links to timetables, fares, live real time passenger information and a link to the journey planner pre-populated for the stop.

The Bus Information Portal will also include a more inclusive public transport journey planner, with the intention of including the options that public feedback suggests that less-mobile

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus information

customers would find useful, such as the ability to limit walking distances in journey plans or to specify a step-free journey. Eventually, the planner could also feature links from journey planning results to appropriate fares and real time data. Integrated e-ticketing would allow passengers to plan a journey and pay for it in advance, storing the ticket on their smartphone or printing out a paper ticket at home, making it a one-stop-shop for both planning and paying for journeys.

All of the above will help to personalise digital information to the needs of the individual passenger, allowing them to select journeys which fit their individual criteria.

We will work with appropriate partner organisations to investigate the application of assistive technologies for disabled users. While measures to assist mobility-impaired users are well understood and widely implemented, technologies to assist users with other disabilities, such as visual impairments, dementia or learning disabilities, are relatively new. However, such technologies have been in development for some time and are now reaching the market. This represents an opportunity to open up the network to these groups in a way which has

not been previously possible, giving access to employment, education and healthcare as well as offering a general improvement in quality of life. A significant step forward will be the fitment of next bus stop audio and visual displays in all buses, together with hearing loops.

In order to deliver the above, we have developed a range of initiatives in our Enhanced Partnership and some of these can be delivered without funding from the NBS. To this end, we will work with passenger and disability advocacy groups to ensure that the information and options we provide are relevant and complete, as well as working with Visit Kent and Tourist Information Centres to ensure that suitable attractions and points of interest are included on maps and bus stop landing pages.

As well as working with customers, we will need to work with transport providers such as local bus operators, to implement e-ticketing and multi-operator ticketing, creating buy-in via enhanced partnerships; and rail companies, to gain access to appropriate data feeds for multi-modal journey planning and to place onward travel plans at appropriate locations in railway stations.

Mobility-as-a-Service

Mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) adds to the available passenger information, allowing personalised journeys for the passenger on different transport modes, such as bus, rail, demand responsive transport and bike hire. 2023/24 BSIP funding is being used to procure a MaaS platform in Kent Thameside in 2024/25 to complement the Fastrack service upgrade. It will be available as an app on mobile communication devices.

This will allow personalised journeys for the user across different transport modes, such as bus, rail, demand responsive transport and bike hire with the options set out in one place. This is discussed further under the Fares and Ticketing section of this document.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Passenger Experience

Bus Passenger Experience

Introduction

Improving the bus passenger experience is a common theme across all of our initiative areas and is outlined in each section. This section concentrates on the development of a Bus Passenger Charter. Whilst most individual bus operators have a customer promise or published minimum standards, we are working with the operators to produce a joint Bus Passenger Charter which will cover all local bus operations in the County. All of the Medway operators also run services in Kent. This will give an assurance to passengers of the minimum standards that they can expect from their bus services. The charter is due to be launched in 2024.

Existing challenges and barriers

To avoid any confusion at the boundaries between Kent and the Medway unitary authority area, particularly on cross-boundary routes, KCC is working with Medway Council to agree a similar charter to apply in both areas. This will assist both bus passengers and operator staff and avoid any conflict with differing standards applying in each area. Joint working with operators will avoid conflicts with any established customer promises that may apply over a wider area than just Kent and Medway.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary

In the 2021 Kent Bus Passenger Survey, lower cost fares and improved reliability of bus services were the second and third highest concerns of those passengers surveyed. Better bus service information and better waiting facilities also scored significantly.

In the sample survey carried out in Summer 2023, these areas featured once again as concerns of bus passengers.

The charter will therefore include these subject areas to address customer concerns, together with other subject areas that have been the subject of feedback to both the councils and the bus operators.

More details of the content of the charter are outlined in Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025* as part of our 2024/25 delivery plan.

Page 267

Environmental and Improvements to the Bus Fleet

Environmental and Improvements to the Bus Fleet

We are at a critical point where change is needed, and our actions today will shape the Kent of tomorrow. While we have huge pressure for growth in Kent, we must ensure that it is sustainable with respect to impacts on emissions and air quality. In 2019 Kent recognised the UK climate and environment emergency and in 2020, The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy set a single goal to ensure Kent's residents and businesses do their bit to care for and protect The Garden of England.

Improvements to public transport with respect to vehicle emissions standards and how the benefits of bus travel are promoted can have a real impact on KCC's overall environmental objectives, as well as providing an opportunity to increase bus usage. Kent's BSIP, decarbonising our bus fleet, introducing MaaS and an increased use of DRT are some of the initiatives in the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy Implementation Plan, part of Kent's Net Zero action plan.

The Kent & Medway Emissions Analysis and Pathways to Net Zero report was published in December 2020. This high ambition pathway relies on a progressive programme of emission reduction measures, including zero emission buses. To achieve zero emissions by 2050 in Kent and Medway there must be front-loaded CO_2 reductions during this decade. KCC is keen to utilise any funding available to deliver greener fleets in Kent and encourage operators to modernise their vehicles to match some of the investment in our BSIP initiatives achieved through this BSIP.

Together with Medway Council and Kent's 12 district and borough councils, KCC is part of the Kent and Medway Air Quality Partnership.

We support the other local authorities in this partnership to meet their legal duties to monitor and take action to address areas of poor air quality. The Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy recognises air pollution as a priority for action. We are the lead authority for the strategy, and we work with the Air Quality Partnership to take coordinated action.

Through our BSIP, KCC is keen to promote the positive impact that bus services already have on air quality in keeping cars off the road, particularly at peak times supported through our KCC Travel Saver schemes.

Firstly, as part of an Enhanced Partnership initiative, the council have developed a hierarchy – essentially adopting Air Quality Management Areas – and will use these as the basis to prioritise bus air quality initiatives. This has already been utilised to identify corridors of interest to put forward as part of our 2025-2029 proposals.

We will look to use our Enhanced Partnerships to establish minimum Euro standards for buses deployed on all day services and set targets that will organically improve the emissions standards on these vehicles over a period of time. Finally, we will continue to explore all opportunities to

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Environmental and Improvements to the Bus Fleet

secure funding to support initiatives concerned with making more use of electric and hybrid vehicles. We are in the process of converting the Fastrack Thameside (BRT) network to full electric operation during 2024.

Current bus fleet in Kent

There were 1133 buses operating on routes which serve Kent during Summer 2021. Of these, 454 are Euro 6 diesel buses. The remaining vehicles are of Euro 5, standard or below. Some vehicles are 20 years old, 15 years being the normal lifespan of an operational bus. Efforts are being made to improve emission standards across the county by upgrading older buses.

The Kent Thameside Fastrack fleet was the subject of a successful bid for ZEBRA funding from Government and zero emission vehicles are currently being built for introduction in 2025. The forthcoming new Fastrack service in Dover will also be operated with electric powered vehicles as part of this funding award.

Outside of Fastrack, there have been trials of zero emission buses with different operators, and one is now in permanent use.

Existing challenges and barriers

The biggest challenges are funding the purchase of zero emission buses, as these initial purchase prices are more expensive than equivalent diesel vehicles, and the associated depot infrastructure energy sourcing/maintenance procedures. KCC were successful in gaining funding though the Government's ZEBRA (Zero Emissions) initiative to secure funds to convert the current and pending Fastrack services to a fully electric bus fleet. However, more work is needed in this area and a steadier evolution to higher quality diesel vehicles should not be overlooked.

The council is keen to promote the positive impact buses already have on the environment where, at peak times, a single bus can take many vehicles off the road (see figure 11).

Particularly where vehicles have better emission standards, buses are already supporting the overall agenda to improve air quality.

Figure 11. Emissions by vehicle type (average)

32 cars (mixed efficiency)	1 bus Euro V diesel	1 bus Euro VI diesel	1 bus electric
60.6kg CO_2 20g NO_x	14.5kg CO_2 105g NO_x	14.5kg CO_2 8g NO_x	4.0kg CO_2 0g NO_x

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
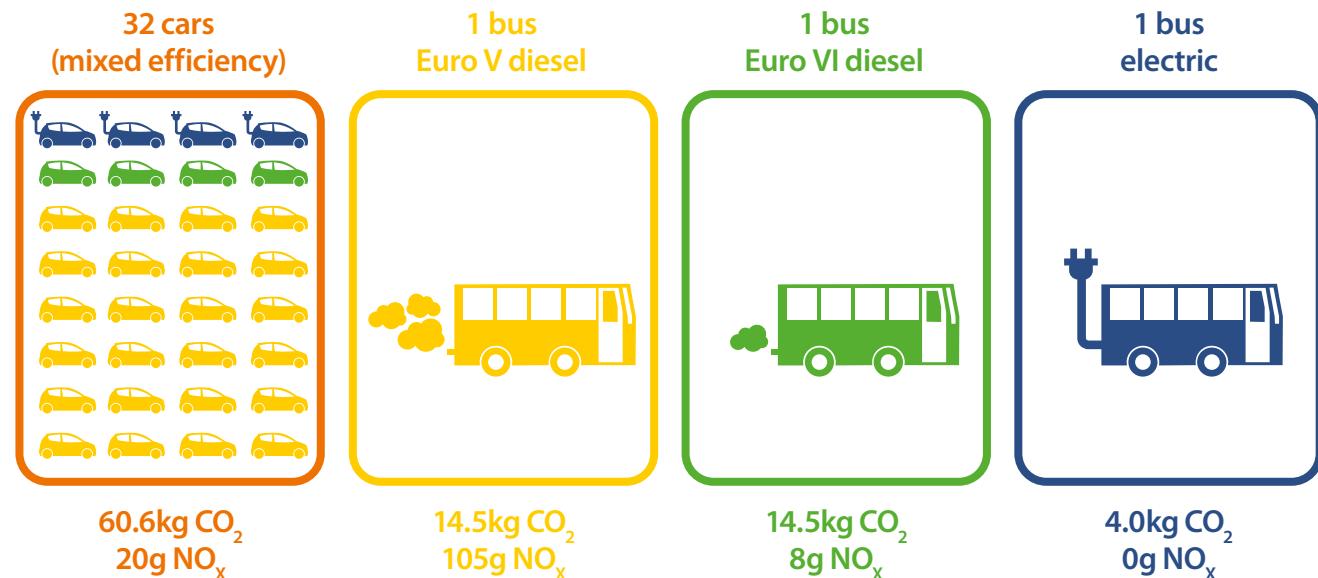
Environmental and Improvements to the Bus Fleet

Aggregating transport has clear environmental benefits, regardless of energy source, a point which is not always appreciated. In this context, one of the biggest challenges is reversing the decline in bus use and increasing the share of transport options that are more sustainable than the car. This would form an important part of an overall marketing strategy to attract passengers back to the bus.

At the current time, bus operators are still recovering from the impact of Covid-19, which accelerated a reduction in bus use. Bus services are still not on a sustainable footing and many operators are still concentrating on this aspect rather than being able to look ahead with significant future investment. From an economic perspective, this increases the challenge to support investment into the evolution of bus fleets to newer and more environmentally friendly financial and resource restrictions, meaning the majority of them are currently unable to fund the procurement of zero emission bus fleets – which are more expensive than Euro 6 diesel buses – without the help of central government or third-party investors. These costs can come in the form of re-fitting workshops, installing power supplies etc.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary
Feedback from our public engagement activity in 2021 indicated that 'better environmental standards' was not one of highest priorities for bus users or potential bus users, who instead place greater emphasis on current services themselves e.g. reliability, frequency etc. However, from subsequent comments we know that environmental standards are still important to people if the basics of the service are already in place. Other stakeholders have put a bigger emphasis on environmental issues and district councils, in particular, are very keen to see significant efforts to improve the environmental standards of our buses and air quality through the Kent BSIP. However, in noting the positive impact that buses already have on air quality, it could be argued that all initiatives concerned with increasing bus use could have a positive impact on the air quality aspirations of the Kent BSIP.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Air Quality
Through the BSIP and associated EP, KCC has a range of initiatives that seek to steadily improve the environmental standards of buses in Kent as the bus network stabilises and further funding becomes available. KCC and its bus operators will achieve this through a combination of

improvements to vehicle emission standards incentivised through EP targets, and more focused initiatives aimed at expanding the use and understanding of vehicles that use alternative fuel types.

KCC has developed an air quality corridor hierarchy. This takes account of the county's Air Quality Management Areas and the intensity of bus activity in these zones. The hierarchy is being used to help identify future priority corridors that using further funding could be converted to zero emission operation.

Finally, we would argue that any increased bus use has a positive environmental impact, and therefore better promotion of the bus network will also be central to our efforts.

Fastrack
Fastrack follows the principles of 'Public Transport Oriented Development'. This means that Fastrack is built around new developments that are in close proximity to the network by design. With a high modal share locally on the existing Kent Thameside network, our high frequency Fastrack network is already playing a critical role in improving air quality by providing nearly a quarter of local journeys.

Page 270

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Environmental and Improvements to the Bus Fleet

As road traffic is often the biggest contributor to poor air quality in places where people live and work, it is the responsibility of Fastrack to be a good neighbour and mitigate the impact of our footprint. As outlined already, the successful ZEBRA bid with investment of over £9m from both the ZEBRA funding and other sources including the Fastrack operator will transform the service with a fleet of electrically powered tram-like buses being introduced in 2025.

KCC's plan is then to further enhance the Fastrack network across Kent, with the next planned operation being the route from Whitfield into Dover, as outlined in the next chapter.

Through the Enhanced Partnership, we will have greater influence over the quality of buses in Kent and will use the Fastrack investment for learnings and as an example of good practice.

Some services that run into Dartford, Swanley and Westerham operate across the boundary from London and are run on behalf of Transport for London. Their policy for upgrading their operating fleet to greener vehicles is well advanced and this part of Kent therefore already benefits from a lower emission fleet running at Euro 6 standard, with a stated pathway to move to zero emission vehicles by 2030.

KCC also owns an electric minibus which is currently used on the bus network in North West Kent.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Accessibility and Inclusion

Accessibility and Inclusion

Introduction

Kent's original BSIP document issued in 2021 included a Key Principle covering accessibility and stated: *We strive to improve the levels of physical and digital accessibility both on buses and through infrastructure to ensure a fully accessible network for disabled passengers.* When combined with Inclusion and Passenger Safety, this section now covers the following areas:

Safe walking routes to access bus stops

An accessible vehicle cannot be effectively accessed if the route to and from bus stops is not usable by all passengers. Whilst the wider footpath network is outside of the scope of this document, where there can be action is where new developments are designed through the planning process to ensure that footpaths to and from bus stops in the developments are accessible.

