

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 10th September, 2025

10.00 am

**Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**





AGENDA

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 10 September 2025, at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Hayley Savage**
Telephone: **03000 414286**

Membership (13)

Reform UK (9): Mr C Hespe (Chairman), Mr P Chamberlain (Vice-Chair),
Mr D Burns, Mr W Chapman, Ms S Emberson, Mr L Evans,
Mr J Finch, Mr M Mulvihill and Mr N Wibberley

Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook

Green (1): Mr M A J Hood

Conservative (1): Mr H Rayner

Labour (1): Mr A Brady

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Introduction/Webcast announcement
- 2 Apologies and Substitutes
- 3 Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda
- 4 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2025 (Pages 1 - 6)
- 5 Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department (Pages 7 - 24)

- 6 Fair Funding 2.0 Consultation (Pages 25 - 68)
- 7 Update from the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) (Pages 69 - 74)
- 8 25/00058 - Freehold disposal of the former Rowhill Primary School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ (Pages 75 - 94)
- 9 25/00059 - Freehold Disposal of land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and South of the London Road, Leybourne (Pages 95 - 114)
- 10 25/00060 - Freehold disposal of land to the south of Pratling Street, Aylesford (Pages 115 - 134)
- 11 25/00061 - Freehold Disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP (Pages 135 - 150)
- 12 25/00082 - Disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable BR8 7LG (Pages 151 - 168)
- 13 Work Programme 2025/2026 (Pages 169 - 172)
- 14 25/00057 - Property Accommodation Strategy - Strategic Headquarters (SHQ) (Pages 173 - 354)

Motion to exclude the press and public for exempt business

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

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

EXEMPT ITEMS

There are no entirely exempt items on this agenda but exempt documents feature within some items. As appropriate, the Committee may resolve to exclude the press and public as set out above.

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Tuesday, 2 September 2025

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 8 July 2025

PRESENT: Mr A Brady, Mr D Burns, Mr P Chamberlain, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Finch, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook and Mr H Rayner

ALSO PRESENT: Mr B Collins and Ms L Kemkaran

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy), Mrs A Beer (Chief Executive), Mrs R Spore (Director of Infrastructure), Mr B Watts (General Counsel), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance), Mr J Betts (Interim Corporate Director Finance) and Ms H Savage (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Election of Chair

(Item 2)

1. Mr Christopher Hespe was nominated by the Leader to be the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.
2. The Committee agreed this nomination and Mr Hespe was declared as Chairman of the committee.
3. RESOLVED that Mr Hespe be elected as the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

2. Election of Vice-Chair

(Item 3)

1. Ms Sarah Emberson proposed, and Mr John Finch seconded that Mr Paul Chamberlain be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.
2. As there were no further nominations, the Chairman declared Mr Paul Chamberlain as Vice-Chairman of the committee.
3. RESOLVED that Mr Paul Chamberlain be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

3. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 4)

Apologies were received from Mr Wayne Chapman and Mr Luke Evans.

Since the agenda was published Mr Osborne had ceased his committee membership of Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee in view of his Cabinet responsibilities.

4. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda (Item 5)

There were no declarations of interest.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2025 (Item 6)

Mr Brady and Mr Rayner highlighted an error at paragraph 8 of Item 8 – *Council Tax Collection Subsidies and Incentives*.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 March were a correct record, subject to the amendment above, and that they be signed by the Chairman.

6. Medium Term Financial Plan Update (Item 7)

1. The Deputy Leader, Mr Brian Collins, and the Interim Corporate Director Finance, Mr John Betts. introduced the report which set out the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), the proposed process and timetable to update the current plan, and the latest announcements and consultation on the government funding settlement.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members the discussion included the following:
 - In relation to the Fair Funding Review there was uncertainty around how or when grants would be distributed or how business rates would be reset. The response to the consultation was due in mid-August and was being prepared.
 - The announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement was anticipated at the end of November. The distribution of social care grants to individual local authorities was uncertain, for example, which elements would be departmental specific grants or which elements would be part of a generalised need across the country. It was anticipated that a policy paper, following the consultation, would be published by central government at the end of September.
 - Mr Shipton provided a technical explanation of how the funding the Council would receive could be estimated based on methodology that was used for the Recovery Grant, and what factors could be considered in relation to Kent. It was unknown how the council tax equalisation would operate.
 - The Spending Review had indicated that there would be an increase in core spending power over the next three year period planned for local government, 60% of the core spending power was expected from council tax and the rest through grant settlements.
 - The challenges involved in providing services to the Isle of Sheppey and coastal communities should be recognised and highlighted to government.

- The Administration was working on a Strategic Framework which would be developed alongside further updates from government.
 - An update on the Department of Local Government Efficiency (DOLGE) would be provided by the Leader at Full Council on 10 July.
3. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee notes the proposed process and timetable to update and revise the MTFP.

7. Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department
(Item 8)

Mr Matt Wagner (Chief Analyst) was in attendance for this item.

1. The Chief Analyst, Mr Matt Wagner, introduced the report which showed the performance against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for services within the Chief Executive's Department (CED) and Deputy Chief Executive's Department (DCED) up to the end of March 2025. The report also included the recommended KPIs and targets for the current financial year.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members the discussion included the following:
 - From a financial perspective the KPIs provided a good overview of where the organisation was in terms of its financial resilience and monitoring.
 - The KPIs were determined through discussions with the relevant Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members with technical advice from the Chief Analyst, and reviewed on a periodic basis.
 - Regarding KPI GL02, more Freedom of Information requests were being received since the May elections. Recent performance had increased due to a greater awareness across KCC of outstanding requests and weekly reporting to the Corporate Management Team.
 - Regarding KPI GL03, there had been an increase of approximately 25% of Subject Access Requests received. The publishing of information on the Council's website attributed, in some cases, to less requests being received compared to other local authorities.
 - In relation to KPI P103c the capital receipts received to date was significantly higher than the previous year. Surplus assets were continually monitored to identify assets for disposal and the Council had a statutory duty not to hold properties on a vacant basis with no designated requirement as well as a statutory duty to ensure assets were disposed of in accordance with the duties set out in legislation. A disposal programme would continue to be brought forward where appropriate and assets were disposed of in accordance with the Council's Freehold Disposal Policy. The Freehold Disposal Policy took into account the Localism Act and how communities could put forward proposals. In the event of Local Government Reorganisation it was noted that no decision or direction from Government had yet been made as to how this would apply to Kent. This was not expected until March 2026. Any change to the Freehold Disposal Policy as a result of LGR would require a key decision. The Council's Freehold Disposal Policy would be circulated to Members of the Committee.

- In relation to KPI CS07 there was a disparity between directorates and a Member requested that this be broken down further by directorate. The Marketing and Resident Experience team worked with the directorates to help managers respond to individual complaints. Backlogs were effected by volume of demand and resource in the relevant department.
 - A review of the targets for future years would be required once the Strategic Statement had been finalised in readiness for 2026/2027.
3. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee notes the performance position for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department.

8. 25/00048 - Freehold disposal of Thistley Hill, Melbourne Avenue, Dover CT16 2JH
(Item 9)

Mr Mark Cheverton (Head of Real Estate Services), Mr Daniel Parkes (Principal Surveyor) and Ms Rachel Paton (Surveyor) were in attendance for this item.

1. Mr Collins introduced the report regarding the proposed disposal of Thistley Hill in Dover.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members the discussion included the following:
 - Local Members had been contacted regarding the proposed disposal but no comments had been received. As the disposal progresses should there be any comments from local members in accordance with the Property Management Protocol the decision maker would be made aware.
 - The funds of sale would be allocated to the capital programme and receipts were not ring fenced to particular projects.
 - There was flexibility to use capital receipts for revenue purposes for specific expenditure but it was not a long term solution for the Council to balance its budget.
 - The building had been a school until 2007 and was then utilised as office space for the Council. Over time the property had become unfit for purpose and the service had relocated to Dover District Council offices.
 - The Council operated and has set resources to support a reactive warm, safe and dry policy across its estate and significant maintenance refurbishment work had not been possible at Thistley Hill.
3. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee endorses the proposed decision to:
 1. the disposal of Thistley Hill, Melbourne Avenue, Dover, CT16 2JH; and
 2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

9. 25/00049 - Freehold disposal of Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre, Hatton House, Bradbourne Road, TN13 3QN
(Item 10)

Mr Mark Cheverton (Head of Real Estate Services), Mr Daniel Parkes (Principal Surveyor) and Ms Rachel Paton (Surveyor) were in attendance for this item.

Local Member, Mr Richard Streatfeild, was present for this item.

1. Mr Collins and Mrs Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure, introduced the report regarding the proposed disposal of Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre.
2. Further to questions and comments from Members the discussion included the following:
 - Marketing advice had been received from three agents. A freehold sale was being sought albeit on an all enquiries basis meaning bids could be made leasehold or freehold.
 - Some Members expressed their concern that a town like Sevenoaks would not have an Adult Education Centre.
 - Key decision [24/00046](#) detailed the previous administration's decision to alter the Community Learning and Skills delivery model. This decision delegated authority to the Director of Infrastructure to progress work on the proposed decision.
3. The Local Member, Mr Richard Streatfeild, provided a verbal statement. He explained that the previous Administration had taken the decision that education would focus on basic skills courses and not leisure and pleasure, which Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre provided. There was considerable disappointment amongst Sevenoaks residents that the Adult Education Centre (AEC) would close. Residents over 65 in Sevenoaks, in particular, wanted to do leisure and pleasure courses, locations for which were not available in Sevenoaks or close by. Mr Streatfeild expressed his view that the decision be delayed and reconsidered based on the following points:
 - Sevenoaks had a requirement for basic skills courses (which was recently determined at Sevenoaks District Council) and locations for such had not been identified. The AEC remained the most likely place where those courses could be run.
 - Sevenoaks was one of the few places in Kent that didn't have a site for special educational needs education and pupils with special education needs were therefore transported out of the district at considerable expense.
 - Regarding potential Local Government Reorganisation the site would be an asset to a potential unitary authority to deliver courses in the future.
4. Mrs Spore reassured the committee that prior to a disposal property being put forward there was a detailed process to identify whether the property was required by any KCC services. Colleagues within education had been consulted and it was not currently required as part of educational plans. The Community Learning and Skills Team planned to align courses to government funding and this was driving their current approach. The service had been exploring options at Sevenoaks Library as well as other community venues in the Sevenoaks area for basic skills provision.

5. Mr Hood proposed, and Mr Rayner seconded, that the Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee recommends to the Deputy Leader that the decision be delayed until proper consideration can be given to the points raised by Mr Streatfeild in paragraph 3 above and that the outcome of reconsideration be reported to a future Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee prior to decision. The Chairman put the motion to the vote and the motion was lost.
6. RESOLVED that the Cabinet Committee, by majority, endorses the proposed decision to:
 1. the disposal of Sevenoaks Adult Education Centre, Hatton House, Bradbourne Road, TN13 3QN; and
 2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execute all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.
7. In accordance with paragraph 16.31 of the Constitution, Mr Alister Brady, Mr Mark Hood, Mr Antony Hook, and Mr Harry Rayner wished for it to be recorded in the minutes that they voted against endorsing the decision.

10. Work Programme 2025/2026
(Item 11)

1. The following items were suggested by Members for consideration at the next agenda setting meeting:
 - Disposal and Asset Management Strategy
 - Leases and peppercorn rents
 - Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCOs)
 - Oracle Update
 - The sale of Sessions House and the office move from Invicta House to Sessions House.
2. RESOLVED to note the Work Programme 2025/2026.

From: Linden Kemkaran, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Communications and Democratic Services

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services
Amanda Beer, Chief Executive Officer

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department (CED) and Deputy Chief Executive's Department (DCED), shows performance against targets set for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

21 of the 30 KPIs achieved target for the last month of 2024/25 and were RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated Green, four were below target but did achieve the floor standard (Amber), and four did not achieve the floor standard (Red). One KPI is not being reported on yet due to its target not coming into effect until October.

Recommendation:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance position for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department.

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 Cabinet Committee. To support this role performance dashboards are regularly reported to each Cabinet Committee throughout the year, and this is the first report for the 2025/26 financial year.

2. Performance Dashboard

2.1. This Performance Dashboard for CED and DCED provides results up to June 2025 and is attached in Appendix 1.

2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance against target for the 30 KPIs for 2025/26. The Dashboard also includes a range of activity indicators which help give context to the KPIs.

2.3. KPIs are presented with RAG alerts to show progress against targets. Details of how the alerts are generated are outlined in the Guidance Notes, included with the Dashboard in Appendix 1.

2.4. Of the 30 KPIs, the latest RAG status is as follows:

- Twenty-one are rated Green – the target was achieved or exceeded.
- Four are rated Amber – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet the target for Green.
- Four are rated Red – performance did not meet the expected floor standard. These are:
 - FN06: Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC under 6 months old
 - GL01: Council and Committee papers published at least five days before meetings
 - GL03: Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within statutory timescales.
 - CS07: Complaints responded to in timescale
- One KPI has no RAG rating, as the target for this KPI is based on publication by a deadline later in the year.

3. Recommendation

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the performance position for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department.

4. Contact details

Report Author:

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Chief Analyst
Chief Executive's Department
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Matthew.Wagner@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

David Whittle
Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance
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Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department

Financial Year 2025/26

Results up to June 2025

Produced by Kent Analytics

Guidance Notes

Key Performance Indicators

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

RAG ratings are based on Targets and Floor Standards brought before the Cabinet Committee in May 2023.

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

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 where appropriate, they are tracked within an expected range represented by Upper and Lower Thresholds. The Alert provided for Activity Indicators is whether results are within the expected range or not. Results can either be in expected range (**Yes**) or they could be **Above** or **Below**. Expected activity thresholds are based on previous years' trends.