The waiting environment at bus stops

This important topic is covered under the Waiting and Interchange Facilities section of this chapter.

Bus driver recruitment, training, and staffing

The bus driver is usually the only point of contact with customers when they make a bus journey.

Operators therefore need to ensure that their driving teams are trained to drive safely and considerately and have good customer service skills. To ensure a reliable service, sufficient drivers need to be available to enable journeys to operate. Whilst buses are now equipped with accessible features, driver training will need to ensure that staff are able to follow procedures which cover alternatives for the passenger if any of the accessible features are not available.

Customer services

An easily accessible and relevant customer advice and information service should be provided to give assurance to customers of the details of upcoming journeys. The forthcoming Kent and Medway customer charter will outline what service a customer can expect and how to get help or make a comment where things go wrong.

Public transport information

Good and easily accessible information is also an important feature for passengers, and this is covered well in the Bus Information and Network Identity section of this chapter.

Existing challenges and barriers

Buses for many years now have been to a low floor design with no steps from the entrance door to the

front area of seats. This has improved accessibility inside the vehicle. However, this has been taken a stage further as all buses used on registered services must now meet at least the minimum accessibility requirements set out in the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee guidelines. This covers a wide range of design aspects on a bus, such as access for wheelchairs and clear destination displays. However, travel can still be a challenge for those who have poor sight or hearing. A further requirement for bus services is being introduced now where all buses need to be fitted with audible and visible information to show and announce next bus stops. This is able to display the information in advance of arriving at the bus stop through the use of GPS co-ordinates.

As buses have become more accessible, it is more important to less ambulant users for these facilities to be in operation, such as wheelchair ramps or having a vacant wheelchair space. Operators are required to implement clear procedures for their drivers to follow should no space be available or if the accessible features are not working.

As more live information for passengers is available through the use of apps both before and during a journey, there is a need for good connectivity and many buses in Kent now feature free wi-fi

Page 272

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Accessibility and Inclusion

connections inside buses together with free phone charging to ensure continuity. Passengers can then increasingly follow their trip on the app with the knowledge that they will have sufficient power for the journey.

Whilst there is a policy of siting bus stops where they are needed and, in urban areas, ensuring that these are generally no more than 400m apart, stops may not be accessible to disabled users if the walking routes to and from the stop are not also accessible. KCC is forming a bus stop hierarchy, taking account of bus service and passenger usage levels, our interchange analysis and the strategic importance

of the location. Busier sites will be prioritised for better infrastructure, including access routes where possible, with enhanced levels of innovation and more facilities, enabling these locations to act as interchange points.

There is a high proportion of bus drivers on Kent's bus routes that have many years of experience. However, this has created an age profile that will be of concern as these long serving staff retire from driving. Recruiting new drivers is essential to ensure that a reliable bus network can be maintained. This needs to target younger age groups, preferably with those who already have skills and experience

in other customer facing roles. Whilst the larger bus companies generally have the resources and job market reach to be able to recruit such staff, small and medium sized companies find this more difficult to do on their own. The next section therefore describes a planned initiative to set up a driver training facility for smaller bus operators.

As discussed further in the Bus Information section of this document, passengers rely on clear and reliable information in whichever formats they are provided. Kent's BSIP places a requirement on the operators to provide a clear website for their services, with links into the Bus Information Portal.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary
In the 2021 Kent Bus Passenger Survey, there were comments on more opportunities for customer feedback and better customer service as well as improved waiting facilities for passengers, including better accessibility. Whilst these were not the most commonly made responses received, they still registered as areas of concern to the people affected.

In the sample survey carried out in Summer 2023, these areas featured once again as concerns of bus passengers, reinforcing the need to ensure that standards are set and adhered to.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Long Term Transformation of the Network

Long Term Transformation of the Network

Introduction

Under the Network Development section of this 2024 BSIP, we have outlined the current position with respect to the bus network in Kent, including an assessment of current service levels across the county and connectivity/accessibility to key destinations. In Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond* we have then included a set of initiatives which consider how this current base network can be sustained and then built upon in the period from 2025-29 should further funding be made available by Government through the BSIP process.

Beyond 2029 we want to see a bus network which continues to work towards our overall bus vision but what this looks like is dependent on what happens in the period up to this point and on any funding made available to support our proposals for 2025-29. We also want our longer-term plan for buses to align with our Local Transport Plan (LTP), a new version of which is currently being developed and which will set the longer-term overall transport priorities for the county.

What we are sure of is that both within the 2025-29

period and beyond we want to see the continued growth of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) across the county. Our award winning Fastrack service in the Kent Thameside area of the county is hugely successful, with the Fastrack B route one of the most heavily utilised in Kent. Fastrack is based on linking new housing developments and existing urban centres together, providing bus priority, modern vehicles and attractive ticketing options to offer a genuinely attractive alternative to the private car.

2024/25 is an exciting time for Fastrack with a number of positive initiatives getting underway or coming to a conclusion. We will shortly see the commencement of a new operating contract for the service with the Go-Ahead group. This will see the introduction of the first zero emission buses in Kent, utilising Government ZEBRA funding to provide pantograph charged vehicles. New bus priority schemes are to be introduced on Fastrack in Rennie Drive, Dartford (using 2023/24 BSIP funding) and in Bath Street, Gravesend and we will see new links between developments in Ebbsfleet and Gravesend Town Centre. More information on these schemes can be found in the Bus Priority and Highway Management section of this chapter.

2024/25 will also see the launch of the new Dover Fastrack service, linking significant housing

expansion in the Whitfield area of Dover with the Town Centre and Dover Priory Station. The infrastructure to deliver Dover Fastrack is being provided through the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) provided to Dover District Council (DDC) with ZEBRA funding also being utilised to provide zero emission buses on the route. One link supporting Dover Fastrack is the Pencester Road bus priority scheme which is currently being delivered (subject to final decision) utilising 2023/24 BSIP funding and is detailed in the Bus Priority and Highways Management section of this chapter. 2024/25 also sees the delivery of a Fastrack Expansion study, where we consider potential growth opportunities for the Fastrack concept.

In Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond* we have considered initiatives which can build on the current Fastrack offer should further funding become available through the BSIP process or other external sources.

Existing challenges and barriers

Whilst Kent continues to be passionate about BRT and the benefits it offers, we must ensure that schemes are established on a basis that works for all of Kent's residents, and in a manner which provides long term sustainability. Issues for consideration include:

Page 274

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Long Term Transformation of the Network

- Ensuring that BRT schemes offer enough 'end to end' priority in order to provide real journey time benefits over other modes.
- Ensuring that there is an appropriate level of potential usage to sustain a viable BRT network.

These challenges will be considered when analysing future development opportunities for Fastrack, particularly in relation to the expansion study being conducted in the 2024/25 financial year.

Public/Stakeholder feedback summary

Feedback gathered through our engagement activity in 2021 highlighted that one of the most important factors for passengers when using the bus is the reliability and punctuality of services. BRT and that Fastrack concept is based on providing reliable journeys and quicker journey times and as such supports this feedback.

Figure 12. Priorities in 2021 BSIP Engagement Exercise
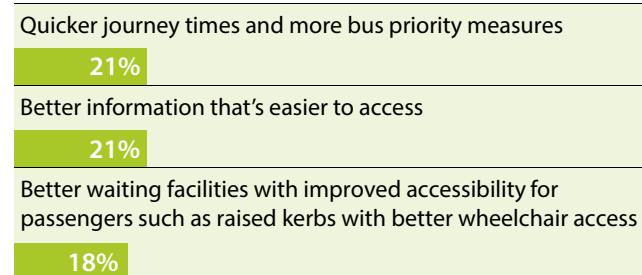
Quicker journey times and more bus priority measures
21%

Better information that's easier to access
21%

Better waiting facilities with improved accessibility for passengers such as raised kerbs with better wheelchair access
18%

Whilst data shows that the main priority for passengers is the availability and frequency of services themselves, there is also specific reference to these features in feedback, particularly with reference to bus priority. Specific comments included:

"It's making sure that bus priority is first and foremost in transport planning. People aren't going to just wake up one day and decide to travel by bus."

"What's the point if buses have to sit in the same traffic jams as cars? Why would people travel by bus if the bus is there sitting next to them in a jam, there's no benefit."

Bus priority measures are key to Fastrack and perhaps the most important aspect of establishing a successful BRT scheme.

Current Offer to Bus Passengers
Fastrack

Fastrack is Kent's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) brand. The service provides fast, reliable and affordable transport in the Kent Thameside area and is soon to be expanded to Dover.

The Fastrack network in Kent Thameside comprises exclusive busways, bus priority measures and purpose-built bypasses, making travel by Fastrack significantly quicker and more convenient for local journeys and onwards connectivity than a private car. Significant infrastructure investment continues in Kent to retain this edge.

Fastrack Kent Thameside Service Offer

The first Fastrack route (referred as Route B) opened in 2006 and provides fast, reliable, and efficient transport access across the Kent Thameside area. Since then, an additional two routes (Route A and Route AZ) have been introduced, creating a high-frequency network stretching between Dartford and Gravesend via popular destinations, such as, the Bridge Estate, Amazon Fulfilment Centre, Crossways Business Park, Darent Valley Hospital, Bluewater Shopping Centre and local train stations.

Route B was the first service introduced to the area in 2006 and links communities with key destination and transport interchanges within the area such as Darent Valley Hospital, Bluewater Shopping Centre and local train stations between Dartford and Gravesend.

Page 275

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Long Term Transformation of the Network

Route A was established in 2007 and provides links between Dartford and Bluewater Shopping Centre via The Bridge development and Crossways Business Park. The Bridge development. In 2021 a third route was defined, Route AZ, following the opening of an Amazon Fulfilment Centre located between The Bridge development and the Dartford Crossing. Due to the levels of congestion near the Dartford Crossing, the retailer did not make on-site parking provisions and instead set up a new bus service between the warehouse, Dartford, Gravesend and Ebbsfleet station, passing through the Bridge Estate and Crossways Business Park. This service runs 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with the frequency of buses reaching every 15-minutes during the day and every 30-minutes during the evening.

In 2024/25 the Fastrack network will grow further to support ongoing development in the Ebbsfleet area. This expansion will be supported by a new operating contract – see Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025* for more information.

Patronage Levels

Fastrack has seen encouraging passenger levels even when taking into account the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2019, the combined total number of passengers reached 2.6 million, the equivalent of over 7,100 people a day. During 2020 and 2021, the level of public transport patronage plummeted across the country due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is also evident for Fastrack patronage. In 2021, the country opened up from pandemic restrictions, and route AZ was introduced on the Fastrack network. The 2022 passenger levels started climbing and in 2023 pre-pandemic levels were surpassed, though this could partially be due to the introduction of an additional route as patronage levels on individual Routes A and B have not reached pre pandemic levels.

In 2019, service routes A and B accumulated 2,630,600 passengers in total. In 2023, service routes A and B accumulated 2,516,500 passengers, which is 96% of 2019 levels. Whilst the patronage on routes A and B does not quite match pre-pandemic levels, the AZ service route runs a similar route to route A, so the patronage is now dispersed across three routes instead of two. The total 2023 patronage exceeded pre pandemic levels by 5%.

Fastrack and Kent's BSIP

In Kent's 2021 BSIP we noted how we wanted to continue to evolve the Fastrack offer in Kent Thameside, to introduce a service to Dover and to explore the possibility of zero emission vehicles should funding permit from the Government's ZEBRA scheme. This has certainly been the case and Fastrack has seen considerable growth since this point including:

- A tender and subsequent award to the Go-Ahead group for the longer-term operation of the Fastrack Kent Thameside network. The new contract will commence in 2024 and will see partnership working between KCC and the operator to ensure optimum service performance.
- A tender and subsequent award for shelter

1. Introduction, Context
   & Our Bus Vision

**2. Current offer to Bus
   Passengers**

3. Improvements
   Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals
   for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance
   Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Long Term Transformation of the Network

maintenance and real time information across the Fastrack Thameside services which will be embedded during 2024/25.

- The progression of further bus priority schemes including Bath Street in Gravesend, and Rennie Drive in Dartford, the latter of which is funded through 2023/24 BSIP funding and will offer significant reliability benefits.

- The opening in 2022 of a new bus hub in Gravesend Town Centre, providing more appropriate interchange facilities for Fastrack including the space for pantograph charging.

- A successful outcome for Kent's ZEBRA bid for Fastrack which has seen over £9m awarded to KCC for the delivery of Zero emissions buses on the Kent Thameside and Dover Fastrack networks.

- The continued roll out of Dover Fastrack including significant infrastructure delivery in the Whitfield area and the progression of a service contract for the project.

Figure 13. Dover Fastrack: Artist's Impression

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

③ Improvements Programme to 2025

Introduction

This chapter details our intended delivery programme for buses across the 2024/25 financial year. At the start of the chapter, we have included a funding table which details all budgeted spend on bus activity for the county, including tranche 2 BSIP funding (which is still subject to final confirmation), together with funding from other sources and KCC's own funds.

The chapter then considers each BSIP initiative area and provides information on projects being delivered in 2024/25. We have updated on the delivery of our 2023/24 (tranche 1) BSIP funded programme in Chapter 2 – *Current Offer to Bus Passengers.*

		2024/25	
Baseline Budget Category	**Funding Source**	**Revenue**	**Capital**
Supported Bus Services & Kent Karrier	KCC	£5.91m	£0
ENCTS Concessions Budget dictated by demand and re-imbursement	KCC	£15.47m *inc £.2.5m anticipated impact of DfT calculator	£0
Kent Travel Saver Concessionary Ticketing Scheme Payment to operators	KCC	£15.02m	£0
Bus Stop Infrastructure Maintenance Contract	KCC	£100k	£0
Fastrack Infrastructure	KCC	£250k	£0
Bus Service Policy, Community Transport and New Bus Stop Infrastructure	KCC	£329k	£0
BSIP Funding	Dft	£4.37m	£11.70m
LTF/BSIP+	Dft	£2.3m	£0
Local Authority BSOG	Dft	£1.08m	£0
Zero Emission Bus Grant (ZEBRA)	Dft	£0m	£2.5m
Housing Infrastructure Fund (for bus projects) Funding to DDC for Dover Fastrack – KCC Delivery Partner	Dft	£0m	£7.63m

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Services and Network Coverage

Services & Network Coverage

The following BSIP budget was allocated to Network Initiatives in 2023/24; delivery will continue across this financial year.

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Network Support – sustaining services		£2.5m*
Network Assessment and Planning Tool		£50k
Network Support – Community Transport Grant	£450k	£0

*Funding support for network sustainability is also using Kent's BSIP+ allocation for 2023/24, totalling £2.3m.

Subject to final confirmation, the following BSIP tranche 2 budget has been allocated to Network initiatives in 2024/25:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Network Support – sustaining services		£1.0m*

*Funding support for network sustainability is also using Kent's BSIP+ allocation for 2024/25, totalling £2.3m

As noted in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers,* we had intended to use our BSIP network allocation to introduce new and enhanced services, where these could be self-sustainable in the future, to provide greater connectivity particularly in areas and at times where gaps or shortfalls existed.

However, between the funding allocation being announced and the BSIP funds for 2023/24 actually arriving, it became clear that reduced bus use and revenue and increased costs was undermining the network's sustainability and service continuity more than we could have anticipated.

A very significant number of services were reduced, or risked complete withdrawal by operators who could not continue to provide them commercially. As noted in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, we have therefore had to use all network funding to sustain critical services that were placed at risk of withdrawal.

To date, we have protected 49 critical services, mainly enabling children to travel to school, using BSIP and BSIP+ funding, without which they would not be operating today. The estimated cost of sustaining these services is over £3m per

annum and has exhausted the funding available. Therefore, it has not been possible to introduce significant service enhancements. Using the Project Adjustment Request (PAR) process, a proportion of our 2023/24 allocation has been rolled over to 2024/25 to ensure these services can continue at least until March 2025.

Community Transport
We used 2023/24 BSIP funding to award £500k of community transport grants supporting 11 schemes across the county and will continue to support the sector during the 2024/25 financial year. We have a dedicated Community Transport Officer to advise and guide organisations wanting to establish new schemes or develop existing schemes. We also have a community transport toolkit to support these ventures.

Network Planning Tool
We will continue to use the network planning tool we secured with BSIP 2023/24 funding to inform data returns and network planning in the 2024/25 financial year.

Page 279

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Bus Priority and Highway Management

The following BSIP budget was allocated to bus priority and Highway Management in 2023/24. Spending for all of these initiatives commenced in 2023/24 and all initiatives are continuing to be delivered across this financial year.

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Bus Priority Pencester Road, Dover	£3.0	
Bus Priority Rennie Drive, Dartford	£2.5m	
Bus Priority Thanet Superbus	£2.0m	£50k
Bus Priority Feasibility Studies		£250k
Highway Management Bus Interventions to Support PIPs	£625k	
Highway Management ANPR	£450k	

Subject to final confirmation, the following BSIP tranche 2 budget has been allocated to bus priority and highways management initiatives in 2024/25:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Bus Priority Bean Road Tunnels	£9.5m	
Bus Priority/ PIP Interventions Further Bus Priority initiatives (to be developed) and bus related highway interventions to support Punctuality Improvement Partnerships	£1.5m	
Highway Management ANPR	£104k	

Bus Priority – Bean Road Tunnels:
If finalised, this funding will deliver a significant bus priority measure for the Kent Thameside Enhanced Partnership (EP) area. The measure will see the creation of a section of tunnel (for buses, walking and cycling only) linking the Bus Station at Bluewater Shopping Centre and the Eastern Quarry development at Ebbsfleet Garden City. The scheme will provide a fast and reliable bus link for the Fastrack BRT service, which is developing significantly in the coming years in reaction to the high level of housing growth currently taking place in the Ebbsfleet area.

The scheme has high levels of local support and has match funding already secured from Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC).

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Priority and Highway Management

Bus Priority/PIP Interventions:
This funding will support the delivery of further bus priority schemes and highway initiatives to support bus reliability in the 2024/25 financial year, identified through feasibility work conducted using 2023/24 BSIP funding and through Kent's PIPs. Outside of BSIP funding, we will also continue to focus on delivering commitments related to bus priority and highway management within our EP Schemes. In addition, a bus priority project in Bath Street, Gravesend is due for completion and the Dover Fastrack BRT service including a new dedicated bus bridge over the A2 is due to launch. We will also continue to work with operators through Kent's PIP's & local focus groups, using these forums to seek to consider key strategic issues affecting bus reliability such as parking enforcement and streetworks.

Highway Management – ANPR
This funding will support the installation of ANPR cameras at a number of bus gate locations across the county. The initiative follows on from a 2023/24 BSIP initiative which is being rolled out currently and is already proving to have immense support from both bus operators and local residents impacted by the misuse of these restricted areas. The intention of the bus gates

KCC manage within Kent has always intended to prioritise bus travel and change the perception of journey times by providing specific links to shorten routes. Unfortunately, the impact of these bus only routes is significantly reduced through misuse by other motorists. Often, we have seen delays for a number of minutes where other traffic has also seen the benefits of using the bus gates. The use of ANPR enforcement is one which not only provides a safe method of enforcement

over manning the gates, but also reiterates the importance of these routes being solely for their specified uses. Following the DfT's guidance on the application of ANPR enforcement, Kent will only install these cameras where other reasonable methods of deterrence have failed. Our officers have identified a number of other locations which would likely benefit from this enforcement method to provide a more reliable and punctual bus service.

Fares and Ticketing

Fares and Ticketing

A significant part of the BSIP budget was allocated to fares and ticketing projects in the 2023/24 year as follows:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Fares and Ticketing Multi Operator Ticketing Trial		£100k
Fares and Ticketing Kent Travel Saver Price Freeze		£2.5m
Fares and Ticketing Fares initiatives and Promotions		£500k

Subject to final confirmation, the following BSIP tranche 2 budget has been allocated to fares and ticketing initiatives in 2024/25:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Fares and Ticketing Wider Multi Operator Ticketing		£180k
Fares and Ticketing 11-18 Years Price Reduction		£3m
Fares and Ticketing Kent Wide Promotion		£200k
Fares and Ticketing Mobility-as-a-Service Platform*	£1.45m	
Fares and Ticketing Ticket Machine Grant for SMEs*	£1.178m	£196k

*These initiatives are funded from Kent's 2023/24 BSIP allocation but due to programme changes agreed with DfT will see their whole spend made in 2024/25.

Multi-operator Ticketing and On-bus ticket machines

KCC are working with the bus operators to introduce multi-operator bus ticketing schemes where possible. Kent's Enhanced Partnership requires operators to accept each other's return tickets, and this will be enabled during 2024. There is also an intention to extend this principle to longer period tickets, although this would become more achievable with the introduction of the national back office, as outlined below.

Following the trial multi-operator scheme in the district of Swale, it is planned to adopt the nationwide Project Coral back office for EMV bank cards when it is introduced, possibly late in 2024. This will require tap on/tap off readers to be fitted to all buses in Kent to be ready for this introduction. We are therefore using BSIP funding to help to bring SME operators up to the necessary standards to be able to offer ticketing using barcode readers and for tap on/tap off transactions with an exit reader. Specifications and costings to upgrade the existing on-bus equipment are being agreed with the two core ticket machine suppliers, with the aim of ensuring they are fitted on all buses in Kent by the introduction date. Final operator negotiations are due to take place shortly, but indications are that we will be within the allocated budget of £1,177k Capital and £196k revenue.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Fares and Ticketing

Through the implementation of this scheme, we will look to provide a range of ticketing options that are simple, easy to access, and which are sold at a reduced rate by comparison to single operator fares bought on the bus. Once the scheme is operable, as well as countywide products which could offer Kent-wide travel for less than the Discovery ticket, KCC intend to develop more localised area pricing zones, particularly for the main towns. KCC will work with the bus operators to adopt flexible pricing which can help with the changing working patterns, particularly post-pandemic with more people now combining home and office working. These new ways of working can make the prospect of a traditional season ticket less attractive as it isn't required daily. Flexible zone pricing would combat this and make bus travel more appealing than using private cars and paying for parking. The tap on/tap off mechanism will allow a very flexible pricing range based on actual passenger journey usage without customers having to pre-select products where they may not know their actual forthcoming travel patterns.

Through the implementation of this scheme, we intend to enable a range of ticketing options that are simple, easy to access and sold at a reduced rate by comparison to single operator fares bought on the bus.

For the 2024/25 year, we have allocated £179.5k to support further development of multi-operator ticketing. If the Project Coral platform is available in time, it will be used to support setting up and developing/promoting ticketing schemes on this platform. If it is not available to us during 2024/25, we will seek to introduce a further localised scheme using current technologies at a location in the County where interchange between bus operators is particularly important.

11-18 Years Travel
The Kent Travel Saver price freeze has maintained a strong school travel demand in the county at a time of rising prices across the economy. The existence of grammar and faith schools in Kent results in longer journeys to school with high numbers travelling to a school that is not the nearest location to home addresses.

The costs of operation of bus services continues to rise. It is therefore necessary to regularly review the scheme to ensure that it remains sustainable within council budgets.

For 2024/25, BSIP funding will be used keep the cost of the pass for both the 11-16 and 16-18 age groups as low as possible. BSIP support of £3m has been allocated to achieve this and full details

of the 2024/25 KTS scheme were published in early June 2024.

Mobility-as-a-Service
Mobility-as-a-service (MaaS) is a comprehensive platform, available as an app on mobile communication devices. It allows personalised journeys for the user across different transport modes, such as bus, rail, demand responsive transport and bike hire with the options set out in one place.

Fig 14 – MaaS Integrations

Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS)

Users

PLATFORM

Integration of all transportation modes

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. **Improvements Programme to 2025**

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
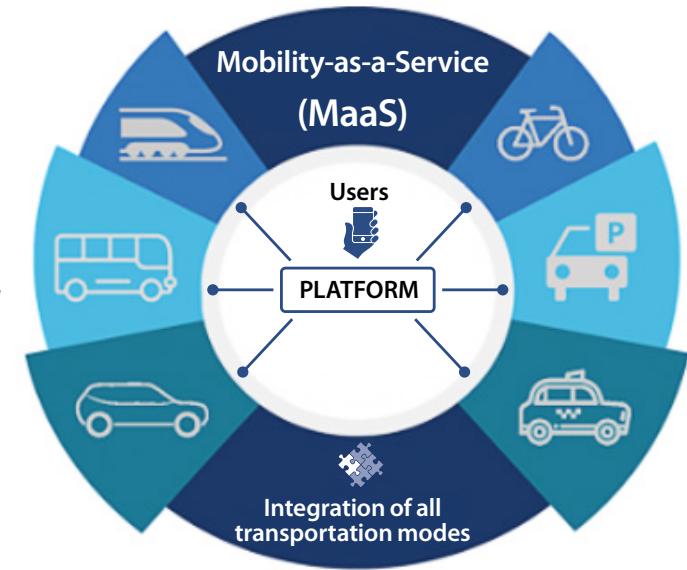
Fares and Ticketing

The system benefits both the transport network and the users but journey costs cannot simply be aggregated, and the platform makes sales of the chosen modes available in a simple format with tickets bought then used on the device when required. By having a simplified and cost-effective transport solution, passenger share is forecast to increase and offset the individual fare concessions needed for each segment of the overall journey. Through an unbiased authority-led scheme, optimised and well-occupied bus routes offer users economy of scale whilst giving participating bus operators a healthy customer base.

The Kent Thameside area of Dartford and Gravesend is seeing substantial new housing and commercial developments as part of the Thames Gateway. Much of the development is being occupied by younger age groups who are more likely to use the latest technology, including for transport use. The transport network is strong and is being expanded as the new sites are occupied, with the fast High-Speed train route to London and the coast and the award winning Fastrack bus network.

BSIP funding is being used to procure a MaaS platform to enable the introduction of a scheme in Kent Thameside in 2024/25. This will complement the Fastrack service upgrade, which will see a new operator and a new fleet of electrically powered vehicles. MaaS will tie together journeys on the Fastrack service with other bus routes as feeder services, together with rail travel at the convenient interchanges at Dartford, Greenhithe, Ebbsfleet and Gravesend. The existing DRT service will also be included and in due course, cycle hire is planned to be added to the platform.

The operators of each mode of travel will be allocated revenues due to them from the platform with sales being subject to a commission from the platform.

A procurement process is underway to secure the platform and it is intended to have the Kent Thameside scheme in operation during the 2024/25 year. The MaaS platform will be funded by an allocation of £1,450k from the BSIP award.

Fare Initiatives and Promotions

As described in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, a series of promotions were implemented in 2023/24 aimed at increasing bus passenger numbers which had fallen sharply since the pandemic, caused by the reductions in services during the Covid 19 infection period and by the national message not to travel on public transport.

Whilst the 2023 programme of promotions targeted individual market sectors, we are proposing to switch to a wider and more general but harder hitting promotion in 2024. This will be undertaken in conjunction with the bus operators and employ an advertising agency. It will be targeted on the positive features of bus travel and will again be aimed at increasing bus usage in Kent. As part of this work a further specific campaign is also proposed, which will see the promotion of bus services serving the Weald area. A budget of £200k of BSIP funding has been allocated to support these promotions.

We will also be continuing to focus on the delivery of other EP commitments related to fares and ticketing across 2024/25.

Page 284

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

BSIP funding from 2023/24 has been utilised to support waiting and interchange facilities as follows:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Highway Management Bus Interventions to Support PIPs – note not all for bus stops	£625k	

Subject to final confirmation, the following BSIP budget has been allocated to waiting and interchange initiatives in 2024/25:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Infrastructure Other Delivery of Further Real Time Information Screens	£500k	
Infrastructure Other Trials of technological interventions at bus stops	£100k	
Highway Management Bus Interventions to Support PIPs – note not all for bus stops	£1.5m	
Infrastructure Other Real Time Information Screens*		£662k

*These initiatives are funded from Kent's 2023/24 BSIP allocation but due to programme changes agreed with DfT will see their whole spend made in 2024/25.

Infrastructure Other – Delivery of Real Time Information

Over the course of 2023/24, a contract was secured with a Real Time Information Screen (RTI) supplier. 2023/24 BSIP funding is now being utilised to roll out a number of new RTI screens across the county over the course of the 2024/25 financial year utilising this contract. As noted in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, Kent's bus stop hierarchy is being used to identify and prioritise locations based on factors such as the number of departures, interchange with other modes etc.