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

Key Performance Indicator Summary

| Finance | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|--|------------|---------|
| FN06: Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC under 6 months old | RED | N/A |
| FN07: Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 30 days of KCC received date | AMBER | GREEN |
| FN08: Invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days | GREEN | GREEN |
| FN11: Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral | AMBER | AMBER |
| FN12: Percentage of working days aggregate bank balance is in credit | AMBER | AMBER |
| FN13: Percentage of working days average credit rating for internally managed cash portfolio is no lower than AA | GREEN | GREEN |
| FN14: Percentage of third-party insurance claims resolved within the designated timescales | GREEN | GREEN |
| FN15: Draft statement of accounts publishing deadline | N/A | GREEN |
| FN16: Publication of draft budget proposals for Cabinet Committee consideration | | N/A |

| Governance, Law & Democracy | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|---|------------|---------|
| GL01: Council and Committee papers published at least five days before meetings | RED | RED |
| GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days | AMBER | RED |
| GL03: Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within statutory timescales | RED | RED |

| Marketing and Resident Experience | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|--|------------|---------|
| CS01: Callers who rate the advisors in Contact Point as good | GREEN | GREEN |
| CS04a: Daytime calls to Contact Point answered | GREEN | GREEN |
| CS04b: Out of hours calls to Contact Point answered | GREEN | GREEN |
| CS06a: Daytime calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard | GREEN | GREEN |
| CS06b: Out of hours calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard | GREEN | GREEN |
| CS07: Complaints responded to in timescale | RED | RED |

| Human Resource and Organisational Development | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|---|------------|---------|
| HR09: Training evaluated by participants as having delivered stated learning outcomes | GREEN | GREEN |
| HR10: Training evaluated by participants as having delivered stated learning outcomes | GREEN | GREEN |

| Health and Safety | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|---|------------|---------|
| HR25: Completed corporate themed Health and Safety audits sent within timescale | GREEN | GREEN |

| Technology | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|---|------------|---------|
| ICT01: Calls to ICT Help Desk resolved at the first point of contact | GREEN | GREEN |
| ICT02: Positive feedback rating with the ICT help desk | GREEN | GREEN |
| ICT03: Working hours where Kent Public Sector Network is available to staff | GREEN | GREEN |
| ICT04: Working hours where ICT Services available to staff | GREEN | GREEN |
| ICT05: Working hours where email is available to staff | GREEN | GREEN |

| Infrastructure | Latest RAG | YTD RAG |
|--|------------|---------|
| PI01: Rent due to KCC outstanding over 60 days | GREEN | N/a |
| PI05: Percentage of scheduled Planned Preventative Maintenance completed by due date | GREEN | GREEN |
| PI06: Percentage of reactive help desk tasks completed by due date | GREEN | GREEN |
| PI07: Percentage of help desk calls answered within timescale | GREEN | GREEN |

Chief Executive's Department

| Service Area | Director (interim) | Cabinet Member |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Finance | John Betts | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|-------------|-----------|--------------|---------|------------|-------|------------|
| FN06 | Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC under 6 months old | 34% | 59% | 54% | 54% | RED | n/a | | 70% | 65% | 34% |
| FN07 | Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 30 days of KCC received date | 87% | 88% | 86% | 83% | AMBER | 86% | GREEN | 85% | 80% | 85% |
| FN08 | Percentage of invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days* | 99% | 99% | 99% | 99% | GREEN | 99% | GREEN | 98% | 95% | 96% |
| FN11 | Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral | 86% | 78%** | 49%** | 87% | AMBER | 87%** | AMBER | 90% | 85% | 86% |
| FN12 | Percentage of working days aggregate bank balance is in credit (Incl. £1m agreed overdraft) | 100% | 100% | 100% | 95% | AMBER | 98% | AMBER | 100% | 90% | 99% |
| FN13 | Percentage of working days average credit rating for internally managed cash portfolio is no lower than AA | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | GREEN | 100% | GREEN | 100% | 90% | 100% |
| FN14 | Percentage of third-party insurance claims resolved within the designated timescales | 100% | 100% | 99% | 97% | GREEN | 98% | GREEN | 95% | 85% | 99% |
| FN15 | Draft statement of accounts publishing deadline | - | - | - | ✓ | N/a | | GREEN | 30/06/2025 | | N/a |
| FN16 | Publication of draft budget proposals for Cabinet Committee consideration | - | - | - | - | N/a | | N/a | 28/10/2025 | | N/a |

*Annual performance of all invoice payments can be found here: [Annual performance of payments - Kent County Council](#)

** April & May Targets are 60% and Floors are 45% due to the Annual Reassessment process, this also means the YTD value is calculated from Jun-25.

FN06 – There are currently 32 outstanding invoices over £100,000 which are over 6 months overdue, these 32 invoices total £13.9m - 71% of debt value over 6 months; of these, 27 relate to health debt. The Kent & Medway Integrated Care Board faces severe financial challenges and KCC has agreed with the ICB to go to binding arbitration on these issues (as they relate to KCC as both creditor and debtor) and the precise mechanisms for achieving this are being worked through.

FN07 – This KPI had been on target until June. Managers have been contacted to remind them of the importance of submitting invoices on time.

FN11 – The response from the public following the annual reassessment process increased workloads and diverted resources as expected for the first two month of the year. Recovery is evident in the June figure and should continue to improve.

FN12 – Due to an internal processing issue at NatWest Bank, a transfer from the Pension Fund to KCC on 30/05/2025 was not completed as expected. As a result, the KCC account appeared overdrawn over the weekend. However, no costs were incurred, as NatWest Bank has reversed all associated charges. While this is the first occurrence of such an issue and we do not expect it to recur, we remain in active contact with NatWest Bank to ensure seamless and timely processing going forward.

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Year to date | Previous Year |
|-------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|---------------|
| FN06b | Value of debt due to KCC (£000s) | 29,002 | 47,873 | 42,660 | 42,405 | N/a | 29,469 |
| FN07b | Number of invoices received by KCC | 10,347 | 8,265 | 7,569 | 7,700 | 23,534 | 26,065 |
| FN11b | Number of financial assessments received | 777 | 650 | 777 | 1,033 | 2,460 | 2,132 |
| FN14b | Number of insurance claims resolved | 123 | 110 | 175 | 177 | 462 | 701 |

| Service Area | Director | Cabinet Member |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Governance, Law & Democracy | Ben Watts | Linden Kemkaran |

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | YTD | Year RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----|----------|--------|-------|------------|
| GL01 | Council and Committee papers published at least five clear days before meetings | 100% | 100% | 100% | 83% | RED | 91% | RED | 100% | 96% | 99% |
| GL02 | Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests completed within 20 working days | 87% | 88% | 85% | 90% | AMBER | 88% | RED | 92% | 90% | 80% |
| GL03 | Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within timescales | 56% | 61% | 49% | 55% | RED | 56% | RED | 90% | 85% | 56% |

GL01 – The Red RAG in June, was caused by just one meeting, namely an urgent meeting of the Personnel Committee - Member Appointment panel where there wasn't sufficient time to publish in five clear days.

GL02 – June saw the floor standard reached for the first time since November 2019, evidence of the continuing improvement for this indicator over the last few months. This is due to a concerted effort by staff and a greater awareness across KCC of outstanding requests following the reintroduction of a weekly report to the Corporate Management Team. All Directorates achieved performance of over 80% in Quarter 1, with the best performing being the Chief Executive's Department with 93% completed in timescale. The highest number of requests (203) was received by the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate, with the overall number received by KCC remaining at historic highs.

GL03 – Performance remains stubbornly low, but this is also against a backdrop of a historically high number of requests. Around 80% of all requests come under the Children, Young People and Education Directorate. The majority of overdue requests relate to SEN. Reasons for delays in responding include lack of resources, particularly in some operational teams, as well as delays in updating information on specific systems.

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | YTD | In expected range? | Expected Activity Upper Lower | | Previous Year YTD |
|-------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|
| GL01b | Committee meetings | 14 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 | N/a | | | 27 |
| GL02b | Freedom of Information requests responded to | 197 | 223 | 193 | 205 | 621 | Above | 560 | 460 | 659 |
| GL03b | Data Protection Act Subject Access requests responded to | 62 | 83 | 67 | 76 | 226 | Above | 160 | 130 | 165 |

Deputy Chief Executive's Department

| Service Area | Head of Service | Cabinet Member |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Marketing and Resident Experience | Christina Starte | Linden Kemkaran |

Key Performance Indicators - Monthly

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|-------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----|---------|--------|-------|------------|
| CS01 | Percentage of callers who rate the advisors in Contact Point as good | 97% | 97% | 97% | 97% | GREEN | 97% | GREEN | 97% | 90% | 98% |
| CS04a | Percentage of daytime calls to Contact Point answered* | 94% | 91% | 92% | 92% | GREEN | 92% | GREEN | 90% | 85% | 91% |
| CS04b | Percentage of out of hours calls to Contact Point answered* | 97% | 96% | 98% | 97% | GREEN | 97% | GREEN | 95% | 90% | 92% |
| CS06a | Percentage of daytime calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard | 77% | 76% | 80% | 74% | GREEN | 76% | GREEN | 70% | 65% | 74% |
| CS06b | Percentage of out of hours calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard | 76% | 78% | 76% | 77% | GREEN | 75% | GREEN | 70% | 65% | 75% |

* CS04a/b - Please note that these figures can vary to those reported for the Agilisys contract, as that contract allows for days of exceptionally high call volumes to be discounted from the KPI calculation. The KPI reported here includes **all** days with none discounted.

Key Performance Indicator – Quarterly

| Ref | Indicator description | Sep-24 | Dec-24 | Mar-25 | Jun-25 | Qtr RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-----|---------|--------|-------|------------|
| CS07 | Percentage of complaints responded to in timescale | 71% | 71% | 70% | 71% | RED | 71% | RED | 85% | 80% | 71% |

CS07 – For the quarter to June 2025, 1,448 complaints were received; this is a small decrease compared to the same quarter last year (down 5%). There was a similar decrease of 5% in the number of complaints received in the 12 months to June 2025, compared to the 12 months to June 2024.

In terms of Directorate performance, the majority of complaints were received by the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate who responded to 91% within the target timescale of 20 working days, the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department, together achieved 97%. ASCH responded to 56% of complaints within timescale, however it must be noted that any agreed extensions to investigate complex cases, although agreed with the customer, will be recorded as late. CYPE responded to 45% of complaints within timescale.

In the quarter to June 2025, collectively we responded to 71% of complaints in the timescale of 20 working days; this is an improvement on last year's figure of 66% in the same quarter, and a slight increase on the previous quarter, where 70% were answered within timescale.

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | YTD 25/26 | In expected range? | <u>Expected Range</u> Upper Lower | | Prev. Yr YTD |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|--------------------|--|--------|--------------|
| CS08 | Number of calls answered by Contact Point | 32,749 | 35,049 | 31,868 | 32,510 | 33,572 | 97,950 | Yes | 118,000 | 96,000 | 99,670 |
| CS12 | Number of visits to the KCC website, kent.gov (000s) | 487 | 633 | 599 | 648 | 559 | 1,806 | Yes | 2,150 | 1,750 | 1,822 |
| CS13 | Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point - priority services (seconds) | 13 | 25 | 37 | 32 | 30 | 33 | Yes | 120 | 30 | 50 |
| CS14 | Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point - all services (seconds) | 25 | 61 | 110 | 85 | 87 | 94 | Below | 300 | 180 | 114 |

CS14 – Speed of answer below the lower threshold for this indicator shows calls are being answered promptly.

| Service Area | Director | Cabinet Member |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Human Resources and Organisational Development | Paul Royel | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators – Monthly

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev Year |
|------|---|---------------|--------|--------|--------------|-----------|------------|---------|--------|-------|-----------|
| HR09 | Percentage of live learning events evaluated as having delivered stated learning outcomes | 99.4% | 98.9% | 98.6% | 99.4% | GREEN | 99% | GREEN | 97% | 95% | 99% |
| HR10 | Percentage of e-learning training programmes evaluated as having delivered stated learning outcomes | New indicator | 99.7% | 99.6% | 99.9% | GREEN | 99% | GREEN | 97% | 95% | N/a |

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | In expected range? | <u>Expected Range</u> Upper Lower | | Prev. Yr YTD |
|------|--|---------------|--------|--------|--------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|--------------|
| HR12 | Number of current change activities being supported | 52 | 49 | 57 | 63 | 66 | Below | 90 | 80 | 73 |
| HR13 | Total number of e-learning training programmes completed (YTD) | 79,922 | 86,707 | 7,381 | 14,374 | 21,653 | Above | 21,250 | 17,500 | 19,723 |
| HR16 | Number of registered users of Kent Rewards | 22,886 | 22,974 | 22,808 | 22,845 | 22,833 | Yes | 23,000 | 19,000 | 22,565 |
| HR21 | Number of current people management cases being supported | 155 | 152 | 165 | 168 | 173 | Above | 100 | 90 | 145 |
| HR23 | Percentage of staff who have completed all 3 mandatory learning events | 93% | 93% | 93% | 93% | 93% | Above | 90% | 85% | 89% |
| HR24 | Total number of live learning events delivered | New indicator | | 86 | 198 | 336 | Yes | 375 | 250 | N/a |

HR12 – Although the volume of change activity was lower than anticipated this year, the scale and complexity required a similar level of resources. Change activity is driven by the wider business and fluctuates monthly, with some activities spanning multiple months. The complexity of these activities varies significantly, requiring different levels of resources and knowledge.

HR13 – E-learning completions continue to exceed our estimates, demonstrating the maturity and acceptance of this delivery method. Recently, this has been particularly inflated by the initial Oracle Cloud training programme where 720 completions have been logged against the initial learning video. There has also been a high uptake of the e-learning elements of the Adults Statutory Competency Framework, with 3,500 completions across 12 courses.

HR21 - Case activity is driven by requests from Managers and fluctuates from month to month. The high level indicates that managers are taking a robust approach and managing cases through the appropriate channels with HR support and advice.