Subject to final confirmation, 2024/25 tranche 2 BSIP funding will be utilised to deliver a programme of further RTI installations across the county, again utilising the bus stop hierarchy to prioritise appropriate sites.

Infrastructure Other – Trials of technological interventions at bus stops

As identified in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, technology with respect to bus stop infrastructure is continually evolving. In Kent, we would like to ensure that we are making the most of new opportunities in this area to enhance the passenger experience as far as possible. As such, subject to final confirmation, we will utilise 2024/25 BSIP tranche 2 funding to launch trials at bus stop/interchange locations identified through the bus stop hierarchy. In particular, following feedback in the 2023/24 passenger satisfaction survey, Kent is keen to explore improving

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

safety at bus stops where there is no potential for full time lighting. As such, the authority would like to explore the potential for installing battery operated solar lighting at identified bus stops. E-ink at stop timetables is also under consideration as part of these trials.

Highway Management – Bus Interventions to Support PIPs – note not all for bus stops
As identified in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, Kent's Punctuality and Improvement Partnerships (PIPs) are utilised to identify key congestion hotspots and issues impacting bus reliability on the network. 2023/24 BSIP funding is being used to deliver a number of schemes to tackle these issues and subject to final confirmation we will use 2024/25 BSIP Tranche 2 funding to delivery further such interventions emerging from PIP meetings and local focus groups.

Wider Initiatives to support Waiting and Interchange Facilities
Outside of BSIP funding we continue to put considerable support into bus stop infrastructure in Kent. As detailed in the funding table at the start of this chapter, Kent invests significant annual funding in maintaining over 6000 bus stop assets through a maintenance contract. This will continue to be in place for 2024/25.

In addition, we will continue to utilise part of an overall policy and infrastructure budget to deliver new bus stops and bus stop upgrades, reacting to enquiries and seeking to improve accessibility where possible. Kent's bus shelters will also continue to be maintained through contracts held by borough and district Councils. KCC has recently appointed a new contractor to manage shelters on the Fastrack Thameside network, many of which will be replaced over the course of the contract. In addition, KCC has allocated funding

within its overall policy and infrastructure budget in 2024/25 to run a Rural Shelter Grant scheme which will see funding offered to local parish and town Councils (through an application process) to provide new or upgrade existing locally owned bus shelters in their areas. This has proved a very popular scheme when run previously.

We will also be continuing to focus on the delivery of other EP commitments related to Waiting and Interchange Facilities across 2024/25.

Page 286

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Information

Bus Information

BSIP funding from 2023/24 is being utilised to support bus information as follows:

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Bus Information Bus Information Portal	£140k	£100k

The following initiative is funded from Kent's 2023/24 BSIP allocation but due to programme changes agreed with DfT will its whole spend made in 2024/25.

Initiative	Capital	Revenue
Bus Information Bus Stop QR Codes		£325k

Bus Information Portal & QR Codes

Work on the bus information portal for Kent public transport information will continue in the 2024/25 financial year. Once the basic site has been completed, including the interactive map and comprehensive journey planner, further options will include the promotion of scenic walking routes and the possibility of targeted offers through the portal. It should also be feasible to include an option for users of the portal to download static maps of parts of the bus network to be printed and used offline.

A further innovation will see the roll out of QR code plates at all marked bus stops across the county which will provide a dedicated and instant link to the bus information portal. When following the codes, real time information will be provided to the user for the stop in question with the ability to then use further functionality on the portal. The installation of the QR Code plates along with Kent's initiative to install RTI screens at key stops identified through the bus stop hierarchy will mean that all marked bus stops in Kent will have access to real time departure information. The QR Codes are being funded through 2023/24 tranche 1 BSIP funding and will be rolled out in 2024 following the finalisation of a delivery contract which commences imminently.
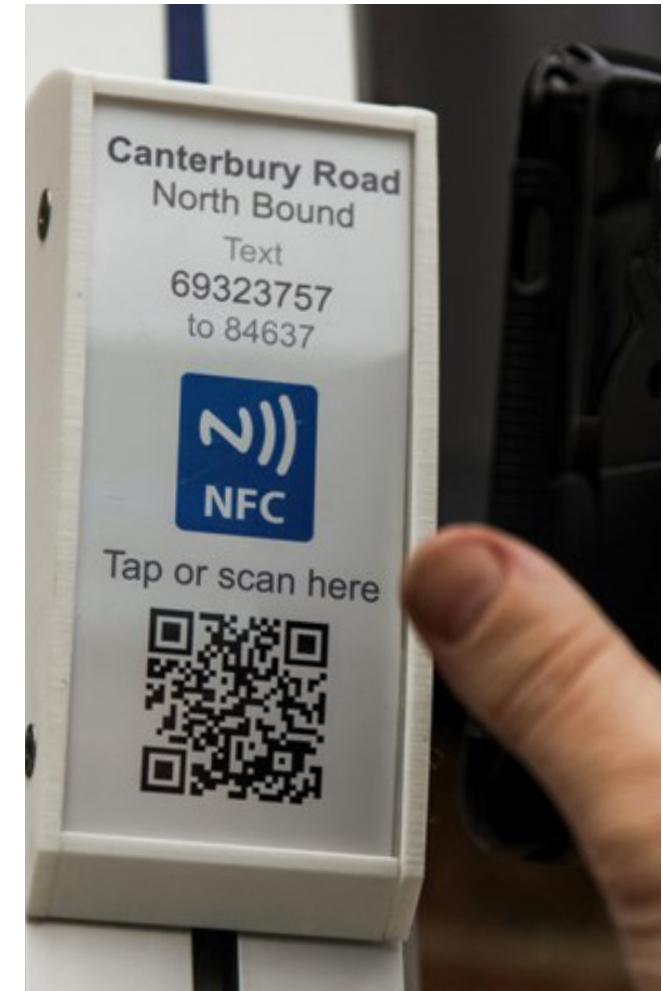
*Please note an example image has been used as final design of QR code plates are yet to be finalised

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Information

In-Bus Announcements and Hearing Loops

A significant step forward for those who are mobility-impaired will be the fitment of next bus stop audio announcement and visual displays in all buses used on scheduled services. This will give information on the service that the bus is working, the direction, each upcoming stop, and the beginning of any diversions. The aids will make the announcements available via induction loop systems. This is a statutory requirement funded by the bus operators themselves, with grants available for small operators, and is due to be implemented by October 2026. In addition, all new buses introduced after October 2024 must also include visible information which can be seen by a wheelchair user when travelling in a rearward facing wheelchair space.

Common Identity

KCC and Kent's bus operators agreed in 2021 to agree a common identity and approach to the design of publicity relating to all bus services around the county. Whilst this review has not yet taken place given other priorities, to achieve this initiative, KCC will negotiate with local bus operators with a view to agreeing a common identity to the design of bus service publicity in the county. Although some bus operators have their own brands and preferred approach to publicity, it is hoped that an agreement can be reached to provide a more common identity, while ensuring bus operators' branding is included. For example, to make it easier for bus users to better understand travel times, printed publicity should display a simplified timetabled grid created to an agreed format, in accordance with the current RNIB 'clear text' guidelines for the benefit of the visually impaired.

The inclusion of local contact details (including phone, email, website) should be displayed on all bus service publicity, along with contact details for KCC in the instance of subsidised bus services. Information relating to the passenger charter should also be included.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices
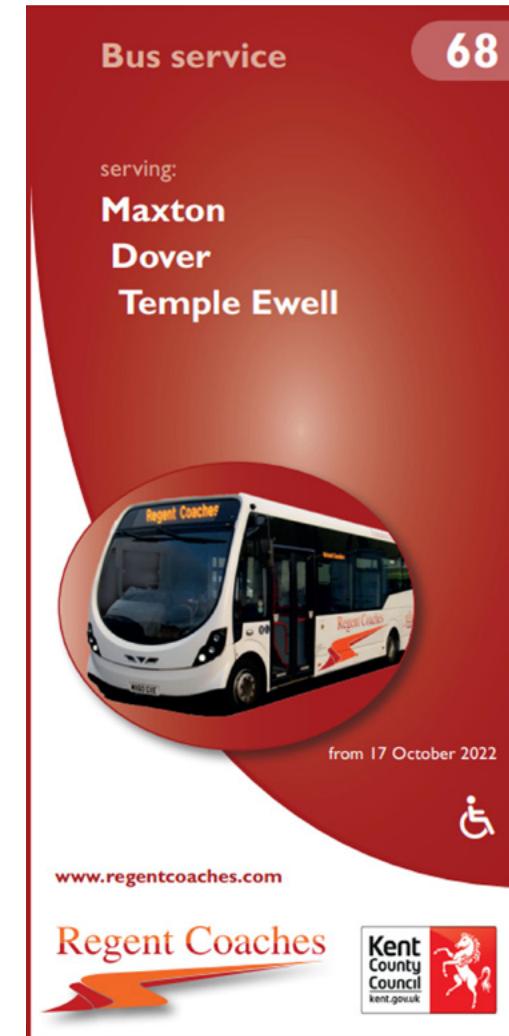
Bus Passenger Experience

Bus Passenger Experience

No part of the BSIP budget was allocated to the development of the passenger charter itself in either 2023/24 or 2024/25 and any promotion of the charter will be funded by the councils and operators from their own resources. However, many of the areas of concern have been allocated funding and these measures are discussed in the relevant subject area chapters of this document.

Bus Passenger Charter

Kent and Medway councils are working with their bus operators to develop a Bus Passenger Charter for the two council areas. This work is at an advanced stage and the final document will be launched during 2024.

As well as the feedback from the two bus passenger surveys, the charter will take into account the guidelines from Passenger Focus on this subject.

The key sections of the charter are planned to be as shown opposite:

What you can expect from Kent County Council and Medway Council

- To work with bus operators to maximise the opportunities to provide as comprehensive network of bus services as is possible accounting for commercial, funding, and operational conditions.

- Up-to-date timetable information at every marked bus stop, where required.

- The ongoing maintenance of bus stop infrastructure (including the bus stop pole, flag, timetable case)

- Bus shelters: in Kent, bus shelters are usually the responsibility of the local District/Borough Councils, or in some more rural areas Parish Councils.

- Consider requests for new bus stop infrastructure within budgetary constraints, ensuring any new bus stops are fully accessible.

- Improve the accessibility of public transport information. In Kent, this will include the introduction of a centralised source of online information outlined in the passenger Information chapter of this document.

- To work with bus operators to try and provide passengers with the best ticketing options available, while also promoting all multi operator tickets or council produced ticket options.

- KCC commits to conduct ongoing reviews of the Passenger Charter with consultation on any revised versions. We will work closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure consistency for bus users.

- Planned timetable changes will be advertised in good time wherever possible.

- To work collaboratively with bus operators to deliver the principles of local Bus Service Improvement Plans.

- To work on providing bus priority and effective roadwork co-ordination to help services run more reliably.

Bus Passenger Experience

What you can expect from Bus Operators

- To work with KCC to maximise the opportunities to provide as comprehensive a network of bus services as is possible accounting for commercial, funding, and operational conditions.

- Safe and reliable bus services operating as timetabled, with services not running early, and ideally not operating more than five minutes late, subject to the status of the highway network.

- Clean buses both inside and outside, while accepting sometimes it is hard to keep the outside of buses clean in adverse weather.

- Professional, fully trained, friendly, helpful drivers in their relevant company attire, who offer assistance to those that need additional help and overall good customer service.

- Buses that are fully accessible and enable the carriage of wheelchairs and buggies.

- Buses that have a working destination display showing the service number and destination.

- Planned timetable changes are advertised on websites and social media in good time wherever possible.

- To respond to all customer complaints in a prompt and professional manner.

- To work collaboratively with Local Authorities to deliver the principles of local Bus Service Improvement Plans.
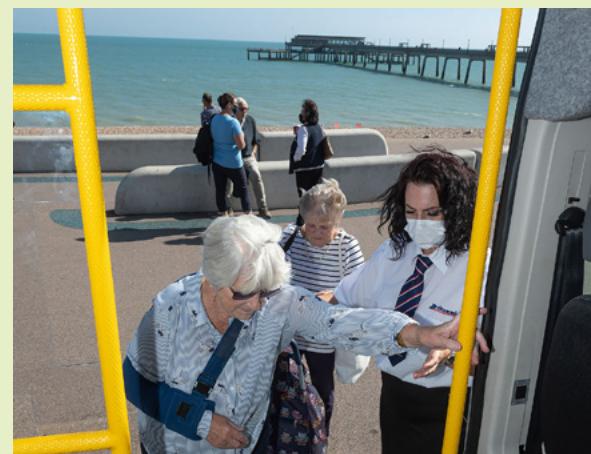
Further sections will outline how passengers can help towards efficient bus services and then a section on how to make a comment or complaint.

The charter will have a formal review process with the creation of a Passenger Charter Group in each of the three EP scheme areas. This will consist of a range of stakeholders to monitor fulfilment of the charter in each area.

We will continue to carry out sample passenger surveys to monitor progress and to ensure that funding is targeted at the areas of most concern to passengers.

The inclusion of local contact details (including phone, email, website) should be displayed on all bus service publicity, along with contact details for KCC in the instance of subsidised bus services. Information relating to the passenger charter should also be included.

Page 290

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Fleet and Air Quality

Bus Fleet and Air Quality

No part of the BSIP budget was allocated to the Bus Fleet or Air Quality projects in the 2023/24 year. However, the new Fastrack fleets in Kent Thameside and Dover attracted significant ZEBRA funding and the initial air quality hierarchy did not require funding. Once again, in 2024/25, no BSIP funding has been allocated to this subject area however Kent is working with neighbouring authorities to use further ZEBRA funding allocated to West Sussex County Council (WSCC) to deliver a hydrogen bus scheme between Tunbridge Wells and Crawley.

Bus fleet

As the year to 2025 progresses, the fleet of Fastrack electric vehicles will be introduced, transforming the service between Dartford and Gravesend. This project received funding from the Government's ZEBRA project which contributed substantially to the vehicles and both the depot and on-road charging infrastructure.

Also in 2024, the Dover Fastrack service will commence. KCC's plan is to further enhance the Fastrack network across Kent, with the next planned operation being the route from Whitfield into Dover, supporting the extensive new housing developments in both Whitfield and the former Connaught Barracks site and providing a link to Dover Priory Station. Much of the route will be on Fastrack Busway, with a new bridge over the A2 and a new bus link across to Dover Road and the castle. Commencing in 2024 with new Euro 6 emission buses, the service will be upgraded to Fastrack electric vehicles in 2025, using the ZEBRA funding.

Kent will also play a small part in the exciting ZEBRA bid to introduce hydrogen powered buses on a number of Metrobus services from Crawley and Gatwick Airport, including the 291 route between Tunbridge Wells and Crawley. The Council has contributed to the bid which has now been accepted by DfT, subject to approval of the hydrogen storage facilities at the Metrobus depot in West Sussex. If this issue is resolved, an order for new vehicles is due to be placed by January 2025.

It is hoped that further funding can be gained to enable the introduction of further zero-emission buses in Kent, including bus services that are not part of the Fastrack network.

Through our EP Schemes, KCC intends to set minimum emissions standards for vehicles deployed on the Kent bus network. We will need to be careful about where standards are set, in order not to prohibit competition and service viability. Therefore, our intention is to employ a reducing (Euro) scale, thus steadily improving the environmental qualities of the Kent bus fleet once the network has stabilised.

In 2024, Stagecoach have committed to the delivery of 11 new vehicles to Euro Vi emission standards. These will be small buses that can operate in the more rural parts of Kent.

As identified above, even standard diesel buses are already having a positive impact on air quality by taking cars off the road. Therefore, KCC and Kent's bus operators plan a variety of initiatives to promote the existing network with a view to increasing bus mode share and improving air quality.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Bus Fleet and Air Quality

Page 292

Air Quality

To ensure that buses contribute more to the Low Emissions Strategy, we have a number of initiatives in our EP, some of which will progress in 2024/25.

Firstly, the council has developed a hierarchy – essentially adopting Air Quality Management Areas – and will use this as the basis to prioritise bus air quality initiatives. The hierarchy has now been produced with detailed information for the two main areas of interest in Maidstone and Sittingbourne worked up. These areas form part of our proposed initiative programme for 2025-29 (see Chapter 4 – *Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond*). In 2024-25, we will develop the next priority sites further.

We have noted in our EP that we intend to establish minimum Euro standards for buses deployed on all day services and set targets that will organically improve the emissions standards on these vehicles over a period of time. This remains the ambition should future funding and economic conditions permit.

Finally, we will continue to explore all opportunities to secure funding to support initiatives concerned with making more use of electric and hybrid vehicles.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. **Improvements Programme to 2025**

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Accessibility and Inclusion

Accessibility and Inclusion

No part of the BSIP budget was specifically allocated to accessibility, inclusion and safety, as this subject area is a new addition to BSIP guidance. However, funding aimed at other parts of the BSIP plan also assist these areas, such as improving the waiting environment, providing support to enable the introduction of further community bus services and introducing comprehensive bus service information. These areas are covered in the relevant sections of this document.

Outside of BSIP support, other funding has been used to:
- Continue support for the pre-bookable Kent Karrier service for those who are not able to use conventional bus services.
- Continue support to enable free travel for companions for disabled users within the ENCTS scheme.
- Deliver accessibility improvements at bus stops.
- Provide funding towards implementing a driver recruitment and training scheme for the smaller bus operators.

Community transport

The community transport sector plays a key part in Kent's overall transport offer and in many areas provides a service where more conventional transport modes are not able to do so. The county has a vibrant community transport market with a number of organisations running services to meet the needs of their local areas or supported groups, often on a voluntary basis. We feel there is a key role for wider groups such as community transport operators that are not party to EP requirements, and this is something we would like to explore further.

KCC's role within the sector is mostly signposting and facilitation, a responsibility we take seriously. Our website directs would-be users to community transport schemes in their areas, and relevant resources which they may find of use. KCC has also developed a community transport toolkit which is a step-by-step guide for starting up or improving a community transport scheme. Since 2018, KCC has awarded a number of community transport grants across the county. KCC is eager to build on this positive work to further develop the community transport sector to complement our overall bus offer.

We are working with community transport partners to evolve Kent's community transport offer. Funding through 2023/24 BSIP is already supporting the introduction of further grants to facilitate new community transport schemes including a new service in the Faversham area. This subject is covered in more detail in the Network and Development section of this document.

KCC also runs its own community transport scheme, the Kent Karrier which provides door to door transport for those with mobility issues or who live more than 500m from a bus stop. The service operates across the county and in the year up to March 2024 over 11,500 passenger journeys were made.

KCC is also supporting the Kent Community Rail Partnership (KCRP) using some of its policy and infrastructure budget in 2024/25 in recognition of the importance of connectivity between bus and rail services. Improved wayfinding signage for buses has been included as an initiative for the KCRP in 2024/25 as part of this support.

Page 293

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Accessibility and Inclusion

Bus Driver Training

To address the bus driver shortage and future need for replacement drivers as existing long-serving staff retire, some of the SME companies have an initiative to set up a recruitment and training facility for the smaller bus operators. KCC have also offered some funding towards this venture.

Driver recruitment will look to attract people from other industries and experiences, particularly where good customer facing skills have been acquired, such as staff displaced by retail store closures. This would help to encourage people out of unemployment.

The training centre will either purchase its own training bus or utilise local commercial PCV driver training companies to assist in carrying out the practical training.

As well as training for the PCV licence, candidates will receive further training through the Certificate of Professional Competence programme, with such topics as disability awareness and assisting passengers to board and alight together with procedures for when disabled facilities are not available on the bus, such as when a ramp is not functional or the designated disabled space is already occupied.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Longer Term Transformation of the Network

Longer Term Transformation of the Network

Improvement Programme to 2025
Whilst there are no Fastrack specific initiatives to be delivered under the 2024/25 Kent BSIP programme, there are BSIP initiatives across 2023/24 and 2024/25 which support both the Fastrack networks in Kent Thameside and Dover which continue to be rolled out. These include:

- The Rennie Drive, Dartford bus priority scheme which is being finalised in 2024/25 using 2023/24 BSIP funded. The scheme is anticipated to complete in the summer of 2024 providing significant reliability benefit to Fastrack. More information is provided in the Bus Priority and Highway Management section of Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers.*
- The Pencester Road, Dover bus priority scheme which is being progressed across 2024 (subject to final decision) using 2023/24 BSIP funding and which will provide significant benefits to the Dover Fastrack service. More information is provided in the Bus Priority and Highway Management section of Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers.*
- The Bean Road Tunnels bus priority scheme which will further enhance the Fastrack offer in

Kent Thameside. More information is provided in the Bus Priority and Highway Management section of Chapter 3 – *Improvements Programme to 2025*. This scheme is subject to final confirmation of 2024/25 BSIP funding.

As detailed in Chapter 2 – *Current offer to Bus Passengers*, a significant number of wider Fastrack projects are progressing in 2024/25 including:

- The start of a new operating contract for the Fastrack network in Kent Thameside with the Go-Ahead Group.
- The use of ZEBRA funding to introduce a fleet of zero emission buses to the Fastrack network in both Kent Thameside and Dover.
- The start of a new contract for the maintenance of shelters and Real Time Information on the Fastrack route.
- The development of a Fastrack expansion study which will explore how the Fastrack concept could be rolled out to other areas of Kent.

Dover Fastrack Launch
The 2024/25 financial year will also see the launch of the Dover Fastrack service. Dover Fastrack is a new bus rapid transit system that will connect Whitfield, Dover town centre and Dover Priory Station, to provide a reliable, high-quality, and

frequent bus service. The buses will have priority over other traffic on the route. The Dover Fastrack will use existing roads, new roads and dedicated busways. It will link housing developments in the Whitfield Urban Expansion area and Connaught Barracks, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover Leisure Centre and Dover Castle.

The scheme is funded through £22.9 million grant from Homes England (awarded to Dover District Council through the Housing Infrastructure Fund designed to help stimulate new housing growth in Whitfield and at the former Connaught Barracks site).

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

④ Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Despite the challenges affecting the bus industry the NBS process and the funding it has delivered to support our BSIP have enabled us to work with our operators to protect the most essential parts of the bus network. We have also driven forward some notable improvements through initiatives delivered using the first tranche of BSIP funding, which we will continue in 2024/25.

This phase of the NBS concludes at the end of March 2025. This also marks the end of the current BSIP funding period, but we and our partners are committed to continuing to deliver on the principles of our first BSIP and this revised version. We will work towards fulfilling our vision to protect existing services and develop a fast and frequent, reliable, sustainable and fully accessible network that connects our communities with essential services. Passengers will travel on modern, environmentally friendly vehicles, have access to using dynamic and readily available information, with high-quality bus stops and infrastructure and flexible, affordable tickets that are easy to pay for.

Doing so will require a continuation of current BSIP+ support funding to enable us to maintain currently unprofitable services. We will also need long-term funding plan to support our vision and the future initiatives set out in this chapter. These are as an extension of the first BSIP, taking into account engagement with key stakeholders both at that time and more recently.

Should funding allow, these initiatives would bring developments in all areas of network provision including new and enhanced services, greater connectivity, reduced bus journey times and improved reliability, flexible ticketing, modern accessible vehicles and infrastructure and better information.

This programme, along with our bus vision, covers 2025-2029. We are currently developing a new Local Transport Plan (LTP) which will establish new proposals for delivering our overall transport strategy. We intend to produce longer-term BSIP proposals to align with this new LTP in future versions of the BSIP, including in 2025 if the LTP has been finalised by this point.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Network development

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
NDI 1	KCC will secure ongoing funding that will enable the Council to work in conjunction with bus operators to protect the existing network, sustaining services currently supported through BSIP and BSIP+ funding.	**YES**
NDI 2	KCC will work in conjunction with network operators to review the possibility of growing the rebased bus network, reintroducing services and improving frequencies, and introducing a more expansive evening and weekend network of buses on identified strategic bus corridors where there is new optimism for patronage growth and future sustainability.	**YES**
NDI 3	KCC will use the results of the Bus Connectivity Assessment complimented by analysis of outputs from the Network Planning tool to increase the proportion of Kent households with access to; business, healthcare, work, education, retail and leisure destinations within 30 minutes of bus travel and increase levels of rural connectivity to the core network.	**YES**
NDI 4	KCC will look to use its BSIP and any associated funding to support the key aspirations of more localized bus strategies and sustainable transport strategies forming part of District Council's Local Plans such as the Canterbury Bus Strategy, the Ebbsfleet Sustainable Travel Strategy and the Tunbridge Wells Bus Strategy.	**YES**
NDI 5	Secure the long-term access and use of a Network planning tool to continue to inform future BSIP reviews and responses to Bus Connectivity Audits.	**YES**
NDI 6	Strengthen data collection tools and processes to improve reporting, analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of network changes & improvements.	**YES**

Page 297

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Bus Priority and Highways Management

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
BP 1	To progress detailed feasibility reviews and subsequent delivery of bus priority schemes on bus corridors identified in Chapter 2 – *Current Offer to Bus Passengers*. Many of these sites were also in Kent's 2021 BSIP but do not yet have funding. A detailed review will be required to ensure the sites provide practical support in line with The Plan for Drivers and DfT guidance. Identified corridors include: (Gravesend- Chalk, Swanscombe- Horns Cross, Dartford East Hill, Tonbridge (Southborough), Maidstone- Loose Road, Maidstone- Sandling, Canterbury- Sturry, Ashford Town Centre).	**YES**
BP 2	To identify and deliver a further package of minor highway improvements which may be beneficial to operators (and provide reciprocal benefit) following feedback from existing Punctuality Improvement Partnership meetings.	**YES**
BP 3	Work with Kent Borough Councils to use district Local Transport Plans and Strategies to identify additional locations (to BP1) for bus priority. Ensuring a well-rounded approach to transport which increases efficiency and impact. (e.g. Canterbury Bus Led Strategy).	**YES**
BP 4	Develop understanding of alternative methods of innovative data capture (such as mobile network data, real time sensors and BODS reliability outputs) to identify additional bus priority locations to BP1 & BP 3. Focus on those areas where delays exist but may be underrepresented by those experiencing delays and areas which improve bus operating speed and punctuality – i.e. addressing BSIP Targets.	**YES**

Page 298

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Bus Priority and Highways Management

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
BP 5	Using the Traffic Management Act 2006 Part 6 powers to continue carrying out ANPR enforcement to ensure effective and safe bus priority. Investigating ways other traffic restrictions may improve bus priority, such as yellow box junction enforcement.	**YES**
BP 6	Increasing the inspection regime for temporary street works on bus routes to ensure works are completed without undue delay. Supporting the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and managing pressures roadworks place on punctual bus movement.	**YES**
BP 7	Installation of countywide RTIGXML Traffic Priority system. Enables bus ticket machines to provide our traffic light signals with real time location data to ensure priority through traffic light corridors.	**YES**
BP 8	Explore innovative methods of enforcement of parking restrictions to promote compliance.	**YES**
BP 9	Parking policy and countywide strategy between district councils. Supporting district councils in retaining civil enforcement officers and attracting strong employment.	**YES**

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Fares and Ticketing

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
FT 1	Develop a network of multi-operator ticketing zones in the County using the Project Coral back office and EMV cards or M-ticketing with bar codes. Would need some expert resource if setup is not part of the Project Coral package. Assumes pricing at commercial fare levels if funding to reduce prices is not available. See below for funded offers.	**YES**
FT 1A	Introduce a maximum day ticket fare across the County. This could replace the Discovery Ticket for travel within Kent and would affect top end single fares if the fare cap ceases.	**YES**
FT 1B	Introduce local daily fare zones around Kent's major towns. Potential for flat fares if the fare cap ceases. The level of fare discount will depend on future stability and the level of support available. Priority for Thanet (Superbus) and West Kent (larger number of operators).	**YES**
FT 2	Support Home to School travel on the bus network with innovative ticketing pricing solutions.	**YES**
FT 3	MaaS expansion to the rest of Kent if it is sustainable or cost neutral after the set up and introductory period.	**YES**
FT 4	Ticketing provision trial in Bus/Travel Hubs to speed bus boarding times. Simple EMV purchase of most popular tickets.	**YES**
FT 5	Expand the successful bus/rail plus bus ticket scheme to include, for example, stations in Swale and to relaunch the scheme to enhance its promotion.	**YES**