HR23 – During Quarter 1, the new learner and manager dashboards were launched, allowing users to have an overview of compliance towards the mandatory learning events for both themselves and their teams. There was also the launch of Single Sign-On, removing the need for a password when accessing Delta - these efficiencies reinforce the continued drive to keep compliance high.

| Service Area | Interim Head of Service | Cabinet Member |
|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Health and Safety | Maria Kelly | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators – Quarterly

| Ref | Indicator description | Sep-24 | Dec-24 | Mar-25 | Jun-25 | Qtr RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|------|---------|--------|-------|------------|
| HR25 | Percentage of corporate themed Health and Safety audits sent in 7 days | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | GREEN | 100% | GREEN | 95% | 85% | 100% |

| Service Area | Director | Cabinet Member |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| Technology | Lisa Gannon | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | Year to Date | Year RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|-------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|--------------|----------|--------|-------|------------|
| ICT01 | Calls to ICT Help Desk resolved at the first point of contact | 87% | 88% | 88% | 87% | GREEN | 88% | GREEN | 70% | 65% | 79% |
| ICT02 | Positive feedback rating with the ICT help desk | 96% | 96% | 96% | 96% | GREEN | 96% | GREEN | 95% | 90% | 96% |
| ICT03 | Working hours where Kent Public Sector Network is available to staff | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | GREEN | 100% | GREEN | 99.8% | 99.0% | 100% |
| ICT04 | Working hours where ICT Services are available to staff | 98.9% | 100% | 99.4% | 99.0% | GREEN | 99.4% | GREEN | 99.0% | 98.0% | 99.7% |
| ICT05 | Working hours where email is available to staff | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | GREEN | 100% | GREEN | 99.0% | 98.0% | 100% |

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Year to Date | Previous Year YTD |
|--------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| ICT01b | Calls to ICT Help Desk | 5,342 | 6,184 | 5,795 | 5,335 | 17,314 | 25,705 |
| ICT02b | Feedback responses provided for ICT Help Desk | 1,021 | 1,006 | 1,119 | 1,035 | 3,160 | 5,299 |

| Service Area | Director | Cabinet Member |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Infrastructure | Rebecca Spore | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
| PI01 | Percentage of rent due to KCC outstanding over 60 days (including rent deferment invoices) | 2.2% | 3.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.1% | GREEN | 5% | 10% | 3.1% |

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Year to Date | Previous Year YTD |
|-------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| PI01b | Total rent invoiced (£000s) | 266 | 367 | 134 | 1055 | 150 | 1,339 | 2,035 |
| PI03c | Capital receipts banked (£000s) | 6,000 | 2,955 | 0 | 729 | 0 | 729 | 2,577 |

| Service Area | Director | Cabinet Member |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Infrastructure | Rebecca Spore | Brian Collins |

Key Performance Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Month RAG | YTD | YTD RAG | Target | Floor | Prev. Year |
|------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----|---------|--------|-------|------------|
| PI05 | Percentage of scheduled Planned Preventative Maintenance completed by due date | 99% | 99% | 99% | 98% | GREEN | 98% | GREEN | 90% | 80% | 98% |
| PI06 | Percentage of reactive help desk tasks completed by due date | 91% | 93% | 92% | 95% | GREEN | 93% | GREEN | 80% | 71% | 93% |
| PI07 | Percentage of help desk calls answered within timescale | 97% | 99% | 99% | 100% | GREEN | 99% | GREEN | 90% | 85% | 99% |

Activity Indicators

| Ref | Indicator description | Feb-25 | Mar-25 | Apr-25 | May-25 | Jun-25 | Year to Date | Previous Year YTD |
|-------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|-------------------|
| PI05b | Number of Planned Preventative Maintenance tasks responded to | 2,232 | 2,271 | 2,438 | 2,267 | 2,341 | 7,046 | 7,398 |
| PI06b | Number of reactive tasks responded to | 744 | 799 | 721 | 721 | 783 | 2,225 | 2,060 |
| PI07b | Number of help desk calls responded to | 302 | 307 | 239 | 289 | 311 | 839 | 772 |

From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
John Betts, Interim Corporate Director – Finance

To: Policy & Resources Committee 10th September 2025

Subject: **Fair Funding 2.0 Consultation**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary:

This paper sets out:

- The key elements of the government's consultation on reforms to local authority funding
- KCC's policy position that informs our response
- The next steps

KCC supports the general principles which underpin the proposals in the consultation but we do not agree with everything and there are some aspects where the Council believes the arrangements could be further improved. We agree with the government that demand for, and cost of, local authority services have increased significantly, and both the overall quantum and the current funding arrangements are not fit for purpose. The current funding arrangements are complex and out of date and a review of the system is long overdue. An eight-week period for such a significant topic is not adequate although we recognise the urgency if reforms are to be introduced alongside the re-introduction of multi-year settlement for 2026-29 which we agree is essential to give councils certainty and stability over future plans.

Recommendations:

Policy and Resources Committee is asked to NOTE and COMMENT on KCC's response to the consultation.

1. Introduction

1.1 As reported to Policy & Resources Committee in July, the government launched a consultation on substantial reforms to the funding arrangements for the local government sector on 20th June 2025. The consultation ran until 15th August 2025. KCC has submitted a response which has been agreed with the Deputy Leader, which in many ways reflects the views of other county councils, but also includes comments on issues specific to Kent. We are expecting the government to publish a policy statement outlining its response and principles for the revised funding arrangements in September/October 2025.

1.2 The consultation is a key step towards delivering the government's reform to target funding where it's most needed taking into account different needs, costs and ability to raise funds through Council Tax in different areas. The government's intention is a simpler and fairer approach to determining local authority funding.

1.3 The consultation covered the funding arrangements under the following sections. In total there were 46 separate questions (KCC's responses to each are included in appendix A to this report):

- **Determining local authority funding allocations** - Calculation of Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) and new Spending Power based on an updated methodology for relative needs and relative resources
- **Funding simplification** - Principles for consolidation of separate existing grants and rolling grants into Revenue Support Grant (RSG) within SFA. It is important to distinguish that SFA is the methodology by which grant amounts are determined and RSG in the means of payment from central government
- **Measuring differences in demand for services** – Proposed new and updated Relative Needs Formula (RNF) sub blocks for the main service areas
- **Measuring differences in the cost of delivering services** – Proposals to reflect differences in the cost of delivering local government services in both urban and rural areas within funding allocations
- **Measuring differences in locally available resources** – Proposals to equalise resources from council tax
- **Running the business rate retention system** – Longer-term approach to business rate retention including updates to reflect resets in rateable values, levies on growth and safety net protection for reductions, and future pooling arrangements
- **The New Homes Bonus** – Proposals to abolish the current New Homes Bonus and how to incentivise authorities for new housing development
- **Transitional arrangements and keeping allocations up to date** – Additional flexibilities and phasing in the new allocations during implementation, floor protection, and updating of population and council tax levels
- **Devolution and, local government reorganisation and wider reform** – Funding for Strategic Authorities within local government finance settlement, the funding arrangements for new unitary authorities, and reduction in burdens on local authorities
- **Sales, fees and charges** – Modernising and increasing flexibility over charges whilst ensuring affordability for service users
- **Design of relative needs formulae** - Details of the measures proposed to be used within the RNF for individual service sub blocks
- **Equalities impacts**

2. Determining Local Authority Funding Allocations

2.1 This section dealt with the government's proposals to calculate updated local authority funding allocations by bringing together: an updated assessment of relative need; a resources adjustment; and transitional arrangements.

2.2 The proposals include an overall relative need share for each local authority determined by a series of Relative Needs Formulae (RNF), which assess differences in demand for and cost of services between local areas. The proposed 'resource adjustment' would direct funding towards places that are less able to meet their needs through locally raised income. The resulting Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) is the relative needs share allocation less this resources adjustment.

2.3 It is possible that the updated SFA calculation could find that an area has the resources to fund all its assessed need through increases in local Council Tax and therefore would receive a zero allocation. The government is considering the

consequences of zero allocations within the updated SFA and possible mitigations to avoid any local authority's SFA reducing to zero.

2.4 Although KCC is unlikely to be one of those authorities with a possible zero SFA, in our response we do not think it appropriate that any authority should have a zero or negative SFA. We have recognised that local tax payers rightly expect their Council Tax should be spent on local services and would not accept moving Council Tax to other areas of the country. Since the vast majority of local authority services are statutory, it is reasonable to expect an element of funding comes from national taxation through the local government finance settlement, rather than all funding coming from Council Tax, which would be the case if an authority had a zero SFA.

2.5 A new **Spending Power** will be made up of the SFA +/- transitional arrangements + locally raised council tax based on each authority's ability to raise council tax up to the maximum allowed without a referendum. The spending power is a measure of the resources potentially available to a local authority, although the decision on annual Council Tax levels remains a local decision and as such the spending power is only a notional calculation. We note that the plans do not include reforms to Council Tax even though there are inherent flaws with the current Council Tax arrangements (not least the regressive nature of the tax and lack of local flexibility for English councils available to devolved administrations elsewhere in the UK) and that Council Tax has increasingly been used to plug gaps in local authority funding.

3. Funding Simplification

Consolidation

3.1 In 2025-26 over 300 grants were awarded to local government from across government departments. Many of these had specific conditions, and sometimes reporting requirements attached. From 2026-27 the government proposes to bring together grants from across government into larger ringfenced consolidated grants delivered as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. Many of these will support prevention and service reform. The intention is that including these in the settlement will provide multi-year certainty over as much funding as possible. This will be supported by a shift towards outcome-based accountability for local authorities.

3.2 Each consolidated grant will be delivered as a single ringfenced Section 31 grant and will have a bespoke distribution. Where appropriate, distributions will be consulted on as part of the 2026-27 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. This is effectively an interim step between the current fragmented approach and the eventual rolling in of further grants into SFA. The four consolidated grant streams for 2026-27 are proposed to be:

- Public Health Grant - The Public Health Grant will be consolidated alongside other service-specific grants to create a wider Public Health grant, delivered as a separate grant within the Local Government Finance Settlement in 2026-27.
- Children, Families and Youth Grant - This will consolidate the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant and the Children and Families Grant, alongside further investment in children's social care reform. The government will explore whether additional grants for children, families and youth services can be consolidated within this grant.
- Crisis and Resilience Grant - This will enable local authorities to build the financial resilience of their communities and assist those facing financial crisis,

incorporating Discretionary Housing Payments (and we presume Household Support Fund although this is not expressly mentioned in the consultation).

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Grant - This will bring together funding for all homelessness and rough sleeping revenue funding except for the proposed temporary accommodation funding to be included within SFA. This grant is unlikely to apply to KCC as it allocated to lower-tier and unitary authorities which have housing responsibilities.

Rolling in grant into Revenue Support Grant

3.3 The consultation proposes that all of the remaining existing separate grants currently included in the Local Government Finance Settlement will be rolled into RSG and distributed using the SFA relative needs and resources formula. This will include funding for Adult Social Care (the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund [MSIF] and the Local Authority Better Care Fund Grant) and the Social Care Grant. It is also assumed that the Employers National Insurance Contributions grant, business rate compensation and Recovery Grant will be rolled in although these are not expressly mentioned in the consultation.

3.4 The three social care grants will be rolled into the SFA methodology – but only the MSIF and Social Care Grant will be paid via Revenue Support Grant. The Local Authority Better Care Fund grant will be paid via Section 31 grant (top-sliced from RSG), so that it can continue to be pooled with the NHS through the Better Care Fund arrangements.

3.5 The inclusion of adult social care grants in the SFA will be accompanied by a published adult social care ‘notional allocation’ for each local authority. This ‘notional allocation’ will set out the government’s expectation for how much local authorities should spend on adult social care, considering local authority expenditure, alongside income and funding available, for adult social care.

3.6 The government will also develop new accountability arrangements, that will describe how they intend to work with local government to ensure that this funding supports delivery of the government’s ambitions for adult social care. Further details on accountability and assurance will be set out alongside the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement.

3.7 In KCC’s response we agree with the proposed simplification of the funding arrangements outlined above alongside multi-year settlements. We recognise that the current system is overly complex and blurs accountability. We have also been critical of the previous timing of grants which has led to a drip-feeding of funding which restricts medium term financial planning. As with the response outlined in paragraph 2.4 we are concerned that the resource equalisation could result in some authorities receiving zero allocations. We have suggested that any departmental grants that remain outside of the consolidation and SFA arrangements should be notified on a multi-year basis and that consolidated and new grants should be subject to full, transparent and timely consultation.

4. Approach to Assessing Demand

4.1 Relative needs formulae (RNF) calculate how much ‘need’ a local authority has relative to other authorities for a particular service or group of services. It is important to note these measure relative not absolute needs, and the formulae do not calculate the amount of money required for a local authority to deliver this service. Instead, each local authority is given a ‘share’ of the need.

4.2 Since 2013-14, the Local Government Finance Settlement's core distribution has used 15 separate RNFs that encompass a range of service areas. The formulae have been used within the SFA to determine the distribution of RSG and set each local authority's Baseline Funding Level (BFL) for retained business rates.

4.3 The updated formulae proposed for inclusion take a comparable number of service areas into account and merges these into a smaller number of RNFs. Appendix B shows a comparison of the 2013-14 formulae to the proposed new formulae which are summarised in the table below.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Social care formulae | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult social care (older adults and younger adults) • Children's and young persons' services |
| Non-social care formulae | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundation Formula (upper and lower tier) • Fire and rescue • Highways maintenance • Home to school transport ¹ • Temporary accommodation |

4.4 The current formulae uses data that is over a decade old, and in some instances uses information from 2001 national Census. Consequently, updating the data is essential.

4.5 The **Adult Social Care** (ASC) proposed formula includes changing the current variables and weightings as well as updating the data. The proposals draw upon independent research undertaken by the Personal Social Services Research Unit at the University of Kent and include more detailed data at a smaller geographic level, up to date data e.g. from 2021 Census, as well as improved indicators of need. The ASC formula is particularly important as it allocates a large share of current SFA and a national total of £9.6bn of social care grants being rolled into SFA.

4.6 The **Childrens and Young People's** (CYPS) formula is based on extensive development and support from academic partners. The formula is based on a combination of individual child and neighbourhood characteristics to predict engagement with social care for Children in Need (CIN), Children Looked After (CLA) and care leavers. This research upon which the formula has been based has not been published.

4.7 The new formula for **Highways Maintenance** is based on road length and traffic flow data. The current RNF has a higher weighting for urban roads (x2) and includes top-ups for non-resident population and for winter maintenance. The proposed changes to the formula generally favour rural rather than urban authorities.

4.8 The new formula for **Home to School Transport** (HTST) will provide specific funding for both mainstream and Special Educational Needs (SEND) home-to-school transport. The proposed formula for mainstream HTST is based on the number of pupils and the distance travelled (capped at 20 miles). For SEND HTST, there is a proxy formula based on anticipated number of pupils with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCPs), and the

¹ Post 16 travel is covered by the Foundation Formula.

average distance travelled (again with a 20 mile cap). Both formulas are largely based on distance (which is appropriate) and favour county areas, where distances travelled for HTST will be further.

4.9 The individual sub blocks include an area cost adjustment to reflect the different cost of providing services in different areas (covered in the next section) and are weighted according to the scale of overall national spending in each service area to determine overall need assessment. KCC's share of the proposed new RNF is shown in table 1 which overall provides KCC with 2.3% of the national total i.e. this provides KCC with a greater national share than the current RNF in table 2 (2%).

Table 1 – Kent's Share of Proposed RNF

| | Adults | Childrens | Foundation Upper | Fire and Rescue | Highways | Home to School | Foundation Lower and Temp. Accomm. | Overall Weighted |
|-----------|--------|-----------|---------------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|---|---------------------|
| Weighting | 37.54% | 23.18% | 14.76% | 4.30% | 3.20% | 3.24% | 13.78% | |
| KCC Share | 2.79% | 2.73% | 2.70% | 0.00% | 2.61% | 4.43% | | 2.31% |

Table 2 – Kent's Share of Current RNF

| | Childrens RNF | Adults RNF | Highways RNF | EPCSRNF | Capital RNF | Total RNF |
|------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|----------------|-----------|
| Kent | 2.53% | 2.57% | 2.56% | 1.02% | 2.78% | 1.99% |

4.9.1 In KCC's response we agree with the streamlining of services within RNF and that these cover the main service areas where there are spending differences between authorities. We support the principle that separate formulae are only included where there is strong case that this improves the overall effectiveness of assessment of needs. Our only issue is why there is no separate assessment for waste collection and disposal/recycling. We support the recognition of additional costs of delivering services in large relatively sparse geographic areas and do not support recognising service costs associated with high population density. We have raised concerns that legacy capital financing costs are no longer reflected, as the cost of servicing borrowing taken out under the previous Supported Borrowing regime is still a fixed cost for those authorities until such debt matures. We are concerned about the lack of statistical analysis or evidence of the impact of deprivation and the measure used (Index of multiple Deprivation – IMD) is not suited to use to determine relative needs.