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
WI 1	Using the bus stop hierarchy produced in 23/24 as a base, build on information currently available to produce a full asset database for each marked bus stop in the county. Subsequently seek to deliver improvements using this hierarchy as a base, including improvements to overall accessibility to the bus network, facility levels in terms of information, connectivity with other travel modes etc. Consider locations for upgrade to Travel Hubs under this analysis.	**YES**
WI 2	KCC will seek to roll out successful technology trials introduced at bus stops using 24/25 BSIP funding at locations across Kent, utilising the bus stop hierarchy to inform this. Further technology trials will be pursued as new advancements are made.	**YES**
WI 3	Work collaboratively with Parish Councils to Improve passenger experience and safety in rural villages through technological innovation. This will include the provision of battery powered real-time information and solar-powered lighting at key rural locations.	**YES**
WI 4	KCC will look to identify and engage with key tourist destinations to improve the infrastructure offer at these locations, increasing attractiveness of using sustainable travel to these locations and raising awareness through branding.	**YES**

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
WI 5	Following the rollout of a number Real-Time Information screens in 23/24 and 24/25, KCC will continue the rollout of improved passenger digital information utilising its 'Bus Stop Hierarchy'. Consideration will be given to how integration can be maximised through this work – e.g. potential for screens at rail stations/health care centres etc.	**YES**
WI 6	KCC will engage with Kent Police to identify crime hotspots in the county. KCC will conduct a feasibility study identifying potential improvements to passenger safety, and the perception of passenger safety. This may include increased stop relocation, improved lighting in the area, working with District Councils to provide CCTV etc.	**YES**
WI 7	Continue to work in partnership with Southeastern, bus operators, Active Travel Schemes and local groups to improve Kent's transport cohesion. KCC will aim to create one travel hub for each EP area over the 25-29 BSIP period.	**YES**

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Bus Information and Network Identity

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
PTII 1	KCC and Kent's bus operators will proactively promote the bus network and the role of buses in supporting strategic priorities and other activity such as tourism, environmental benefits, road safety etc. We will work with key partners to ensure public transport is publicised. KCC will work with organisations such as Visit Kent, National Trust and Kent Country Parks to produce publicity informing the public of the sites of interest in Kent which can be accessed by bus.	**YES**
PTII 2	KCC will Improve on street wayfinding signage between Bus, Rail and Ferry services to improve the ease of interchange between different modes. This will include arrows and maps detailing the public transport infrastructure located nearby.	**YES**
PTII 3	KCC recognises that a significant number of residents are not able to access the improved digital journey information. KCC will look to utilise paper-based materials to support the publicity of BSIP funded initiatives and campaigns to encourage the use of the bus.	**YES**
PTII 4	KCC will continue to provide and develop the interactive bus map provided with 23/24 BSIP funding (e.g. explore how fares information can be included from BODs).	**YES**

Page 303

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Bus Passenger Experience – Passenger Charter

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
BPE 1	Using the principles of the Kent Bus Passenger Charter, develop the means in which feedback can be provided online by passengers to KCC and operators. Consider whether this can be aligned with KCC's Bus Information Portal (delivered with 23-24 BSIP funding).	**YES**
BPE 2	Develop other physical means for passengers to provide feedback in line with the passenger charter – e.g. potential trial of feedback buttons on buses and ability to feedback issues/concerns with infrastructure at travel hubs.	**YES**
BPE 3	The support of an annual survey of passengers (and non-passengers) to understand levels of satisfaction and areas for development.	**YES**

On Bus Accessibility, Inclusion, personal safety and security

The areas of accessibility, inclusion, safety and security including walking routes to bus stops and waiting facilities are covered within other initiative categories.

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
OB 1	Bus Driver Training – Work with SME operators to develop the training school and associated training materials, with an emphasis on passenger safety training and customer service.	**YES**

Page 304

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Environment and Improvements to the bus fleet

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
EAQI 1	The introduction of zero emission buses (for all day workings) on priority corridors identified through KCC's Air Quality Management Area Hierarchy: Upper Stone Street, Maidstone A2, Sittingbourne Dartford Town Centre	**YES** **YES** **YES**
EAQI 2	Tendered services will invite bids for differing levels of emission standards, so that costs can be clearly identified.	**YES**

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

2025-2029 Initiative Proposals

Longer Term Transformation of the network – Alternative Delivery Models

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?
LTT 1	**Dynamic Scheduling.** Use Fastrack and another high frequency service in the east of the county to test London style dynamic scheduling for one year outside of London on High Frequency services to improve reliability. Approval needed by the Traffic Commissioner. GAL will be able to do this easily as they already have the software and experience from TfL contracts.	**YES**
LTT 2	**£1 Bus Travel for Amazon Prime Members.** Using the Fastrack network as a testbed, work with our partners at Amazon to measure the propensity for increased bus use with such app-based membership discounts..	**YES**
LTT 4	**Bus Specific Town Planner/Developer Training.** Design and implement a short training course for town planners and housing developers demonstrating the positive impact and necessary role buses must play in future design. With the ambition of future national adoption and mandatory status. With input from bus operators on optimal design.	**YES**
LTT 5	**Growth of Fastrack BRT Concept:** Through utilising recommendations within the commissioned Fastrack Expansion Feasibility Study, seek to develop and introduce the Fastrack model to other viable areas across the county.	**YES**

Page 306

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

Commentary on Initiatives

Network Development

NDI 1
KCC will secure ongoing funding that will enable the Council to work in conjunction with bus operators to protect the existing network, sustaining services currently supported through BSIP and BSIP+ funding.

Reduced off-peak bus usage and revenue plus increased operating costs has made much of the network commercially unsustainable. Currently. 49 services are operating only with financial support provided using BSIP/BSIP+ funding. Our priority in both our initial and this updated BSIP is to ensure we can sustain the current network before considering enhancements, but this will rely on a long-term funding plan.

NDI 2
KCC will work in conjunction with network operators to review the possibility of growing the rebased bus network, reintroducing services and improving frequencies, and introducing a more expansive evening and weekend network of buses on identified strategic bus corridors where there is new optimism for patronage growth and future sustainability.

During and since the pandemic, Kent's bus network has contracted by around 20% with some services being reduced in frequency or coverage, and others withdrawn completely. KCC will use any funding available to 'pump prime' journeys or services; re-introducing frequencies and journeys previously removed where they can be sustainable again in the future and building on the existing network to expand coverage of the network through extended times and days of operation.

NDI 3
KCC will use the results of the Bus Connectivity Assessment complimented by analysis of outputs from the Network Planning tool to increase the proportion of Kent households with access to; business, healthcare, work, education, retail and leisure destinations within 30 minutes of bus travel and increase levels of rural connectivity to the core network.

The Bus Connectivity Assessment (BCA) completed in Spring 2024 considers whether the current bus network provides appropriate access to schools, employment centres, healthcare, retail and other destinations. KCC will use funding available to build upon improvements delivered in NDI2 to further expand the network. We will

look to deliver an Enhanced Inter-Urban corridor strategy that provides services operating at least every 30 minutes during the daytimes on Mondays to Saturdays and hourly at evenings and weekends and supplementing this enhanced core network with a range of transport solutions for more rural areas.

An indicative example of how the network could evolve following the delivery of NDI1, NDI2 and NDI3 (should funding be available through the NBS process) is included as Appendix D.

NDI 4
KCC will look to use its BSIP and any associated funding to support the key aspirations of more localized bus strategies and sustainable transport strategies forming part of District Council's Local Plans such as the Canterbury Bus Strategy, the Ebbsfleet Sustainable Travel Strategy and the Tunbridge Wells Bus Strategy.

KCC will look to use its BSIP and any associated funding to support key aspirations in more localised bus and sustainable transport strategies within District Councils' Local Plans such as the Canterbury Bus Strategy, Ebbsfleet Sustainable Travel Strategy and the Tunbridge Wells Bus Strategy.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

NDI 5
Secure the long-term access and use of a Network planning tool to continue to inform future BSIP reviews and responses to Bus Connectivity Audits.

Using BSIP funding, KCC has secured a network accessibility analysis and network planning tool. We are using this to inform our BSIP refresh and support work on the BCA. Funding would enable us to continue using this tool on future work in this area.

NDI 6
Strengthen data collection tools and processes to improve reporting, analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of network changes & improvements.

Developing and reporting on BSIPs, responding to BCAs and understanding and planning the network more generally are increasingly data driven. We will work to develop our data management and analysis capabilities to support this.

Bus Priority & Highways Management

BP 1
To progress detailed feasibility reviews and subsequent delivery of bus priority schemes on bus corridors identified in Chapter 2 – *Current Offer to Bus Passengers*. Many of these sites were also in Kent's 2021 BSIP but do not yet have funding. A detailed review will be required to ensure the sites provide practical support in line with The Plan for Drivers and DfT guidance.

To promote bus travel effectively, we must ensure services are reliable and journey times are efficient. Bus priority seeks ways to attract bus users by reducing journey times. By identifying congestion hotspots, we understand where bus priority measures would create improvements and smoother journeys in busier areas. These are high traffic locations, requiring significant design and implementation to see real improvements. They remain a priority for KCC and part of our pledge to provide an environment where buses can be the preferred method of travel. We are also committed to ensuring any proposals are updated to reflect the current environment and wider ideals, including The Plan for Drivers. We recognise that that bus priority measures can look different in each location given the existing infrastructure and local environment.

BP 2
To identify and deliver a further package of minor highway improvements which may be beneficial to operators (and provide reciprocal benefit) following feedback from existing Punctuality Improvement Partnership meetings.

We have seen great success with the PIP initiative under the existing BSIP. With operators we have identified lower-level concerns and issues affecting wider punctuality and service levels. By enabling operators to make their own submissions, we have ensured this provides local, smaller-scale benefits in locations where funding would otherwise have been unavailable. The nature of these schemes has also meant the BSIP has reached areas of Kent where other measures may not. We aim to continue reinforcing the support provided by the BSIP funding. The number of submissions from operators countywide has been higher than expected, underlining the need for this funding source. This has given our PIP meetings greater direction and impact since proposed changes can actually be funded.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

BP 3
Work with Kent Borough Councils to use district Local Transport Plans and Strategies to identify additional locations (to BP1) for bus priority. Ensuring a well-rounded approach to transport which increases efficiency and impact. (e.g. Canterbury Bus Led Strategy)

Working with Borough councils on their wider Local Plans and Strategies, we seek to ensure that early opportunities for bus-led schemes will form part of our combined approach. We will ensure our transport strategies align and support the future of Kent's bus travel. Our changing landscapes and increasing residential and commercial development continue to provide opportunities to highlight bus priority at early stages. We intend to emphasise this link further to ensure measures are given greater importance in planning stages.

BP 4
Develop understanding of alternative methods of innovative data capture (such as mobile network data, real time sensors and BODS reliability outputs) to identify additional bus priority locations to BP1 & BP 3. Focus on those areas where delays exist but may be underrepresented by those experiencing delays and areas which improve bus operating speed and punctuality – i.e. addressing BSIP Targets.

We are aware that information about bus delays may be limited to known congestion and disruption hotspots. We need to consider the whole network equally and ensure we are actively seeking data on where interventions may be required. Keeping up to date with changing data capture methods means we can consider issues which may traditionally not have been as clear and obvious. The county will be visualised as a whole, which should reduce the time taken to identify locations. We recognise the need for continued improvement to the network: this initiative aims to keep us engaged with the lived experiences of Kent residents.

BP 5
Using the Traffic Management Act 2006 Part 6 powers to continue carrying out ANPR enforcement to ensure effective and safe bus priority. Investigating ways other traffic restrictions may improve bus priority, such as yellow box junction enforcement.

Our devolved powers to enforce certain traffic restrictions has helped reduce the impact of wider misuse on existing bus priority measures. We have already identified locations around Kent where ANPR enforcement will maximise journey time savings. With additional funding, we wish to explore the full extent of these new powers to further strengthen our current measures and ensure success for any future similar locations. Through enforcing restrictions such as yellow box junctions in our busiest locations, we can expand any route improvements beyond physical infrastructure.

BP 6
Increasing the inspection regime for temporary Street works on bus routes to ensure works are completed without undue delay. Supporting the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and managing pressures roadworks place on punctual bus movement.

Kent and its operators consistently face the challenge of disruption to the road network and bus services from planned or emergency road works. Utility companies and others who work on the highway are bound by legal notification and consultation requirements, but there is often a disparity between this legislation and rules that apply to public transport. It is therefore increasingly important that we combine the needs of bus users, utilities and our highway authority to maintain apparatus and repair roads. While we understand road works are necessary, we will look to bolster the inspection regime on

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

routes with frequent bus services, to promote on-site attendance and requests for faster site clearance. Works cannot always be done quickly, but this initiative will give us the best chance of reducing disruption wherever possible.

BP 7
Installation of countywide RTIGXML Traffic Priority system. Enables bus ticket machines to provide our traffic light signals with real time location data to ensure priority through traffic light corridors.

Kent's road network is extremely complex, and it is often very difficult to install new priority routes for buses within existing infrastructure. We must therefore consider alternative ways to allow buses to pass smoothly through our busiest locations. The RTIGXML Traffic Priority system uses existing ticketing machines readily available on most services to notify linked traffic light systems of buses' approach, using preset GPS data feeds. Traffic signals will then be programmed to prioritise the approaching bus by changing to green. This technology can create a corridor where there are multiple signal-controlled junctions, providing a faster through route. We believe this is the most time- and cost-efficient method of promoting bus priority through these congested areas.

BP 8
Explore innovative methods of enforcement of parking restrictions to promote compliance.

We will look for alternative means to enforce parking restrictions. We will research and develop enforcement using methods such as Outdoor Individual Space Monitoring, where sensors detect parked vehicles during restricted times. Using technology, we may be able to enforce a wider area and make motorists aware they risk being caught even if the area is not actively patrolled, which should improve compliance.

BP 9
Parking policy and countywide strategy between district councils. Supporting district councils in retaining civil enforcement officers and attracting strong employment.

We will continue to reduce misuse of parking restrictions which obstruct the free-flowing movement of buses. As advised in the 2021 BSIP, we have worked with district councils to create focus groups and identified where and why enforcement issues may be occurring. District councils are concerned at satisfaction and retention levels among civil enforcement officers (CEOs). Through understanding the challenges CEOs face, we intend to support Districts through incentives and improved working conditions.

Fares and Ticketing

FT 1
Develop a network of multi-operator ticketing zones in the County using the Project Coral back office and EMV cards or M-ticketing with bar codes. Would need some expert resource if setup is not part of the Project Coral package. Assumes pricing at commercial fare levels if funding to reduce prices is not available.