5. Approach to Assessing Cost

5.1 As well as variations in need there will be differences in the cost of delivering local government services between different areas because of differences in local labour markets and rurality, for example. The government are proposing to continue to apply an Area Cost Adjustment (ACA) to the Relative Needs Formulae to account for differences in the costs of delivering services.

5.2 The Government have reviewed previous versions of the ACA and are proposing to incorporate the following adjustment factors:

- Rates Cost Adjustment (RCA) – aims to measure the difference in the cost of property rates / rents between local authorities. This reflects the variation between areas in the cost of using equivalent premises due to differences in local supply and demand factors
- Labour Cost Adjustment (LCA) – aims to measure the difference in the cost of labour between local authorities. This reflects the fact that authorities will need to compete with other potential employers to secure and retain suitable skilled staff
- Accessibility Adjustment – aims to measure the impact of the difference in travel time to provide services on the cost of labour. There are two measures within this adjustment - a dispersal adjustment factor (longer journeys to reach households) and a traversal adjustment factor (longer journeys between households). They are measured using journey time data and combined with the LCA, since they are measures of additional labour cost.
- Remoteness Adjustment – aims to measure the impact of separation from larger concentrations of service users.

5.3 The accessibility adjustment for labour costs and the remoteness adjustments are the main changes from 2023-24 ACA and generally benefit local authorities serving large geographic areas with dispersed populations. Every authority will have its own unique ACA, instead of being included in a regional grouping.

5.4 In KCC's response we agree with the proposed changes in ACA. The council has consistently argued that there is ample evidence of the additional costs of providing services in county areas. Our only further enhancement is that we think there should also be a top up for areas with long coastlines, particularly for peninsular areas due to lack of competitiveness due to the inability to share services or suppliers across local authority borders in the same way as land borders. Coastline length is included in the relative needs for Fire and Rescue services, and we believe it is also a factor affecting cost of other services in a county like Kent which should be reflected within relative needs.

6. Council Tax equalisation and the notional Council Tax level

6.1 The government believes there is a role as an equaliser for local government income, directing funding towards the places that are less able to meet their needs through locally raised income. The objective of equalisation is to make funding available in such a way as to enable all local authorities to provide the same level of service to their residents.

6.2 The government is proposing that Council Tax equalisation is based on an assumed or 'notional' level of Council Tax for all authorities. The government is proposing to set a notional Council Tax level that achieves the objective of full equalisation. This notional Council Tax level would be set at the average Band D level of Council Tax in England for authorities in scope of these reforms (c. £2,000 in 2026-27). Where there are multiple tiers of local government the consultation proposes to uniformly apply the average tier split in multi-tier areas to the measure of Council Tax in the resources adjustment. The proposed Upper Tier share in 2024-25 for England would be 84.4%.

6.3 Basing the resource equalisation on a notional tax level effectively equalises funding to take account of differences in the Council Tax base i.e. the proportion of dwellings in different tax bands and impact of mandatory discounts and exemptions but not differences due to local decisions on Council Tax charges. The government is proposing to use a formula to determine a proxy for the impact of working age Local Council Tax Support i.e. this would exclude the discretionary element of local schemes. The proposals assume

that all authorities make no use of discretionary discounts and premiums. The proposals assume 100% collection rate.

6.4 Kent's Council Tax base is relatively lower than other South East councils due to larger number of dwellings in the lower bands. Table 3 shows the distribution of the total number of dwellings before discounts and exemptions by each band. This shows the average dwelling in Kent is in Band C.

| Band A | Band B | Band C | Band D | Band E | Band F | Band G | Band H | % Below Band D | % Band D and Above | Most Common Band | Median Band |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------|
| 10.0% | 18.5% | 27.2% | 20.1% | 11.6% | 6.8% | 5.2% | 0.5% | 55.7% | 44.3% | Band C | Band C |

6.5 In KCC's response we disagree with the proposed full Council Tax equalisation as this should only relate to statutory services, and it should remain a local decision on spending on non-statutory services, striking a balance between spending and local taxation levels. However, we do agree with the principle that equalisation should be based on a notional level of council tax (we have previously been critical of the changes introduced in 2016 with equalisation based on individual tax levels in each authority which was introduced with no prior consultation or notification). We agree that the equalisation should include impact of mandatory discounts (although we think the proxy for working age local council tax is too complex and could be based on assumed impact of national default scheme) and exemptions, and local discretionary decisions should not be included in the equalisation calculation. We do not agree with the assumption of 100% collection rate as this is unlikely to ever be feasible and collection rates should be based on national average.

7. Business Rates Retention System

7.1 Under the current business rates retention arrangements local authorities retain a share of local growth in business rates above a baseline established in April 2013. This baseline was based on the current relative need and resources formula compared to historic local shares of business rates. Authorities where the baseline is more than share of business rates receive a top-up, and authorities where baseline is less return a tariff to offset top-ups at a national level.

7.2 The baselines (and consequently top-ups and tariffs) have been uplifted each year in line with inflationary increases in the national multiplier (with a separate compensation grant for freezes in the multiplier and additional relief) and have been recalculated to reflect revision to rateable values but have not been reset to reflect changes in relative needs and resources. The consultation proposes a full reset of the Business Rates Retention System in 2026-27 to align with changes in relative needs and resources and further planned changes in business rates including the introduction of further classes of multipliers, making temporary relief arrangements permanent, and triennial review of rateable values.

7.3 The level of risk and reward local authorities are subject to within the Business Rates Retention System will largely be determined by the level of protection provided to local authorities experiencing drops in their business rate income from the Safety Net, the levy charged on business rate growth above funding baselines, and whether local authorities are able to share risk and reward through pooling arrangements.

7.4 The government has proposed further periodic resets to ensure funding allocations are kept up-to-date while providing future funding certainty to local authorities. To help them drive growth the government is considering whether Mayoral Strategic Authorities should eventually receive a direct share of business rates through the Business Rates Retention System. Engagement will take place over the forthcoming multi-year Settlement period to co-develop a new offer with view to implementation thereafter.

7.5 In KCC's response we feel there is insufficient justification for increasing the level of protection through the safety net, and that the cost of safety net protection should be contained within funding from levies on growth. We are concerned about suggestions that pooling will not continue, as this has worked well to share the impact of risks and rewards in local areas, especially in two-tier areas.

8. New Homes Bonus

8.1 The government is proposing that 2025-26 will be the final year the New Homes Bonus is paid in its current format. The government does not believe the New Homes Bonus is an effective incentive. The current funding (£290 million nationally in 2025-26) will be returned to the core Settlement and allocated according to the updated assessment of needs and resources. The government is seeking views on alternatives to incentivise local authority housing growth and specifically to support affordable and sub-market housing.

8.2 KCC received £1.9m funding from the Homes Bonus in 2025/26 (Kent districts received a total of £7.7m). The current Medium Term Financial Plan agreed in February 2025 already assumes this grant ceases in 2026-27 so there is no change to existing planning assumptions.

8.3 In KCC's response we agree the New Homes Bonus should cease and funding transferred into the core Settlement through relative needs and resources. The Council has consistently challenged the basis of New Homes Bonus, which includes an arbitrary threshold for growth (above which grant is allocated), the split of resources in two-tier areas (with 80% allocated to lower tier authorities and 20% to the upper tier) and the use of Council Tax growth creates a significant lag between planning approvals and delivery of new housing. We believe housing incentives should be bespoke and sit outside of the core Settlement, although there is a case for excluding new housing from the relative resource adjustments until any future resets between multi-year settlement periods as a short-term incentive.

9. Transitional Arrangements and Keeping Allocations up to Date

9.1 The government will begin implementation of updated funding allocations at the 2026-27 Settlement, alongside a business rates reset with the new allocations phased in over the three years of the multi-year Settlement. This will align with the Spending Review period (2026-27 to 2028-29) which provides an additional £3.4bn of additional grant funding over the three-year period.

9.2 To support local authorities to move to their new allocations in a phased sustainable way, the government are inviting views on a package of transitional arrangements available over the three-year multi-year Spending Review period. Where funding reduces, the government expects that service transformation supported by the use of funding held in reserves, will be required to support the move to the new funding allocations.

9.3 As well as the phased implementation, the consultation includes a proposal for a 0% (cash flat) funding floor so authorities would not suffer cash-terms reductions in overall funding over the period of the multi-year settlement. Any protection offered through a funding floor will assume local authorities use their full council tax flexibility (i.e. they would set the Band D council tax up to the referendum limit) although to keep Council Tax levels affordable the government expects councils to consider all levers at their disposal to manage balanced budgets before making requests for Council Tax referendum flexibility.

9.4 In KCC's response we agree with a time-limited phased introduction as previous damping arrangements were not time limited which led to previous distribution of funding being baked into allocations and the objectives of reforms never fully achieved. We support continuing flexibilities to use capital receipts to fund revenue spending but only in limited circumstances. We do not support allowing councils to borrow to fund revenue spending. We have commented that the reform of Council Tax is long overdue, the previous funding arrangements have led to a wide divergence in Band D charges with London authorities able to raise much lower charges than other areas. We believe that devolution of additional powers to local authorities is key to unlocking additional flexibilities and to reduce reliance on Council Tax increases as a way of funding increased costs and demands on local services (however we do not necessarily believe that a Strategic Mayoral Authority should be prerequisite for devolution).

9.5 We do not believe an arbitrary cash floor is appropriate. If there is to be additional protection for some councils this should be separately funded and not at the expense of assessed needs and resources for all other councils. We do not agree that population, notional Council Tax levels or taxbase data should be based on projections and data should be fixed for the entire multi-year period between resets (as forecasting errors could more than negate any smoothing of transition that projections are designed to achieve).

10 Local Government Reorganisation

10.1 Where two-tier areas seek to reorganise into a single unitary authority, the government proposes that SFA allocations of the predecessor authorities are combined to determine the allocation of the successor authority.

10.2 Where there are proposed boundary changes, including where an area is divided into more than one unitary authority, the government proposes to provide guidance to support areas to determine an appropriate division of allocations locally. This guidance would aim to ensure a consistent approach across all reorganisation areas but would allow for local data and intelligence to be used. It is important that areas determine allocations locally because local authorities hold the information needed to assess the level of need and resources at a sub-local authority level, for example information on differing levels of social care demand and costs across the county area to ensure that proposed funding splits are financially sustainable for the new unitary authorities.

10.3 The final decision on the division of allocations between successor authorities will sit with the Secretary of State and will ultimately be subject to Parliamentary approval through the annual Local Government Finance Settlement process. This approach will apply to all funding delivered through the Settlement.

10.4 In KCC's response we agree with arrangements for reorganised areas, However, it is essential that government guidance is sufficiently flexible to ensure the principal objective

that new authorities start from a relatively financially sustainable position. We have advised that significant and urgent reforms are needed to the arrangements for assessing and supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, including home to school transport, given spending pressures and budget deficits in many areas which are currently subject to a statutory override due to expire at the same time as new councils are likely to take over responsibility.

11. Sales, fees and charges

11.1 Income from sales, fees and charges is not taken into account in the relative resources adjustment. However, the government is looking to introduce some reforms to balance the challenging financial position of local authorities and affordability of fees for individuals. These reforms will look to update nationally set fee levels via secondary legislation and devolving control of fee setting for other services to local councils.

11.2 In KCC's response we agree with the proposed framework and have suggested that one possible solution to the financial challenge facing local authorities from increasing demand for and cost of local authority services would be to fully recover the cost of some services through income so that limited resources from central government and local taxation can be better targeted. We agree that a balance needs to be struck to protect service users from excessive increases. However, we have commented that we have not seen any assessment of ability to pay to underpin the decision in the Spending Review to maintain Council Tax referendum levels at 5%.

12. Proposed design of relative needs formulae

12.1 The consultation includes details of the proposed measures of relative needs to be included in RNF. These are generally based on relevant age population with additional weighting and add-ons for specific characteristics such as welfare support claimants, household circumstances derived from National Census, deprivation, free school meals, child health, parental qualifications, daytime/nighttime population inflows, road length and traffic volumes, average travel distance to school. The consultation includes a number of technical annexes for the individual RNF calculations. Appendix C sets out all the measures for each RNF.

12.2 In KCC's response we agree with the proposals for older persons social care RNF, children and young people's RNF, and highways maintenance RNF. We do not agree with the proxy measures used for younger person's adult social care RNF as these do not adequately reflect the client group and we have suggested that the government already holds up to date person level information in the Adult Social Care Client Level Dataset which could be used as a more accurate measure.

12.3 As per the response set out in section 9 of this report we disagree that annual population projections should be used in the calculation and data should be consistent for entire multi-year period. We accept that the Foundation formula RNF for all other services should be based on population, but we are concerned about the weighting applied to, and the measures used for, deprivation. We fully agree with the inclusion of a home to school transport RNF based on pupil population and travel distance but do not support an arbitrary 20-mile cap. We think there should be consideration of a further adjustment to the home to school transport formula to reflect net movement of out of area looked after children with EHCPs if transport costs are not able to be recouped from the home authority.

13. Next Steps

13.1 The government has said they intend to publish a policy paper setting out the proposed arrangements for 2026-29 multi-year settlement following the consultation in September/October. This announcement should enable us to better model the impact on KCC's grant settlement as the consultation itself did not include detailed modelling. In the meantime we will be updating the funding assumptions in the 2026-28 existing Medium Term Financial Plan to include the additional funding announced in the Spending Review but based on the current distribution.

13.2 On 5th August KCC launched its own consultation on the budget strategy for 2026-27 [budget consultation 2026-27](#). This is based on a presumption that the recent trends continue, and the Council will face increased spending in the coming year in excess of the resources from central government and local taxation leaving a gap of circa £50m (3.3% of 2025-26 net revenue) to be found from savings and income. The consultation seeks views on where savings should be found and on Council Tax levels. The consultation is open for 8 weeks until 29th September. This forecast gap will change as a result of Fair Funding 2.0 decisions although it is highly unlikely any gain will fully close the gap and further savings/income will still be needed to balance 2026-27 budget and plans for subsequent years.