The current programme for 2024/25 will equip bus operators with on-bus ticket machines able to work with QR codes and tap on/tap off readers. Using this capability, we will implement multi-operator ticketing once the nationwide Project Coral revenue allocation platform is up and running. Under this initiative, we would employ outside expert resources to set up ticketing zones across Kent on the Coral platform. The assumption is that these zones would be priced under this initiative at commercial pricing levels. However, if funding becomes available allowing us to launch with reduced pricing, the following two initiatives will build on this one to achieve it.

Page 310

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

FT 1A

Introduce a maximum day ticket fare across the County. This could replace the Discovery Ticket for travel within Kent and would affect top end single fares if the fare cap ceases.

Most of Kent's bus network is covered by the Discovery Ticket which gives a full day's travel across the South-East. Prices can seem high for more local travel just within the county of Kent, so we propose to use funding to support a more attractive price for travel within the county, at least for its initial years of operation.

FT 1B

Introduce local daily fare zones around Kent's major towns. Potential for flat fares if the fare cap ceases. The level of fare discount will depend on future stability and the level of support available. Priority for Thanet (Superbus) and West Kent (larger number of operators).

To make bus travel even more attractive, we are seeking funding to introduce fare zones around the main towns in Kent, linking in with Project Coral. We would include day and period tickets and, if the current £2.00 fare cap ceases, look at introducing flat fares in these zones. Priority would be given to the Thanet area, to build on the LOOP Superbus initiative, and in West Kent where the

larger number of operators means multi-operator ticketing would be most beneficial.

FT 2

Support Home to School travel on the bus network with innovative ticketing pricing solutions.

School travel is a vital part of Kent's bus network owing to the wide range of parental choice in the county. We have already used BSIP funding to offer lower ticket prices than would otherwise be possible, providing welcome relief to parents at a time of rising costs of living. If funding is available, we will continue to provide discounted travel for schoolchildren and the 16-19 age group on the Kent bus network.

FT 3

MaaS expansion to the rest of Kent if it is sustainable or cost neutral after the set up and introductory period.

BSIP funding will enable a Mobility-as-a-Service (MaaS) scheme in Kent Thameside in 2025 consolidating planning and booking platforms from different transport modes in one app. This complements the new developments in this area and the expanding Fastrack network but will also benefit existing residents. If the first stage is successful, we would seek further funding to expand the MaaS platform across Kent.

FT 4

Ticketing provision trial in Bus/Travel Hubs to speed bus boarding times. Simple EMV purchase of most popular tickets.

We are also planning to improve bus stations and key interchanges, including introducing Travel Hubs. To add to their attractiveness and improve boarding times, if funding is available, we would conduct a trial in at least one hub with a modern compact ticketing facility using EMV cards or phone scanners to enable quick purchase of the most popular ticket types.

FT 5

Expand the successful bus/rail plus bus ticket scheme to include, for example, stations in Swale and to relaunch the scheme to enhance its promotion.

Most Kent towns are already part of the PlusBus ticketing schemes giving a local bus add-on to train tickets. This initiative would expand this where not currently available and where there are good links to a station. We have identified stations in Swale as a gap in PlusBus coverage; a small amount of funding would enable us to run a promotional campaign in this area, and a more general relaunch of the ticket in Kent.

Page 311

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

WI 1
Using the bus stop hierarchy produced in 23/24 as a base, build on information currently available to produce a full asset database for each marked bus stop in the county. Subsequently seek to deliver improvements using this hierarchy as a base, including improvements to overall accessibility to the bus network, facility levels in terms of information, connectivity with other travel modes etc. Consider locations for upgrade to Travel Hubs under this analysis.

At present, we do not have a detailed database of bus stop infrastructure in Kent. This can make it challenging to maintain them, and lead to delays in repairs or confusion when replacing parts.

Subject to funding, we will conduct a survey of all our physical bus stop infrastructure to create a database. This would enable us to conduct repairs and react to vandalism more efficiently. It would also be used in conjunction with the hierarchy to identify high importance boarding points with sub-standard infrastructure for targeted upgrades.

WI 2
KCC will seek to roll out successful technology trials introduced at bus stops using 24/25 BSIP funding at locations across Kent, utilising the bus stop hierarchy to inform this. Further technology trials will be pursued as new advancements are made.

Following successful local trials, we will seek to roll out well-received new technology more widely. Since bus stops mark both ends of any journey, it is important that they are modern and attractive to new and existing passengers. This is particularly important in Kent, with its historic infrastructure and rural character.

To keep up with advances in technology, we will also commit to further trials in the 2025-29 BSIP period. It is increasingly important that we embrace new ways of working: allowing our infrastructure to become old and outdated reduces its appeal to new passengers.

WI 3
Work collaboratively with Parish Councils to Improve passenger experience and safety in rural villages through technological innovation. This will include the provision of battery powered real-time information and solar-powered lighting at key rural locations.

Unsurprisingly, bus stops with the highest footfall mostly lie within more densely populated urban areas. This tends to attract greater investment from local authorities looking for improvements that deliver value for money by benefiting as many passengers as possible.

We are keen to ensure that rural areas and smaller towns do not miss out. Rural areas offer unique challenges for public transport, including lack of street lighting and access to power. Subject to funding, KCC will use local knowledge to identify key areas within parishes where investment will be of greatest benefit. Improvements will be tailored to individual sites but will include access to simpler forms of real-time information and lighting.

WI 4
KCC will look to identify and engage with key tourist destinations to improve the infrastructure offer at these locations, increasing attractiveness of using sustainable travel to these locations and raising awareness through branding.

Kent is known as the 'Garden of England'and has numerous beauty spots, sites of historical significance and tourist attractions. Following the success of similar 'branded route' schemes, we

Page 312

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

want to promote these destinations and improve their accessibility via public transport. Those in rural locations would benefit from infrastructure modernisation.

Targeted infrastructure improvements and brand awareness campaigns will allow better access for those with mobility impairments, young children etc. Promoting sustainable travel to these locations will also aid the local economy, and potentially lower congestion.

WI 5
Following the rollout of a number of Real-Time Information screens in 23/24 and 24/25, KCC will continue the rollout of improved passenger digital information utilising its 'Bus Stop Hierarchy'. Consideration will be given to how integration can be maximised through this work – e.g. potential for screens at rail stations/ health care centres etc.

In market research, residents highlighted improved provision of accurate service information. We are already delivering this through real-time information screens at urban centres, transport interchanges and bus stations.

There is however plenty of scope to take this

further. Having already purchased a back office' for real-time information, further investment will provide a greater return on spend. We can continue to use the bus stop hierachy to identify priority spots to install information, such as at railway stations and health centres.

WI 6
KCC will engage with Kent Police to identify crime hotspots in the county. KCC will conduct a feasibility study identifying potential improvements to passenger safety, and the perception of passenger safety. This may include increased stop relocation, improved lighting in the area, working with District Councils to provide CCTV etc.

Passenger surveys showed perceptions around safety, particularly in darkness, are a major barrier to using public transport, especially for vulnerable groups. We therefore will work with passenger groups, district authorities, Kent Police, operators and other stakeholders to identify measures to overcome this barrier. This could include increased stop relocation, improved lighting, working with district authorities to provide CCTV and more.

WI 7
Continue to work in partnership with Southeastern, bus operators, Active Travel Schemes and local groups to improve Kent's transport cohesion. KCC will aim to create one travel hub for each EP area over the 25-29 BSIP period.

Today's transport environment is largely deregulated and Kent's bus and rail services are run by independent operators. While this has some advantages, it can lead to areas existing in a 'transport vacuum'. We will seek to bridge the gap between different transport modes, including providing walking and cycle routes, under our remit as the highway authority. Better integration of sustainable travel methods will give passengers a better experience and make the network more efficient overall.

To achieve this, we will commit to investing in specific travel hubs in each EP area before 2030. These will provide interchanges between different transport modes at key locations, identified via working groups with relevant stakeholders.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

Bus Information

PTII 1
KCC and Kent's bus operators will proactively promote the bus network and the role of buses in supporting strategic priorities and other activity such as tourism, environmental benefits, road safety etc. We will work with key partners to ensure public transport is publicised. KCC will work with organisations such as Visit Kent, National Trust and Kent Country Parks to produce publicity informing the public of the sites of interest in Kent which can be accessed by bus.

Kent's numerous leisure attractions are enjoyed by residents and tourists alike. Providing information on how to reach them by bus boosts both bus usage and visitor numbers. We are looking to establish partnerships with visitor organisations to improve this information, and give the public greater confidence regarding timetables, stopping points and walking routes.

PTII 2
KCC will Improve on street wayfinding signage between Bus, Rail and Ferry services to improve the ease of interchange between different modes. This will include arrows and maps detailing the public transport infrastructure located nearby.

While our 2023/24 initiatives have focused on improving real-time on-street service information for bus and rail journeys, knowing where to go when interchanging is also important. We are looking to improve wayfinding signage, including maps and arrows, at interchange points between bus, rail and ferry, to make walking between these different modes easier. Where these facilities are not located next to each other, improved signage will boost public confidence around interchanging and help overcome a potentially important barrier to multi-modal journeys.

PTII 3
KCC recognises that a significant number of residents are not able to access the improved digital journey information. KCC will look to utilise paper-based materials to support the publicity of BSIP funded initiatives and campaigns to encourage the use of the bus.

Utilising existing BSIP funding, we are rolling out a bus service information portal, including an interactive bus map, as well as QR code technology at bus stops to provide service information. However, we recognise digital technology does not work for all members of the public. Bus operators have traditionally been responsible for paper-based service publicity. Subject to funding, we would seek opportunities to use these materials, including timetable information and publicity for other BSIP-funded initiatives and events, to raise awareness and boost bus use.

PTII 4
KCC will continue to provide and develop the interactive bus map provided with 23/24 BSIP funding (e.g. explore how fares information can be included from BODs)

The bus passenger information portal will combine real-time bus tracking information, timetables and a multi-modal journey planner on a single site. Working with operators and BODS, we will seek opportunities to develop this further, identifying additional bus data feeds, including fare information, vehicle occupancy, and service disruption, which could be beneficial to users.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

Bus Passenger Experience – Passenger Charter

BPE 1
Using the principles of the Kent Bus Passenger Charter, develop the means in which feedback can be provided online by passengers to KCC and operators. Consider whether this can be aligned with KCC's Bus Information Portal (delivered with 23-24 BSIP funding).

Key principles within the Kent Bus Passenger Charter will include the wider passenger experience and how users report challenges to operators. Should funding be available, we could further develop our Bus Information Portal to include a feedback element, allowing passengers to report issues/successes with particular services separately to KCC.

BPE 2
Develop other physical means for passengers to provide feedback in line with the passenger charter – e.g. potential trial of feedback buttons on buses and ability to feedback issues/concerns with infrastructure at travel hubs.

To harness technological advances, should funding be made available, we will look to trial using feedback buttons on hand-picked key

routes to determine overall journey satisfaction. We could also investigate using technology to report issues or concerns with infrastructure at major travel hubs.

BPE 3
The support of an annual survey of passengers (and non-passengers) to understand levels of satisfaction and areas for development.

To build on survey work conducted to date to support our BSIP and EPs around passenger satisfaction we will expand our survey audience to reach non bus users.

On Bus Accessibility, Inclusion, personal safety and security

OB 1
Bus Driver Training – Work with SME operators to develop the training school and associated training materials, with an emphasis on passenger safety training and customer service.

Three small and medium sized operators plan to introduce a small-scale driver training school in 2024 with a grant from KCC. However, to be effective, the project needs to be expanded. We are seeking further funding to acquire mid-life buses for training and to contribute towards running costs.

Commentary on Initiatives

Environment and Improvements to the bus fleet

EAQI 1
The introduction of zero emission buses (for all day workings) on priority corridors identified through KCC's Air Quality Management Area Hierarchy: Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, A2, Sittingbourne, Dartford Town Centre.

Decarbonising the bus fleet will be a gradual process, with some routes still requiring improvements in technology before they could be considered for electrically powered buses. In using public funds to accelerate the process, we look to maximise the environmental benefits by concentrating on areas with poor air quality. At this stage, we would be converting routes running all day rather than concentrating on school and peak-only buses, which make only one or two journeys per day through the area.

Upper Stone Street is part of the A229, a key exit route from Maidstone town centre, used by buses heading south and south-east on both local and longer distance routes. The wider A229 is part of the worst air pollution AQMA area in Kent, so conversion of buses here would have a wider impact.

Sittingbourne is the second worst AQMA in Kent. All-day bus routes in the town are provided by two operators, both of whom have investigated the use of electrically powered buses. The road layout, pedestrian crossings, and lights to control conflicting movements, creates stop-start traffic in the town centre. Emissions from diesel buses are consequently higher than in free-flowing conditions (although a number do meet Euro VI standards) but could be entirely eliminated with electric vehicles.

Dartford town centre AQMA area is the third worst for NOx and PM in Kent. Further investment here would complement the ZEBRA-funded investment on the Kent Thameside Fastrack contract, and also new spending by TfL, which is responsible for almost half of bus movements within Dartford town centre.

EAQI 2
Tendered services will invite bids for differing levels of emission standards, so that costs can be clearly identified.

Many tendered services are operated by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). For them, the cost of brand-new buses is a significant barrier, while the cost of depot electrification could not be borne by a single contracted service, most of which employ fewer than three buses. In addition, peak hour extra journeys, for example school transport, often use older buses that carry out little or no other work at other times. However, some SMEs use former TfL buses with exhausts upgraded to meet, or nearly meet, Euro VI standards. Our tendering procedure will explicitly seek prices for vehicles that meet these higher standards, so we can assess value for money against the cost of using other vehicles that do not.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

Longer Term Transformation of the Network

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LTT 1
Dynamic Scheduling. Use Fastrack and another high frequency service in the east of the county to test London style dynamic scheduling for one year outside of London on High Frequency services to improve reliability. Approval needed by the Traffic Commissioner. GAL will be able to do this easily as they already have the software and experience from TfL contracts.
</div>

While the UK bus network has done a good job of utilising better available data in fixed service planning, outside of London it has not translated this into real time service planning. Alongside improvements in live passenger information, including the development of Kent's MaaS app, there is an opportunity to develop real time dynamic bus schedules to vastly improve service reliability for our customers. Fastrack operates in an area of Kent with the most variability in traffic conditions but as a high frequency operation it has the ability to adapt schedules instantly to reflect those current conditions. Developing a methodology for Dynamic Scheduling would allow journey planners to transform mobility, particularly in urban areas. The data we need to build dynamic networks and communication

channels already exist. It is a process and framework to legally work within that needs to be developed outside of London.