14. Financial Implications

14.1 At this point in time it is reasonable to presume that under the current Fair Funding 2.0 proposals, KCC would receive an increased share of the resources available in the Local Government Finance Settlement. Not least because as outlined in section 4 of this report, the Council's overall weighted share of RNF is higher than the current arrangements. However, the Government have not produced any exemplifications alongside the consultation. Further, any gains on the relative needs share will need to be tempered by the impact of the relative resources adjustment and will be phased in over the three-year period through transitional arrangements. Those Authorities "losing" from these proposals will also lobby intensely for further changes. So, it is not possible right now to assign, with any degree of certainty, what any financial gain to the Local Authority may be.

14.2 The consolidation of departmental ringfenced grants is likely to impact on the Council's overall net budget requirement. Currently the net budget is reduced by the income received from ringfenced grants to offset spending, but income from RSG and other funding in the Local Government Finance Settlement is not offset and is treated as funding towards the net budget requirement along with Council Tax and retained share of business rates. We intend to maintain this approach with the grants rolled into RSG (allocated via SFA) continuing to be treated as funding and income from consolidated grants announced in the settlement and any other ringfenced grants outside the settlement treated as income to offset spending.

15. Legal Implications

15.1 The Council is required by law under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 to set a balanced budget for 2026-27 before 1st March 2026. There is a separate requirement under Section 25 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003 for the Chief Finance Officer to prepare a statement on the robustness of the budget estimates and the adequacy of reserves. The Fair Funding 2.0 consultation does not change these legal requirements

although it will impact on the funding available to the Council towards balancing the budget and ultimately local decision on Council Tax levels.

16. Equalities Implications

16.1 As set out in the Council's response to the consultation there is no specific evidence of impacts on those with protected characteristics but given the scale of local authority services, and the heavy bias on spending to support the most vulnerable it is essential that the formulae used to determine funding allocations are based on up to date data and are the best measures to reflect need. The draft budget 2026-27 and medium term financial plan 2026-29 will include a published Equality Impact Assessment.

17. Data Protection Implications

17.1 None.

18. Appendices

Appendix A – Individual Consultation Responses

Appendix B – Comparison of RNF Sub Blocks

Appendix C – Components of RNF Sub Blocks

19. Contact details

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Determining local authority funding allocations

Question 1

What are your views on the updated SFA resulting in zero allocations, and the use of mitigations to avoid zero allocations?

We think it unrealistic that any authority should have a zero allocation as this has the implication that all spending on local authority services can be funded from locally raised council tax and retained business rates. Negative values imply that local council tax income should be transferred to other authorities, this cannot be allowed to happen. Local taxpayers rightly expect their council tax should be spent on services in local areas and would not accept moving council tax to other areas. The vast majority of local authority services are statutory and should be funded from national taxation. There has been an over reliance on assuming funding can be raised from council tax within the local government settlement for many years and the council tax referendum limits (which were intended to prevent excessive increases) have become the expected normal for annual increases for all councils. It is becoming increasingly difficult to justify council tax levels which for the majority of households bear no resemblance to the services they benefit from, as a significant amount of local authority spending is targeted to small minority of residents. There needs to be more emphasis on council tax being raised to fund local services that are of wider community benefit and not just as another form of national taxation.

Question 2

Do you agree with how the government proposes to determine the Council of the Isles of Scilly's Settlement Funding Assessment?

Agree for Isles of Scilly as this is long standing approach and has little impact on other authorities. However, we do not support a bespoke arrangement for larger authorities such as Greater London Authority as this accounts for a much larger share of the settlement and funding should be determined by the same formula as other authorities. If there are any bespoke elements for London this should be within the overall settlement for London and not top-sliced from funding for authorities outside London.

Funding Simplification

Question 3

Do you agree with the government's plans to simplify the grant landscape?

Agree. The local government funding settlement remains incredibly complex and difficult to understand as the system comprises of departmental specific grants (with ring-fences on how grants are spent) and grants within the MHCLG local government settlement (some of which are general and can be spent on local priorities, whilst others have conditions such as Better Care Fund reporting). This mix of different grants blurs accountability. The picture is further complicated by the timing of grant announcements which have had the feel of funding being drip-fed to local authorities. The local government finance settlement itself is unnecessarily complex with settlement funding assessment, social care grants and a number of other grants included in the announcement. The social care grants are allocated via slightly different formulas based on the same principle of relative needs (albeit using out of date measures) and council tax equalisation. We support rolling these social care grants into the new and updated adult

social care relative needs formula within Revenue Support Grant but as with response to Q1 we are concerned if the tax equalisation results in some authorities receiving a zero or negative allocation. The consolidation of departmental ring-fenced grants and the rolling of grants into RSG alongside multi-year allocations should improve certainty and accountability.

Any departmental grants that remain outside the settlement should comply with same multi-year approach as the main settlement and should be announced in time for authorities to plan accordingly.

Where consolidated or new grants are established it is essential that allocations are subject to full, transparent and timely consultation. This has not always been the case in the past.

Approach to Assessing Demand

Question 4

Do you agree with the formulae for individual services the government proposes to include?

Agree, we think the streamlining of services covered by the formula is reasonable and covers the main areas of spending differences (subject to concerns raised elsewhere in the response on some individual aspects). We support the principle that there should only be a formula for individual services where there is a strong case that doing so improves the overall effectiveness of the assessment of needs. Our only question is what evidence has the government considered in concluding there is not a strong case to reflect relative needs in relation to waste collection and disposal/recycling as this is a significant area of spending which is likely to be less cost effective in large geographical areas.

We welcome the recognition of additional costs of delivering services in large relatively sparse geographical areas. However, we do not support recognising high population density.

We support the government that the data on which the current formula is based is out of date and that there is too much focus on relatively minor areas of spending in the current formula.

We are disappointed that the government is proposing to no longer to recognise legacy capital financing. Whilst we accept that the impact of this is diminishing over time and as time passes it becomes more difficult to identify the impact of legacy debt, but KCC still faces legacy costs of borrowing taken out under the Supported Borrowing regime (with the understanding that the financing costs were to be covered in the finance settlement for the lifetime of that borrowing). We have previously provided independent evaluation of the impact. We can update that analysis if the government is willing to reconsider retaining legacy capital finance within the formula.

We are concerned that deprivation measures have been included without any statistical analysis and evidence. An over reliance on deprivation measures could result in double or triple counting, particularly in the Foundation Formulas, although we recognise there may be a need for some measure of deprivation the weighting is not supported. We have serious concerns over the suitability of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) to distribute funding, given its broad range of measures (many of which are not relevant to LG services) and the subjective weightings with its calculation.

Question 5

Do you agree with the areas of need the government proposes to no longer include in the assessment through the Foundation Formula?

Agree

Question 6

Do you agree with the government's approach to calculating the control total shares for the relative needs formulae?

Agree, the approach outlined seems reasonable. Our only comment is that Revenue Outturn service spend continues to include an apportionment of overheads which could skew the distribution. We have consistently suggested that direct service expenditure and overheads should be separately identifiable in RO returns in future. This would allow more accurate assessment of the controls totals in the future (recognising we are not suggesting that previous RO returns should be recalculated).

Approach to Assessing Cost

Question 7

Do you agree with the Labour Cost Adjustment (LCA) and Rates Cost Adjustment (RCA) equations set out in this chapter?

Agree. We particularly welcome the inclusion of a measure of accessibility within the Labour Cost Adjustment. We have consistently argued that there is ample evidence that providing community based social care services is more expensive in counties covering large geographical areas with a more dispersed population due to additional travel time and costs involved. We also recognise that travel time/cost affects other services such as home to school transport, waste collection and disposal/recycling (albeit there is no separate waste formula).

Question 8

What are your views on the proposed approach to the Area Cost Adjustment (ACA)?

We think the distinction between traversal cost (time and cost based on distribution of households) and dispersal costs (time and cost of access to services) are a useful distinction as they affect services differently. We also agree that a cap should be applied where the measures are obviously skewed.

We are happy that weightings for ACA will result in a single index for each formula. We are also broadly happy with the approach to determine weights based spending from Revenue Outturn (RO) and Subjective Analysis Return (SAR). We welcome specific modelling for waste and social care.

Question 9

Do you agree or disagree with the inclusion of the Remoteness Adjustment? Do you have any evidence to support or contradict the theory that rural areas face additional costs due to separation from major markets?

Agree. We can provide evidence that supports the case that in several key markets there are fewer providers (and thus less competition) in more remote areas, impacting on the cost of procured goods and services. However, we also have evidence that areas with large coastal boundaries, particularly for a peninsular authority like Kent, also suffer from less competitiveness due suppliers not being able to benefit from cross boundary trade compared to other areas with land borders. As well the proposed use of journey times between major centres we think the government should also include the proportion of an authority's borders that are coastal as a measure of remoteness.

Approach to Resources

Question 10

Do you agree with the government's proposal to set a notional Council Tax level at the national average level, to achieve the objective of full equalisation?

We strongly disagree with full council tax equalisation.

We support the principle that resource equalisation should be based on each authority's relative tax base applied to a notional tax charge. We have consistently challenged the reforms introduced in 2016 (with no prior consultation or notification) where the methodology for the relative resources element of equalisation changed from notional charge to actual charge.

We agree with the government that partial equalisation could be contrary to the objective of distributing grant in such a way that enables all authorities to provide the same level of services to their residents. However, we believe this should only apply to statutory services and it should remain a local decision on the level of spending on non-statutory services where there is a degree of choice, and a balance to be struck with levels of local taxation. We are concerned that this local aspect of council tax could be lost through full equalisation which is a strong argument in favour of partial equalisation. This has not been adequately explored in the consultation and government should seek further views on this particular aspect.

Question 11

Do you agree with the government's proposal to fully include the impact of mandatory discounts and exemptions in the measure of taxbase?

Agree, the impact of mandatory discounts on the overall ability to raise council tax income is a significant factor and should be included in the relative resource calculation. The impact of discretionary discounts and premiums should not be included in the calculation.

Question 12

Do you agree with the government's proposal to use statistical methods to proxy for the impact of Working Age Local Council Tax Support in the measure of taxbase?

Agree. We agree with the principle that it is a mandatory requirement to have a working age scheme and thus the differential impact on ability to raise council tax from local economic circumstances affecting the number of claimants should be reflected in the calculation. We agree that taking no account of these differences is not tenable. We also agree that the calculation should not be based on actual levels of working age reductions as these will include the impact of local discretionary decisions. This is particularly important in two tier areas where the decisions on working age reductions are taken by the billing authorities (lower tier) but impact is much more material to the council tax income for precepting authorities (upper tier).

Question 13

What are your views on the proposed statistical approach to proxy for the impact of Working Age Local Council Tax Support?

The proposed approach seems overly complex and theoretical. We are particularly concerned about using Index of Multiple Deprivation to weight population in the calculation. Although IMD is a numerical measure it was intended to identify whether one area is more or less deprived than another for ranking purposes, but not a measure of the extent of the differences. We are also concerned that IMD is not necessarily a good proxy for working age claimants as it does not take into account other aspects of eligibility criteria. A more robust measure would be a uniform approach based on number and value of working age reductions if the national default scheme were in place in every local authority area. In Kent the collection authorities have been able to calculate this even though individual local schemes are currently in place so it should be possible to apply the same uniform approach in other areas.

Question 14

Do you agree with the government's proposal to assume that authorities make no use of their discretionary discount and premium schemes in the measure of taxbase?

Agree. It is paramount that authorities should be able to make decisions about these local arrangements in response to local circumstances safe in the knowledge it will not affect grant funding allocations. As with working age schemes in two tier areas the discretionary decisions on discounts and premiums are made by billing authorities (lower tier) although the most material impact is on the upper tier authorities. This apparent inconsistency would be resolved through Local Government reorganisation plans although this will lead to harmonisation considerations for the new successor unitary authorities.

Question 15

Do you agree with the government's proposal to apply a uniform Council Tax collection rate assumption to all authorities?

Agree with principle of a uniform rate but this should not be based on 100%. We suggest the uniform rate should be based on an average as full council tax collection is unlikely to ever be feasible.

Question 16

Do you agree with the government's proposal to split or allocate the resource adjustment in multi-tier areas according to the average share in Council Tax receipts in multi-tier areas?

Agree, in principle we agree this should be based on national average rather than actual tier splits in each area. However, we do not understand why the split in London does not equate to 100% of council tax or why the Police and Crime Commissioners' share is not shown in two tier areas. This appears to be inconsistent and overstates the county council share in two tier areas.

Running the Business Rates Retention System

Question 17

Noting a potential trade-off of an increased levy charged on business rate growth for some local authorities, do you agree that the level of Safety Net protection should increase for 2026-27?

Neither agree or disagree, as there is insufficient justification for increasing the level of safety net protection, particularly as the consultation acknowledges the government is still exploring options for redesigning the levy rate. Any changes to the safety net should include a review of tier splits in two tier areas.

The principle that safety net protection should be funded from levies on excess growth should be honoured. Safety net protection should not be funded at the expense of the overall settlement for all authorities. Pooling has worked well to share the benefits of business rate growth and mitigate the risk of losses in local areas according to local circumstances. We are extremely concerned that the consultation suggests pooling would not continue. This would be a retrograde step which would especially penalise two-tier areas and the only justification seems to be to increase the levy available to government to fund the enhanced safety net. KCC is firmly of the view that the current safety net and pooling arrangements should continue.

The New Homes Bonus

Question 18

Do you agree with the government's proposal to end the New Homes Bonus in the Settlement from 2026-27 and return the funding currently allocated to the Bonus to the core Settlement, distributed via the updated Settlement Funding Assessment?

Agree. We have consistently challenged the basis of New Homes Bonus grant. It is based on council tax base growth from new homes and homes brought back into use but only for those above an arbitrary 0.4% threshold. We have never supported this arbitrary threshold and have been concerned that using council tax base introduces a significant lag between planning approvals and completions. We have also consistently challenged the 80/20 split in two tier areas as this understates the role the strategic upper tier authorities play in promoting housing growth. However, it should be acknowledged that transferring the allocation to the updated SFA will result in a significantly different distribution both between authorities and particularly between upper tier and lower tier authorities in two-tier areas, although we do agree there is no better fair way of distributing this funding other than through updated SFA and any resulting turbulence should be dealt with through transitional damping.

Question 19

What measures could the government use to incentivise local authorities to specifically support affordable and sub-market housing?

We support the principle of incentivising housing growth, however, in general we believe these should be bespoke arrangements and should sit outside of the relative need/relative resource equalisation within the main settlement and covered in this consultation and response. One possible incentive within the settlement would be to exclude new housing from council tax base in the relative resource adjustments until future resets. This is explored further in response to question.27

Transitional arrangements and keeping allocations up to date

Question 20

Are there any further flexibilities that you think could support local decision-making during the transitional period?

We support capital receipt flexibilities but only on spending that will support service transformation and efficiencies. We would support flexibilities which reduce statutory burdens on local authorities and/or allowed scope for greater income generation/income sharing.

Reform of council tax is long overdue. Whilst it is a resilient tax, it is regressive and previous funding arrangements have seen a wide divergence in Band D charges with London authorities able to have much lower charges than other areas. We believe that devolution is key to unlocking additional flexibilities and could reduce the reliance on council tax increases as way funding increasing costs and demand on local services.

We are opposed to previous suggestions that local authorities should be given additional flexibilities to fund revenue spending from borrowing as this runs counter to the balanced budget requirement. We are concerned that allowing borrowing to fund revenue spending could add to the already large amounts of capital debt resulting in even more of an authority's revenue budget being consumed on debt servicing costs adding even further to the challenge of balancing revenue spending. Therefore, borrowing should not even be considered as a transitional mechanism.

We do recognise that there may need to be bespoke arrangements for a very small number of authorities in exceptional circumstances. We accept these are likely to have to be agreed with authorities on an individual basis.

Question 21

What are the safeguards that would need to go alongside any additional flexibilities?

The main safeguard we would like to see is that any additional flexibilities should not be at the expense of the overall settlement available to all local authorities.

Question 22

Do you agree or disagree that we should move local authorities to their updated allocations over the multi-year Settlement?

Agree. We fully support the 3-year phased approach to transitional damping. One of the problems with previous damping arrangements was that they were not time limited which led to the previous distribution of funds being baked into future allocations and the objectives of funding reforms never fully achieved

Please provide any additional information, including the impact this measure could have on local authorities' financial sustainability and service provision.

Question 23

Do you agree or disagree that we should use a funding floor to protect as many local authorities' income as possible, at flat cash in each year of the Settlement?

Disagree. A funding floor seems an unnecessary additional transitional arrangement as well as phased damping. It appears to be designed as window dressing as there is no particular rationale that says protecting the same level of cash as the current settlement is a pre-requisite. We would suggest that if there is a floor this should not be funded at the expense of SFA allocation for other authorities which should receive their full share of assessed needs after applying the phased transitional damping.

Please provide any additional information, including on:

- **The level of protection or income baseline, considerate of the tradeoff with allocating funding according to the updated assessment of need and resources; and**
- **The possible impacts on local authorities' financial sustainability and service provision.**

Question 24

Do you agree or disagree with including projections on residential population?

Disagree. .

Question 25

Do you agree or disagree with including projections on Council Tax level?

Disagree.

Question 26

Do you agree or disagree with including projections on Council Tax base?

Disagree.

Question 27

Please provide any additional information, including any explanation or evidence for your response and any views on technical delivery. If you agree, what is your preferred method of projecting residential population, Council Tax level and Council Tax base?

Q24 We agree that data should be updated at the at the beginning of each multi-year period and not annually. Whilst we understand that using population projections should

provide a more contemporary and dynamic assessment of needs and resources, hopefully smoothing the transition between reset periods. However, we are equally concerned that forecast errors could more than offset this smoothing. What modelling has been done to identify the impact of errors in previous forecasts? We would need to see any modelling before reaching a firm view whether or not using population projections would meet the intended objectives

Q25 - We would not be happy that the multi-year settlement is based on an assumed increase in the notional council level used in the resource equalisation and should not be based on the government's referendum principles and historic patterns of council decisions on the basis this further erodes the idea that council tax levels are a local decision. Council's should continue to benefit from local decisions to raise council tax and not including assumed increases would act as an incentive to new house building. We do not believe increases should be subject to a referendum or included in core spending power.

Q26 - There are many factors that affect council tax base other than just new housing e.g. changes single occupancy, changes in claimants under Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes, etc. Whilst we understand logic that if relative needs are based on population forecast then relative resources should be based on tax base estimates but even more than is the case with population projections we are concerned that any additional accuracy/equity could be offset by forecast errors. Again, what modelling has been done to compare validity of previous Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts with tax base set by individual authorities?

From our own experience we would be concerned about using tax base growth over the previous 5 year period as a prediction for future growth as this would include the significant turbulence arising from Covid lockdowns and impact of subsequent global and national economic circumstances which may not be repeated.

Fixing the tax base in the relative resource calculation for the whole multi-year period would allow those authorities with significant new housing to benefit for the council tax proceeds in their taxbase and not have an adjustment in grant distribution until the next multi-year period. This would provide a short-term incentive to promote housing growth. Since the resource equalisation has not been reset since 2013-14 under the current system there has already been a similar incentive that has applied over a much longer period for growth over the last 12 years and thus would be more equitable than the current arrangements.

Q27 - On balance we think that the first multi-year settlement should be calculated on consistent data i.e. same population and taxbase in each year. This would provide a more predictable outcome and it's likely that transitional damping will have a much greater impact on the settlements for each year than changes in forecast data so using forecasts becomes rather academic.

Devolution, local government reorganisation and wider reform

Question 28

Do you agree with the proposed above approach to determining allocations for areas which reorganise into a single unitary authority along existing geographic boundaries?

Agree, this seems appropriate. Presumably this would lead to a revised damping calculation for the new authorities rather than combining the damping for the previous authorities? If so this could be difficult to predict for any new authorities created in 2026 or 2027 i.e. during the damping period.

Question 29

Do you agree that, where areas are reorganising into multiple new unitary authorities, they should agree a proposal for the division of existing funding locally, based on any guidance set out by central government?

Agree. This is fine in principle and particularly in the case of social care as it would allow the impact of disproportionate care placement decisions to be reflected in baseline funding allocations. However, we are not convinced that the statement “it is important that areas determine allocations locally because local authorities hold the information needed to assess the level of need and resources at sub local authority level” is necessarily always the case. What this fails to address is that the very nature of a relative needs formula makes it difficult to disaggregate into sub areas and thus there will have to be some subjective judgements.

We welcome government guidance, but this should not override the principal objective of ensuring new authorities at least start from a relatively financially sustainable position.

Please provide any supporting information, including any further information areas would find helpful in guidance.

Question 30

Do you agree that the government should work to reduce unnecessary or disproportionate burden created by statutory duties? If you agree, what specific areas of statutory duties impose significant burden without significant value for residents?

Agree

Please provide any examples of changes you would like to see to statutory duties, being as specific as possible.

Significant and urgent reform is needed of the arrangements for assessing and supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and home to school transport. Both present authorities like Kent with significant and unavoidable costs due to current legislative

requirements. The current overspends on the Dedicated Schools Grant are being held a negative reserve which although this is currently subject to a statutory override there is an impact on the Council's treasury balances available for investment with consequential loss of investment returns.

Sales, fees and charges

Question 31

Do you agree with the proposed framework outlined at paragraph 11.2.3 for assessing whether a fee should be changed?

Agree. We do not have any particular concerns with the proposed framework and in particular we welcome that government is not seeking to legislate to change fees across the whole system and there is still a role for local authorities to reflect local circumstances. We do believe that one possible solution to the financial pressure arising from the increased demand for and cost of local authority services will inevitably require more services to be covered by full cost recovery so that the limited resources from national and local taxation are better targeted. This should not exclude enhancing the ability to raise charges on statutory services i.e. just because a service is statutory it shouldn't necessarily be free or subsidised.

Please provide any additional information, for example any additional considerations which would strengthen this proposed assessment framework, and any data which would be used to assess against it.

Question 32

The government invites views from respondents on how best to balance the need to maintain fee values and the original policy intent of the fee whilst minimising cost of living impacts for service users.

We support mechanisms that would ensure fee increases are affordable both in terms of the council's overall funding requirements and individual household budgets.

Question 33

Do you agree that the measures above provide an effective balance between protecting charge payers from excessive increases, while providing authorities with greater control over local revenue raising?

Agree. We think the proposed measures represent a reasonable balance for service users but we remain concerned whether adequate regard has been given to balance between fees for service users and contribution expected from local council tax payers. We have not seen any evidence of assessment of ability to pay to underpin the decision in the Spending Review to maintain referendum levels at 5% over the spending review period.

Please provide a rationale or your response. We are also interested in any further mechanisms which could be applied to fees that are updated or devolved, that will help strike a balance between those objectives.

Question 34

Do you agree that we should take action to update fees before exploring options to devolve certain fees to local government in the longer term?

Agree, although we would welcome additional devolved fee setting powers at the earliest possible opportunity (albeit with due notice so that we can consult with local residents and communities over how those powers should be exercised).

Proposed design of relative needs formulae

Question 35

Do you agree or disagree that these are the right Relative Needs Indicators?

Are there any other Relative Needs Indicators we should consider?

Note that we will not be able to add additional indicators for a 2026-27 update.

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree for younger adults. We have previously expressed concerns that relative needs indicators for younger adults are very broad proxy indicators based on the overall population whereas the client group is generally a very well defined and known group of clients who would only represent a relatively small proportion of those living with no family or in receipt of welfare benefits. We can still see merit in exploring whether all or an element of relative needs should not be based on actual client numbers/assessed needs especially as these clients are in the care system for a long time. The Adult Social Care Client Level Dataset contains up-to-date person level information of those accessing services (including enablement) with all local authorities, providing a comprehensive understanding of activity, length of time in different types of services and the committed costs. This would provide an extensive set of data to base new calculations on, rather than using rescaled ASC Activity from 2012-13. Surely this important and far-reaching work meets the reasons for the creation and implementation of a national Client Level Dataset for ASC, which contains full postcodes.

Agree for older persons. The proxies for older persons are more representative of the client group eligible for social care as there is a stronger correlation with those receiving disability benefits (a proxy for health), living without a partner (a proxy for family support) and income/housing ownership (a proxy for wealth). Access to older persons social care is influenced by all these factors.

Question 36

Do you agree or disagree with including population projections in the ASC formula, when published, that have been rebased using Census 2021 data?

Disagree. We are not comfortable with using population projections within the ASC formula even if some of the measures of need are frozen based on 2021 census. However, as with comments in response to question 24 we would like to know what modelling has been done to identify whether forecast errors negate some of the benefit and whether keeping data constant over the multi-year settlement makes any significant difference (particularly during the initial damped period) compared to simplicity and predictability from constant data (and potentially more equitable in the short-term on the presumption that damping would more than outweigh the impact of using data projections).

Question 37

Do you agree or disagree with our proposal to include a Low-Income Adjustment (LIA) for the older adults component of the ASC RNF model?

Disagree. We are not convinced that the low income adjustment makes much difference, as noted in the consultation if it were excluded the impact on final allocation shares would be small.

The relative needs assessment already includes weightings for income and wealth (wealth being a significant factor in determining client contributions) so we are not convinced that a further low income adjustment is necessary.

Question 38

Do you agree or disagree that the overall ASC RNF should combine the two component allocation shares using weights derived from the national ASC net current expenditure data on younger and older adults (in this case 2023 to 2024)?

Agree. We certainly believe the updated 52%/48% split between younger adults and older persons is more realistic than the current 40%/60%. Traditionally net spend on services for younger adults has been considerably higher than net spend on older persons even more than this updated ratio in some areas (particularly county areas) although in recent years we have seen spending on older persons residential services increasing most rapidly due to a combination of complexity and market supply of places

If you disagree, what other weightings would you use? Please provide details for why you would use these weights and what data it would be based on?

Question 39

Do you agree that ethnicity should be removed as a variable in the CYPS formula? Please explain your reasoning.

Agree. We believe ethnicity was always a poor measure of relative needs as it was too simplistic and the reasons why children are engaged with children's social care are myriad and complex.

Question 40

Do you agree overall that the new formula represents an accurate assessment of need for children and family services? Please share any reflections or suggested changes.

Agree. We believe the relative needs formula used for the allocation of the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant resulted in a much better distribution of resources than the previous children's RNF. Our main concern with the Children's Social Care Prevention Grant was the 30% adjusted for relative resources as unlike adult social care there is no specific council tax levy for children's social care. We believe the new children's RNF has been well researched although this research evidence has not been shared.

Question 41

Do you believe that the components of daytime population inflow should be weighted to reflect their relative impact on demand for services?

.Agree We remain unconvinced that daytime population has as much impact on local authority services as the consultation suggests although we accept there is some impact. The Foundation

Formula should be principally based on resident population with a top-up for daytime/night time visitors rather than being based on projected daytime population.

Question 42

Do you agree with/have any comments on the design of the Foundation Formula?

Disagree. We accept the principal that the Foundation Formula should be based on population with an area cost adjustment and should include a small deprivation top-up. However, it is unclear from the consultation what weighting has been given to deprivation and as outlined in our response to Q14 we do not agree with using Index of Multiple Deprivation for the to-up calculation as although IMD is a numerical measure it was intended to identify whether one area is more or less deprived than another for ranking purposes, but not a measure of the extent of the differences. Therefore, it is poor measure to use in the top-up calculation.

As per response to Q42 we think the Foundation Formula should be based on resident population with a top up for inflows.

Question 43

Do you agree with/have any comments on the design of the Fire and Rescue Formula?

No view. No specific comments other than we have already indicated that length of coastline should be a factor in the Area Cost Adjustment and we note it is a proposed factor in Fire and Rescue RNF which adds further weight to our argument that it affects the cost of delivering other services, particularly in a peninsular county like Kent.

Question 44

Do you agree with/have any comments on the design of the formula for Highways Maintenance?

Agree. Road length and usage are key factors influencing the cost of highway management and maintenance. We believe this RNF should be identified as management and maintenance rather than solely maintenance

Question 45

Do you agree with/have any comments on the design of the formula for Home-to-School-Transport?

Agree. We fully support the inclusion of a relative needs formula for Home to School Transport. This is a significant area of spending for upper tier councils, particularly county areas serving a larger area with more dispersed communities and lacking public transport. Spending on home to school transport has been growing as a result of increased demand for Education and Health Care Plans as well increased market costs due to labour recruitment and higher fuel and maintenance costs.

We think the design of the formula based on pupil population and travel distance is the right approach, however we do not support the arbitrary capping the maximum travel distance. We do think there is a strong argument for a more service specific Area Cost Adjustment for Home to School Transport which takes into account the competitiveness of the market in some areas compared to others.

The Department for Education has launched a consultation on The Belonging Regulations covering the recoupment of educational costs for out-area looked-after children. This includes seeking views on recouping the home to school transport costs for looked-after children placed into care in another local authority area. Under the current arrangements the local authority where the child is placed is responsible for maintaining an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and regulations permit recoupment of social care costs, however, other costs (such as special educational provision and associated home to school transport) can only be recouped by mutual agreement between the authorities. If the regulations are not adjusted to reflect home to school transport costs then authorities which receive more looked-after children than they place elsewhere will continue to be penalised and there would be a strong case to include and adjustment to the home to school transport relative needs formula to reflect net movement of looked-after children with EHCPs.