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LTT 2
£1 Bus Travel for Amazon Prime Members. Using the Fastrack network as a testbed, work with our partners at Amazon to measure the propensity for increased bus use with such app-based membership discounts.
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The way in which we consume things has changed. The idea of a wallet is no longer a piece of folded leather but a folder on a Smart device. Usership over ownership is the driving economic force now and buses should seek to sell products through the most popular retail channels and 'shop windows' of our potential customers. Over 90% of those that use or would consider using Fastrack state that they use Amazon to make purchases at least once a month. Over 60% hold Amazon Prime accounts, and nearly all of these memberships are obtained for specific discounts that can be obtained. Building on our existing contractual relationship with Amazon, we propose to test the idea that discounted bus travel would be an attractor to Prime membership and in return, Amazon would use this increased uptake to part

subsidise public transport and increase uptake through the attraction of exclusive discount. Digital products purchased would be compatible on services instantaneously and furthermore, prepaid products are likely to reduce boarding dwell times.

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LTT 4
Bus Specific Town Planner/Developer Training Design and implement a short training course for town planners and housing developers demonstrating the positive impact and necessary role buses must play in future design. With the ambition of future national adoption and mandatory status. With input from bus operators on optimal design.
</div>

The planning and establishment of a new BRT system within a new or existing urban environment is a huge challenge. Although the initial concept may have germinated in the context of existing planning duties, it is advisable to structure, motivate, and select a collective BRT focused working group to develop the idea in the earliest planning phase of the system. A quality BRT system can only be achieved within the desired time frame through a detailed understanding of the requirements and required outcomes. Through the development of a

Page 317

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

Commentary on Initiatives

nationally recognised training Programme and recognition by town planners and developers alike, prosperous communities can be built around fully functioning large scale bus networks.

LTT 5

Growth of Fastrack BRT Concept: Through utilising recommendations within the commissioned Fastrack Expansion Feasibility Study, seek to develop and introduce the Fastrack model to other viable areas across the county.

The commission would be for a further deeper dive analysis within Kent of where BRT could unlock further development opportunities as well as improving existing bus networks in specific locations. Canterbury has been identified as an additional opportunity area, alongside the existing research for eastbound expansion of the existing Kent Thameside Fastrack network.

Page 318

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

3. Improvements Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals for 2025 and Beyond

5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

⑤ Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

Introduction

This chapter discusses how Kent's BSIP and EP are monitored through an established meeting structure and progress to date on targets set in the 2021 BSIP & subsequent EP.

Approach to Governance/Monitoring and Engagement

In our 2021 BSIP, we noted that, regardless of any ultimate funding award, we wanted to use the opportunities provided by the NBS to create closer working relationships with stakeholders including district councils, bus operators, the wider public and most importantly bus users. We then noted how we wanted to use those developed relationships to monitor progress on our BSIP targets and EP commitments through a meeting structure designed to both meet statutory governance requirements and provide local engagement opportunities.

Although not required to by the guidance, we engaged widely with operators, local members, district and borough Councils and Kent residents when drafting our 2021 BSIP. This activity is summarised in Appendix A.

Meeting Structure to Support Kent's BSIP and EPs

We have established a meeting structure, as outlined in the 2021 BSIP, to support the ambitions outlined above. The Enhanced Partnership Board (EPB) oversees Kent's EP as a whole. It is chaired by KCC's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and comprises other officers from KCC and bus operator representatives. The EPB votes on key changes or additions to our EP schemes and fosters positive dialogue between KCC and the bus operators.

We also run three Enhanced Partnership Scheme Monitoring Groups (EPSMGs), one for each EP Scheme area. These are attended by KCC and all operators in the area who have an EP commitment to attend. They are also open to the relevant district and borough councils. They consider any proposed decisions coming to EPB, have the ability to raise concerns and suggest items for the EPB agenda and provide a forum to discuss strategic improvements in the area concerned.

In January 2023, we relaunched our Punctuality and Improvement Partnership (PIP) meetings. These support bus operators in all aspects of KCC and District Councils' network management responsibilities, tackling issues such as bus priority scheme identification and design, network and

roadworks management and reliability, parking strategy and parking enforcement. We used the PIPs to inform our 2023/24 BSIP initiative programme, particularly to identify locations for bus-related highway improvement schemes and for sites for ANPR enforcement.

Our 2021 BSIP noted that, before the NBS was published, Kent ran a number of Quality Bus Partnerships. These brought KCC, local operators and the relevant borough or district council together to discuss local strategic and operational issues such as planning, parking enforcement and infrastructure. While the EP required new statutory meetings– i.e. the EPB and EPSMGs – we did not want to lose this more local engagement. We therefore stated our intention to encourage district and borough councils to establish focus groups to replicate the positive local discussions at QBPs and feed into the wider EP meeting structure. Councils including Canterbury and Swale have established these groups successfully.

Performance and Targets

The 2021 BSIP set out six targets for improving Kent's bus network in 2024/25. Base information was provided for 2018/19 and 2019/20, the last two years before the Covid pandemic. However, we produced these targets before our BSIP award was announced. The allocation to KCC, and indeed to all authorities, whilst positive was smaller than we had hoped and as such would not support delivery of the full BSIP and therefore original targets. We therefore revised the targets in our EP schemes in April 2023 to reflect the actual award, which itself was delayed by almost a year.

Past performance	Actual 2018/19	Actual 2019/20	Actual 2020/21
Journey Time (bus speeds)	n/a	24.7 KM/hr	23.88 KM/hr
Reliability (Service timekeeping)	Nov19: 77.7%	Jun21: 85.0%	Nov 23: 72.6%
Reliability (Service operated)	Nov19: 98.7%	Jun21: 99.0%	Nov 23: 97.1%
Passenger numbers (Adjusted for Cross boundary routes)	52.6m	51.0m	44.8 m
Passenger satisfaction (Different basis from 2018-2020)	(86.0%)	(89.0%)	67.9%
Vehicle Emissions	n/a	26.1%	40%

Bus Speeds

In 2019/20, the average timetabled speed on Kent bus routes was 24.7 KM per hour. Our target was to maintain this in 2024/25 before any bus priority measures were introduced. However, the 2023/24 figure shows scheduled speeds of 23.88 KM/hour (representing a 12-month average from March 2023 – March 2024). This reflects many operators reworking their timetables to improve service punctuality in the light of performance standards set by the Traffic Commissioners. It is important to note that challenges facing bus services have been felt acutely in rural areas.

This has been demonstrated further within Kent's Bus Connectivity Assessments. Bus speeds are generally faster in rural areas where there is less congestion and better traffic flow. This has had an impact on this figure.

Service Timekeeping

While work is proceeding on the three bus priority schemes and smaller works measures in 2024/25, no significant improvements have yet been made to the road network on bus routes. The overall service reliability figure provided by operators in November 2023 was 72.6%. Although lower than 2019/20, that year had lighter traffic volumes owing to the pandemic, and congestion has returned to at least pre-Covid levels since then. As per bus speeds, most operators have regularly revised their timetables, but this has not kept pace with reality. Our target of maintaining the 2019/20 performance has therefore not been fully met, but the forthcoming bus priority measures should produce progress in future years. We aim to move to full ABOD reporting after we have worked through some issues reported by operators. As noted within earlier chapters of the BSIP, reliability of bus services is a big priority for both KCC and operators. For this reason, we have put a large focus on highway management within

1. Introduction, Context
   & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus
   Passengers

3. Improvements
   Programme to 2025

4. Ambitions and Proposals
   for 2025 and Beyond

**5. Targets, Performance
   Monitoring and Reporting**

6. List of Appendices

the document and have included a number of initiatives for 25-29 which will look to improve this performance.

Service Operated

In 2023/24, 97.1% of scheduled miles were actually operated. This represents a fall against the base years and our target of 99.5% has not yet been achieved. The key reason was the acute driver shortage after the pandemic, which have now been largely addressed through management action and new recruitment policies. A new driver training facility for smaller operators will also help.

Passenger numbers

Passenger figures for routes operating into Kent were 44.8m in 2023/24. The data for 2018/19 and 2019/20 quoted in the 2021 BSIP document included figures for cross-boundary services, including Transport for London (TfL) contracted routes. These are no longer included where a majority of the route lies outside Kent, and the early-year base figures have been adjusted accordingly. In our 2021 BSIP we noted that the target for 24/25 was to grow the network by 10% when compared to the rebased (post covid) network. This rebased figure as of 22/23 was 42.3m

While passenger numbers have clearly recovered, they are still at just 85% of 2018/19 levels. This has not been helped by the significant reduction in ENCTS passholders using buses.

Passenger Satisfaction

Our Summer 2023 passenger survey showed a satisfaction rate of 67.9%. Before the pandemic, surveys carried out on Passenger Focus asked passengers about the journey they had just taken. From 2023, we changed to conducting interviews at bus stops focusing on people's views of their bus service in general. We will continue our annual surveys on this basis, with the 2023 data as our baseline. The results have been calculated by the three EP scheme areas, so from 2024, we will be able to follow trends in each part of the county.

Vehicle Emissions

In the 2021 BSIP, we showed 26.1% of services operating with buses to at least Euro VI standards. However, most of these were on TfL cross-boundary services, where this is the minimum contracted standard. There was just one zero-emission bus in Kent. We now have 40% of buses on Kent routes meeting Euro VI emissions, reflecting low investment by operators during the pandemic recovery period. However, there is

now investment in zero-emission buses on the Fastrack bus fleet, due to enter service in 2025, plus Stagecoach's new fleet of 11 Euro VI buses in East Kent in 2024.

We will set new targets for 2024/25 in all six subject areas through the EP process and reflect on both the 2023/24 figures and the BSIP schemes coming into effect in the next year.

1. Introduction, Context & Our Bus Vision

2. Current offer to Bus Passengers

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5. Targets, Performance Monitoring and Reporting

6. List of Appendices

⑥ List of Appendices

The appendices can be found at: <u>kent.gov.uk</u>:

Appendix A – Engagement Report from 2021 BSIP

Appendix B – 2024/25 Current Network Table

Appendix C – Supporting Maps and Data

Appendix D – 2029 Indicative Future Network Table

Appendix E – Letters of Support from Kent Bus Operators

National Bus Strategy

Kent Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)
Version 2

July 2024

This publication is available in other formats
and can be explained in a range of languages

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EQIA Submission – ID Number
Section A

EQIA Title

Bus Service Improvement Plan and Bus Service Operators Grant Funding 2025-26

Responsible Officer

Dan Bruce - GT TRA

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

Project/Programme

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Growth Environment and Transport

Responsible Service

Highways & Transportation

Responsible Head of Service

Philip Lightowler - GT TRA

Responsible Director

Haroona Chughtai - GT TRA

Aims and Objectives

In January 2024, Government announced that all Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) were required to develop a revised version of their Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for 2024. KCC developed and submitted its updated BSIP in response to this requirement in June 2024.

On 17th November 2024, KCC learnt of a new indicative BSIP allocation for 2025/26 along with its allocation of Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) funding for the same period. KCC has been allocated a total of £23,134,379. On 20th December, KCC received its formal offer of this funding and the associated Memorandum of Understanding which confirmed this allocation which is collectively referred to as "the Bus Grant".

This EQIA relates to the proposed decision to accept this funding.

The Aims of this project are:
- To continue the work of BSIP undertaken to date (i.e. between 2021 and 2025)
- Working to the 2024 BSIP, deliver a programme of initiatives which firstly look to continue to protect the bus network where possible whilst building on this with other bus interventions..

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?
No

Have you consulted with stakeholders?
Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?
KCC's whole approach to BSIP relates back to feedback received from stakeholders in a significant public engagement exercise carried out in 2021. The 2024 BSIP (on which the use of this funding will be based) wa then subject to input from stakeholders including bus operators and District Councils. The 2024 BSIP was signed off by Kent's Enhanced Partnership meeting structure.   A further group of meetings will be utilsied to inform the delivery plan linked to this funding acceptance.

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
No

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
Acceptance of Kent's 2025/26 BSIP and BSOG allocation will result in the delivery of a number of initiatives which will sustain a number of bus services which would have otherwise have been withdrawn by commercial operators and build on this with a number of positive bus interventions.   The initiatives will deliver benefits to bus users across the county. There is also potential to encourage greater use of buses from people who may have seen barriers to bus use e.g cost or reliability. With more usage of buses across Kent, it will also have the positive impact with regards to bringing down emissions.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?
No

Details of negative impacts for Age
Not Applicable

Mitigating Actions for Age
Not Applicable

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age
Not Applicable

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

No	
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Disability	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Disability	
Not Applicable	
21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex	
Are there negative impacts for Sex	
No	
Details of negative impacts for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sex	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for Sex	
Not Applicable	
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
No	
Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender	
Not Applicable	
23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race	
Are there negative impacts for Race	
No	
Negative impacts for Race	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race	
Not Applicable	
24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief	
No	
Negative impacts for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Religion and belief	
Not Applicable	
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief	
Not Applicable	
25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	
No	
Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	
Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation	
Not Applicable	

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
Not Applicable
26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
No
Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
Not Applicable
27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
No
Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
Not Applicable
28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
No
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Not Applicable

Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – Draft Agenda and Work Programme (Updated 29th November 2024)

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

14 January 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
	Energy Performance Certificates	Added at agenda setting on 3 October
	Environment Policy Refresh - Key Decision	
	Countryside Partnerships SLA - Key Decision	
	Waste reforms and IAAs - Briefing	
	A229 Blue Bell Hill Update	
	Network Management Framework - Key Decision	
	BSIP Funding - could be update or Key Decision depending on receipt of grant conditions	
	Vehicle Parking Standards - Key Decision	

25 February 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
	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	
	Environment Agency presentation regarding river pollution	TBC - added at agenda setting 7 August
	Heritage Strategy Refresh - Key Decision	Moved from Jan's agenda at agenda setting 29/11/24

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
	Met Office update on projections for climate change	• Requested at agenda setting meeting on 7 August 2024 • moved at agenda setting 29/11/24

Items for Consideration that have not yet been allocated to a meeting	
Climate Change Adaptation Plan	To be brought to E&T once a year as a standing order - agreed 29/11/24
Thames Crossing report	Added at agenda setting meeting on 3 October 2024
On-street pavement parking (arrangements with district and boroughs)	Added at agenda setting 7 August
South Kent Energy Park	Added at agenda setting 29/11/24 – Tom Henderson to talk