Question 46

Do you have any views on the potential impacts of the proposals in this consultation on persons who share a protected characteristic?

Whilst we have no specific evidence on protected characteristics given the scale of local authority services, and the heavy bias on spending to support the most vulnerable (many of whom would have protected characteristics), it is essential that the formulas are based on up to date data and are the best measures of need across all local authority types and areas so that councils can have the assurance that in providing services that offer best value to local residents they are not disadvantaged by an out of date and skewed funding distribution. To this extent the update and review is long overdue.

Comparison of RNFs in 2013-14 SFA and Proposed RNF in new Formulae

| 2013-14 formulae in Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) | Formulae the government proposes using in the updated core assessment |
|---|--|
| Adult's Personal Social Services (Social Services for Older Adults) | Updated Adult Social Care (Older Adults) |
| Adult's Personal Social Services (Social Services for Younger Adults) | Updated Adult Social Care (Younger Adults) |
| Children's Services (Youth and Community) | New Children and Young People's Services |
| Children's Services (Children's Social Care) | |
| Children's Services (Central Education Functions) | New Home to School Transport |
| Concessionary Travel | New Foundation Formula (Upper Tier) New Foundation Formula (Lower Tier) |
| Continuing Environment Agency Levies | |
| Coast Protection | |
| Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (Lower Tier) | |
| Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services (Upper Tier) | |
| Flood Defence | |
| Fire and Rescue | Updated Fire and Rescue |
| Highways Maintenance | New Highways Maintenance |
| n/a | New Temporary Accommodation |
| Fixed Costs | No longer included in assessment |
| Legacy Capital Finance | |

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Proposed RNF Measures in new Formulae

Adult Social Care RNF

| | |
|--|---|
| Formula structure | Formula for upper tier authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All upper tier authorities i.e. LB, MD, SC and UAs (excluding the Council of the Isles of Scilly) |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | Younger (18 to 64) and older adults (65 and over) |
| Need drivers: | <p>Younger adult formula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of household reference persons (an ONS term for people) aged 16 to 64 living in one-family households • Proportion of people aged 18 to 64 in receipt of Universal Credit (not subject to Work Requirements), Employment Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance* claimants • Proportion of people aged 16 to 64 who are aged 16 to 24 <p>Older adult formula:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance, or Attendance Allowance claimants • Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over living as a couple • Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are aged 80 or over • Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are Pension Credit claimants aged 80 or over • Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over who own their home outright, multiplied by the proportion of all dwellings in Council Tax bands A to E |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over who own their home outright, multiplied by the proportion of all dwellings in Council Tax bands F to H |
| Analytical technique used: | Small area modelling |

| | |
|--|---|
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning disability and support • Physical support • Social care activities • Mental health support • Support with memory and cognition • Commissioning and service delivery |
|--|---|

This table provides a comparison of the components of 2013-14 younger adults RNF with the proposed components in new younger adults RNF.

| Relative needs indicators in current ASC RNF | Relative needs indicators in proposed updated ASC RNF |
|--|---|
| Proportion of households with no family | Proportion of household reference persons aged 16 to 64 living in one-family households (Note: household reference persons is an ONS term which means 'people') |
| Proportion of people aged 18 to 64 who work in routine or semi routine occupations (occupations carrying out specific activities with well-defined instructions, for example, cleaners, bar staff) | Proportion of people aged 18 to 64 in receipt of Universal Credit (not subject to Work Requirements), Employment Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance* claimants |
| Proportion of people aged 18 to 64 who are long term unemployed or have never worked | |
| Proportion of people aged 18 to 64 who are in receipt of Disability Living Allowance | |
| | Proportion of people aged 16 to 64 who are aged 16 to 24 |

**We note that it is not possible to claim Attendance Allowance under the State Pension age which includes people who are aged 18 to 64. However, this is the name of the variable as included in the DWP Stat Xplore benefits combination dataset where this data is obtained. We have kept this name for consistency.*

This table provides a comparison of the components of 2013-14 older persons RNF with the proposed components in new older persons RNF.

| Relative needs indicators in the current ASC RNF | Relative needs indicators in the proposed updated ASC RNF |
|--|--|
| Proportion of people aged 65 or over who were in receipt of attendance allowance | Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are Personal Independence Payment*, Disability Living Allowance, or Attendance Allowance claimants |
| Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are living alone | Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over living as a couple |
| Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are aged 90 or over | Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are aged 80 or over |
| Proportion of people aged 65 or over who were in receipt of pension credit ** | Proportion of people aged 65 or over who are Pension Credit claimants aged 80 or over |
| Proportion of people aged 65 or over living in rented accommodation | Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over who own their home outright, multiplied by the proportion of all dwellings in Council Tax bands A to E |
| | Proportion of household reference persons aged 65 or over who own their home outright, multiplied by the proportion of all dwellings in Council Tax bands F to H |

**We note that it is not possible to claim Personal Independence Payment over the State Pension age, which includes some people who are 65 or over. However, this is the name of the variable as included in the DWP Stat Xplore benefits combination dataset where this data is obtained. We have kept this name for consistency.*

*** Pension credit was the only benefit included during the 2005-06 development of the final model for the older adults component of the current ASC RNF. However, in subsequent years during the calculation of the estimated relative gross expenditure using local authority-level data, it appears the input data used also included information for other benefits such as income support.*

Children and Young People's Services RNF

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|--|---|
| Formula structure | Formula for upper tier authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All upper tier authorities i.e. LB, MD, SC and UAs (excluding the Council of the Isles of Scilly) |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | Children in Need, Children Looked After, and children who recently ceased care |
| Need drivers: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex of child (categorised as male or female) • Age of child • Eligibility for free school meals (FSM) on date of the census • Socio-economic deprivation level in child's LSOA (as measured by the IDACI) • Proportion of children in child's LSOA with parents with low qualifications • Proportion of children in child's LSOA with poor health • Proportion of overcrowded households in child's LSOA • Population density (measured in persons per km²) in child's LSOA • Travel time from LSOA centroid to nearest town centre (mins) |
| Analytical technique used: | Multi-level model |
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child, young people and family support services • Safeguarding, social work assessment, case management, and commissioning • Looked after children, supporting legal permanence in alternative families and care leaver services • Sure Start children's centres and early years • Youth justice • Information, advice and guidance for young people |

Foundation Formula RNF

| | |
|--|--|
| Formula structure | Separate formulae for lower tier and upper tier authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All lower tier and upper tier authorities |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | Daytime population: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projected total residential population • Commuters • Domestic day visitors • Domestic visitor nights |
| Need drivers: | Lower and upper tier formulae: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) population-weighted score |
| Analytical technique used: | Expenditure-based regression at local authority level |
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste services • Libraries • Leisure • Sports and recreation • Environmental health • Public transport, including bus services • Planning • Central services • Concessionary travel • Flood defence • Coastal protection |

Fire and Rescue RNF

| | |
|--|---|
| Formula Structure | Formula for fire authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All authorities with Fire and Rescue responsibility |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | All residents within a fire authority |
| Need drivers: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of coastline • Household deprivation (2021 Census) • Population density • Population sparsity • Number of Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) sites • Property and societal risk • Percentage of households which have dependent children, students or age 65+ occupants |
| Analytical Technique used: | Based on the existing formula which was derived using a combination of expenditure-based regression and Ministerial judgement |
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting fire safety • Extinguishing fires, as well as protecting life and property in the event of a fire • Rescuing people in the event of a road traffic collision • Assessing and preventing any fire and rescue-related risks • Responding to any other emergencies, including requests from the Secretary of State |

Highways Maintenance RNF

| | |
|--|--|
| Formula structure | Formula for upper tier authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All upper tier authorities i.e. LB, MD, SC and UAs (excluding IoS) |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road length in kilometres (maintained by local authorities) |
| Need drivers: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic volume per unit of road length |
| Analytical technique used: | Expenditure-based regression at local authority level |
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental, safety and routine road maintenance • Structural maintenance • Street lighting • Winter services |

Home to School Transport RNF

| | |
|--|--|
| Formula structure | Formula for upper tier authorities |
| Local authorities in scope: | All upper tier authorities i.e. LB, MD, SC and UAs (excluding IoS) |
| Who/what covered by service(s): | Mainstream and SEND pupils |
| Need drivers: | Average distance to school per pupil |
| Analytical technique used: | Distribution of serviced population weighted by need driver |
| Example of service areas included in the formula: | Pre-16 mainstream and SEND home-to-school travel |

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From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
 Clare Maynard, Chief Procurement Officer

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee

Date: 10 September 2025

Subject: Update from the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG)

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report provides an update on the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG), which resumes in September 2025 following a short pause to review its Terms of Reference (TORs). Only minor changes have been made to the TORs – including updated membership and increased meeting frequency – and the Group will continue to play a key role in providing assurance, challenge, and oversight of KCC’s strategically important contracts, as a vital part of the Council’s commercial governance arrangements.

Recommendation:

Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider** and **note** this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) was originally convened in September 2016. Since its inception, the Group has played a key role in identifying contract management best practice across KCC, while highlighting areas for development and ensuring that identified issues are addressed.
- 1.2 The Group was paused following the recent local elections to allow time to review its Terms of Reference (TORs) (Annex A) and ensure they remain appropriate. This report confirms the resumption of the Group’s operation in September 2025 and reaffirms its role in providing assurance, challenge, and oversight of the Council’s most strategically important contracts.

2. Purpose, Role, and Responsibilities

- 2.1 The CMRG forms a core part of the Council’s commercial governance framework. Alongside the Commercial and Procurement Oversight Board, which scrutinises procurement proposals before tender, the CMRG focuses on the performance and management of contracts once awarded. Together, these forums ensure strong oversight across the full commercial lifecycle.
- 2.2 The Group provides constructive challenge, assurance, and learning through structured reviews of ‘Gold’-tiered contracts – those assessed as strategically

important due to their value, risk, or complexity. These reviews help ensure that value for money is being achieved, risks are managed, and contract management practice is robust and complies with KCC policy and regulations.

- 2.3 The reviews take place at two points in the life of the Council's key contracts: mid-way through the contract and prior to any extension. Reviews are informed by a maturity assessment completed by the Contract Manager against the National Audit Office (NAO) Good Practice Contract Management Framework.
- 2.4 The Group is jointly chaired by the Chief Procurement Officer and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Corporate and Traded Services. Membership includes cross-party elected Members and Senior Officers from Commercial and Procurement, Finance, Legal, and Internal Audit. As outlined in the TORs, the Service owners of the contracts under review are invited to attend the CMRG meeting to contribute to the discussion and provide operational insight.
- 2.5 While the Group does not hold decision-making powers, it plays a key advisory role. Recommendations are shared with Contract Managers, Corporate Directors, and Cabinet Members, with follow-up by commercial business partners. A summary of reviews is reported to this Committee every six months.

3. Operation and Forward Plan

- 3.1 The Group will meet annually to agree its forward plan, with regular meetings now scheduled every six weeks – an increase from the previous bi-monthly arrangement. This change is intended to provide more timely assurance and enable the review of a broader range of contracts over the year.
- 3.2 The first meeting under the updated arrangements will take place in September 2025, focusing on agreeing the forward plan for the next 12 months.

4. Conclusion and Next Steps

- 4.1 The CMRG continues to play a vital role in supporting the Council's ambition to deliver best value, strengthen contract management practice, and maintain robust oversight of commercial delivery. The updated TORs reflect only minor changes – including updated membership and increased meeting frequency – but reaffirm the Group's importance within KCC's governance arrangements.
- 4.2 The next report to this Committee will provide a summary of the Group's activity and findings over the first six months of its resumed operation.

5. Recommendation

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| Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note this report. |
|---|

6. Contact details

Report Author: Michael Bridger, Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead



Contract Management Review Group

Terms of Reference

Version No: 10
Drafted By: Michael Bridger, Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead (Standards and Improvement)~~Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager~~
Date: 5 August 2025 ~~9 July 2025~~

1. Role and Purpose

The Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) has been in operation since September 2016, following agreement at the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee to implement a forum to review KCC's strategically important contracts. CMRG's key objectives are as follows:

- To provide assurance as to good practice and an overall high standard in the management of KCC contracts, as this will improve outcomes, value for money and the management of risk.
- To provide challenge and an opportunity to identify potential commercial improvements and efficiencies in the management of the contract that will help ensure the contract represents 'Best Value'.

The CMRG will meet every six weeks to look in depth at specific contracts; asking eContract ~~m~~Managers to report on the performance of the contract and to review the maturity of their contract management practice against criteria from National Audit Office best practice guidance (Appendix 1).

2. Membership

Membership of the CMRG is drawn from Officers and Members from across KCC, recognising the key role of Officers and Members in providing oversight and governance of the commissioning cycle. The Chair of the CMRG is appointed by the Deputy Leader. Currently, a Joint Chair arrangement is in place with the Chief Procurement Officer and Deputy Cabinet Member for Corporate and Traded Services Finance. The Chairs are responsible for identifying further Officers and Members to sit on the panel.

Officers

- Joint Chair – Chief Procurement Officer
- Section 151 Officer (or representative)
- Monitoring Officer (or representative)
- Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead (Standards and Improvement)~~Commercial and Procurement Standards Managers~~
- Commercial and Procurement Policy and Governance Lead
- Head of Internal Audit (or representative)

Members

- Joint Chair – Deputy Cabinet Member for Corporate and Traded Services Finance
- Member 2 – Member from the Reform UK Group ~~Conservative Group~~
- Member 3 – Member from an Opposition Group ~~the Conservative Group~~
- Member 4 – Member from an Opposition Group
- Member 5 – Member from an Opposition Group

For each meeting, additional invitees would be:

- Presenting Contract Manager/s (mandatory)

- Head of Service for the Contract and/or Head of Commissioning (mandatory)
- Relevant Strategic Procurement and Commercial Lead (based on the Category) (mandatory)
- Operational Director for the Service (optional)
- Cabinet Member for the Service (optional)

3. Functions and responsibilities

- The CMRG reviews contracts against the National Audit Office (NAO) Good Practice Contract Management Framework (see Appendix 1) and an associated maturity assessment template. The NAO framework is a high standard relevant to the Council's strategically important (i.e. 'Gold') contracts. Below this, Officers may still want to consider applying it but proportionally.
- The CMRG will have a forward plan of contracts to be reviewed for the next 12 months and eContract mManagers will be given at least 6 weeks' notice of when their contract will be reviewed.
- Each eContract mManager completes the template and provides supporting evidence for submission prior to meeting with the CMRG. The expectation is that eContract mManagers should have the information required to complete the template readily available as part of a day-to-day good practice approach to contract management. As required, the Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager and Strategic Commercial and Procurement Leads (for Standards and Improvement, and the relevant Category) may also have discussions with the eContract mManager to clarify issues or queries prior to the meeting.
- Unlike an audit, the review process relies on a self-assessment by the eContract mManager and the CMRG does not itself verify evidence and check source material. However, eContract mManagers do agree that the information provided to the CMRG is accurate.
- Within the CMRG meeting, the Group provides a robust level of challenge and questioning to determine whether overall value for money can be demonstrated in addition to there being compliance with the relevant internal rules and public procurement regulations and transparency and accountability around decision-making. The Group will advise on where improvements and efficiencies may be made in contract management practice to better realise those objectives.
- It also provides advice and guidance to managers ahead of any contract extension, in order to ensure consideration of value for money and procedural requirements.
- Where appropriate, the Chairs and wider membership of the CMRG will discuss contract details and issues with the supplier contractor or service user/s in order to gain a wider perspective on contract performance. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis. On occasion, it may also be appropriate for the supplier contractor to attend, if agreed as part of the forward plan.
- Following the CMRG, the Chairs will issue key findings and recommendations regarding the specific contract reviewed to the relevant Corporate Director, Cabinet Member and, where necessary, Committee.
- The Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager and Strategic Commercial and Procurement Leads (for Standards and Improvement, and the relevant Category) are responsible for following up with eContract mManagers after each meeting to review progress against the recommendations put forward by the CMRG and to clarify what the outcomes have been from those reviews.
- When appropriate, Contract Managers will be asked to return to CMRG after a defined time period to account for the actions requested, and to provide assurance that change has been embedded within contract delivery.
- The CMRG is responsible for capturing the lessons learned from contract reviews and sharing best practice across the Council, in order to identify common themes and to improve standards across KCC.
- CMRG will refer matters to KCC's iInternal aAudit term if the need arises.

4. Governance

- The CMRG is a part of the Council's established Informal Governance Arrangements and meets every six weeks.
- Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee and Governance and Audit Cabinet Committee will receive half yearly reports on lessons learned and the forward look for reviews.

5. Meetings, Communication and Timelines

- As standard, the CMRG will meet every ~~six weeks~~two months for 1½ to 2½ hours, ~~usually~~ reviewing one to two specific contracts at each meeting. The frequency, duration, and number of contracts reviewed may vary dependent on business need.
- The Contract Manager, relevant Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead, and relevant Corporate Director and Cabinet Member are invited to attend CMRG a minimum of six weeks prior to meeting, with the master slide deck and timelines for completion provided.
- Where necessary and appropriate, the Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead (Standards and Improvement)~~Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager~~ will have a pre-meet with the ~~e~~CContract ~~m~~Manager to talk them through what needs to be completed, explain the format of the meeting and to understand what the contract is.
- Officers are required to provide a completed set of the maturity slides and, where appropriate, supporting evidence, a maximum one week in advance of the meeting date.
- The agenda, the completed slide deck and supporting evidence will then be issued to the CMRG one week before the CMRG meeting.
- The Chairs will be briefed on the contract by the Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead (Standards and Improvement)~~Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager~~ in the week prior to five to seven days before the CMRG.
- The Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead (Standards and Improvement)~~Commercial and Procurement Standards Manager~~ will arrange a post-CMRG meeting within six months after the presentation with the Contract Manager and Strategic Procurement and Commercial Lead, so that observations and the outcomes from agreed actions can be discussed.
- The minutes and actions will be circulated to the CMRG, ~~e~~CContract ~~m~~Managers, relevant Strategic Commercial and Procurement Lead, Corporate Director and Cabinet Member within four weeks after the date of the CMRG, with the key findings and recommendations from the Group.
- The CMRG is responsible for capturing the lessons learned from the contract reviews for future reference and sharing of best practice. This will be used to update procedural and policy guidance maintained by the Commercial and Procurement Standards and Improvement Team to ensure that it is swiftly embedded within daily practice.

6. How contracts are selected for review

Contracts are selected for review by using the Contract Register produced by the Commercial and Procurement Standards and Improvement Team and consideration of the Council's strategic statement and priorities~~priority to deliver Securing Kent's Future~~. This will be made available to the Chairs and wider membership of the CMRG, who will meet once every twelve months to agree to the ensuing twelve months' forward plan. Contracts should be selected according to the following criteria.

- Alignment with the Council's strategic statement and priorities~~Securing Kent's Future~~
- High value or politically sensitive.
- High complexity – i.e., are there factors that would make contract management more difficult?
- High risk – is the service one that carries inherent risks?

- Strategically important – contracts that are identified as ‘Gold’ contracts using the Council’s contract tiering tool that takes account of all the above factors, in addition to importance to the Council fulfilling its strategic objectives.
- Synergy with audit – is a review of the contract on the timetable for audit?
- Has been identified internally as not working well.

Contracts meeting the above will be reviewed at around the mid-point of their duration (excluding potential extensions). They will also be reviewed prior to any extension to the contract.

Appendix 1

National Audit Office (NAO) Good Practice Contract Management Framework

The CMRG adopted the National Audit Office (NAO) good practice contract management framework as the reference for reviews. The NAO framework is a high standard relevant to the Council’s strategically important (i.e., ‘Gold’) contracts. Below this, Officers may still want to consider applying it but proportionally.

This framework identifies eight key contract management areas:

- Planning and governance – preparing for contract management and providing oversight
- People – ensuring the right people are in place to carry out the contract management
- Administration – managing the physical contract and the timetable for making decisions
- Managing relationships – developing strong relationships that facilitate delivery
- Managing performance – ensuring the service is provided in line with the contract
- Payment and incentives – ensuring payments are made to the supplier in line with the contract and that appropriate incentive mechanisms are in place and well managed
- Risk – understanding and managing contractual and supplier risk
- Contract development – effective handling of changes to the contract
- Supplier development – improving supplier performance and capability

From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Disposal of the former Rowhill Primary School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ

Decision no: 25/00058

Key Decision: Yes, the decision involves expenditure or savings of over £1m

Classification: *Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A, not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division:
Local Member Wilmington – Local Member, Alan Cecil

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of former Rowhill Primary School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ

Recommendations:

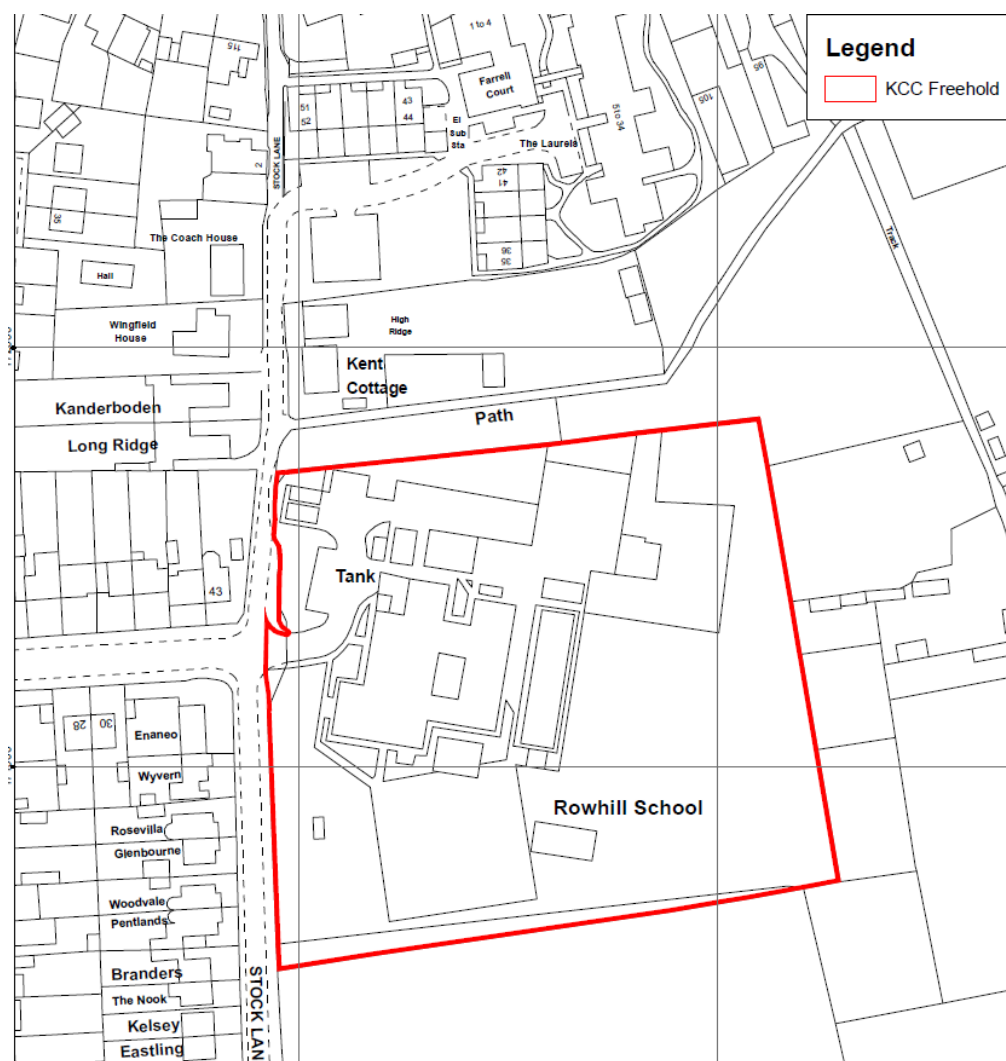
The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of former Rowhill Primary School, Stock Lane, Wilmington Dartford DA2 7BZ;
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers the Council's intention to sell the former Rowhill Primary School, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ.
- 1.2 The property is located in Wilmington, a village approximately 2.4km south of Dartford.

- 1.3 In terms of transport links, the site is 2.5km southwest from Dartford Train Station (Dartford station is well-served by trains to London terminals and major Kent towns), and approximately 500m from the A2, which links London and Canterbury. High Road, which lies north of the site and adjacent to Stock Lane provides bus services to Orpington and Dartford.
- 1.4 The property which extends to approximately 3.63 acres is currently vacant and comprises of several single storey structures that are in poor condition and need extensive renovation or demolition and rebuild prior to any future use. The school was closed in 2010, following the relocation of the special school and was declared surplus by the Council in July 2013, as it was no longer required for educational purposes at that time.
- 1.5 However, whilst the site was being progressed for disposal, activity at this site was held to enable investigations into whether there was any new education requirement for a new secondary, or special school, which was emerging in the west of the county. It was concluded that this site was not the preferred location for either of these emerging requirements with alternative sites identified. The Kent Commissioning plan sets out KCC's future educational commissioning requirements.
- 1.6 Site plan below shows the redline boundary for the proposed disposal, attached at Appendix B.



- 1.7 Exempt Appendix A includes a full analysis of options with financials included. This information is commercially sensitive.

2. Background

- 2.1 KCC are the freeholders of the property Title Number K408054. The property is currently vacant. The site has been subject to historic planning applications relating to the school on the site. Permission was initially granted in 1972 for use by children with special educational needs.
- 2.2 As set out above, whilst the site was originally declared surplus in 2013, it was held pending consideration as to whether the site was suitable in relation to other educational requirements that were identified at the time. Education confirmed in July 2023 that alternatives had been identified and implemented and therefore the site was not required. During this period, following the COVID-19 pandemic, KCC also received interest on a joint venture basis from a public sector partner, though this has not progressed as it did not meet KCC service requirements.
- 2.3 KCC currently has no requirement to accommodate any other KCC services in this location and in that regard, it is surplus to operational requirements. Given the condition of the site and current planning use, seeking a tenant for the site has been ruled out. The asset has been declared surplus. Continuing to hold the site carries certain safety risks, and security/maintenance cost liability.
- 2.5 Disposal of the asset on the open market is therefore recommended to mitigate further holding risk and cost given there is no other use for it. Given complexities with the site, it is further recommended that it be marketed on an 'all enquiries' basis and any bids assessed against KCC's policies and financial requirements.
- 2.6 The disposal value is in excess of £1m and therefore a Key Decision is required. To avoid delays in the disposal process, mitigating holding risk and cost, this is being sought in advance of marketing.
- 2.7 Pre-planning advice was sought in June 2024 to obtain advice on the principle of residential development comprising of 20 new dwellings from Dartford Borough Council, who are the local planning authority. The principle of development has been considered as acceptable subject to certain conditions being met.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 3.1 **Reuse the site:** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- 3.2 **Continue to hold the site subject to the existing license in case of a future requirement:** there is currently ongoing costs of approximately £30,000 per annum and no income being received due to the poor condition of the buildings, it would require significant capital cost to reoccupy the buildings. The option for holding as an investment has been discounted as the buildings have minimal rental value in their current condition. KCC has no ongoing requirement to hold the property.

3.3 **Disposal of the asset:** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations.

3.4 **Recommended option:** A freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, seeking offers on an 'all enquiries' basis to ensure all potential interest is explored in line with the Council's statutory duties and policies

4. Marketing

4.1 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Q4 2025 on an 'all enquiries' basis, to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.

4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.

4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's statutory and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.

4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:

- Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales
- Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions
- Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these
- Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
- Funding security
- Any benefit cost that may be relevant

5. Financial Implications

5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

5.2 The disposal of the property will remove holding costs associated with the site, easing pressure on revenue budgets.

5.3 The current holding costs are £30,000 per annum, however, historically due to unauthorised access this has necessitated occasional enhanced security in excess of this.

5.4 Further financial information is set out in the exempt appendix A.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.

6.2 External legal advisors will be appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1 As part of this approval process and in the handling of marketing/conveyancing of the site Data Protection regulations will be observed. No data or records are stored on site.

8.2 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screener has confirmed that there are no DPIA implications and that a further DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

9. Other corporate implications

9.1 This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.

10.2 The views of the local Member in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.

10.3 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the extension, new promotion agreement and disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the decision.

10.4 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.

10.5 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next Steps and Conclusions

11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal is set out below:

| Stage | Timescale |
|--|-----------|
| Marketing | Q4 2025 |
| Bid Appraisal | Q1 2026 |
| Exchange of contracts | Q2 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale | Q4 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming conditional sale | Q4 2028 |

11.2 The site has been declared surplus to the Council's operational requirements. In accordance with the Council's strategy of recycling assets to produce capital receipts for reinvestment into capital project priorities, it is recommended that this site is progressed for disposal.

12. Conclusions

12.1 KCC has no operational requirement to retain the site.

12.2 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

12.3 The disposal of the property will remove holding costs associated with the property easing pressure on revenue budgets.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of former Rowhill School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ; and
 2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.
-

13. Appendices / Background Documents

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment

14. Contact details

| | |
|--|---|
| Report Author(s): Lead Officer: Mark Cheverton Head of Real Estate Services 03000 41 59 40 | Director: Rebecca Spore Director of Infrastructure 03000 41 67 16 rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk |
|--|---|

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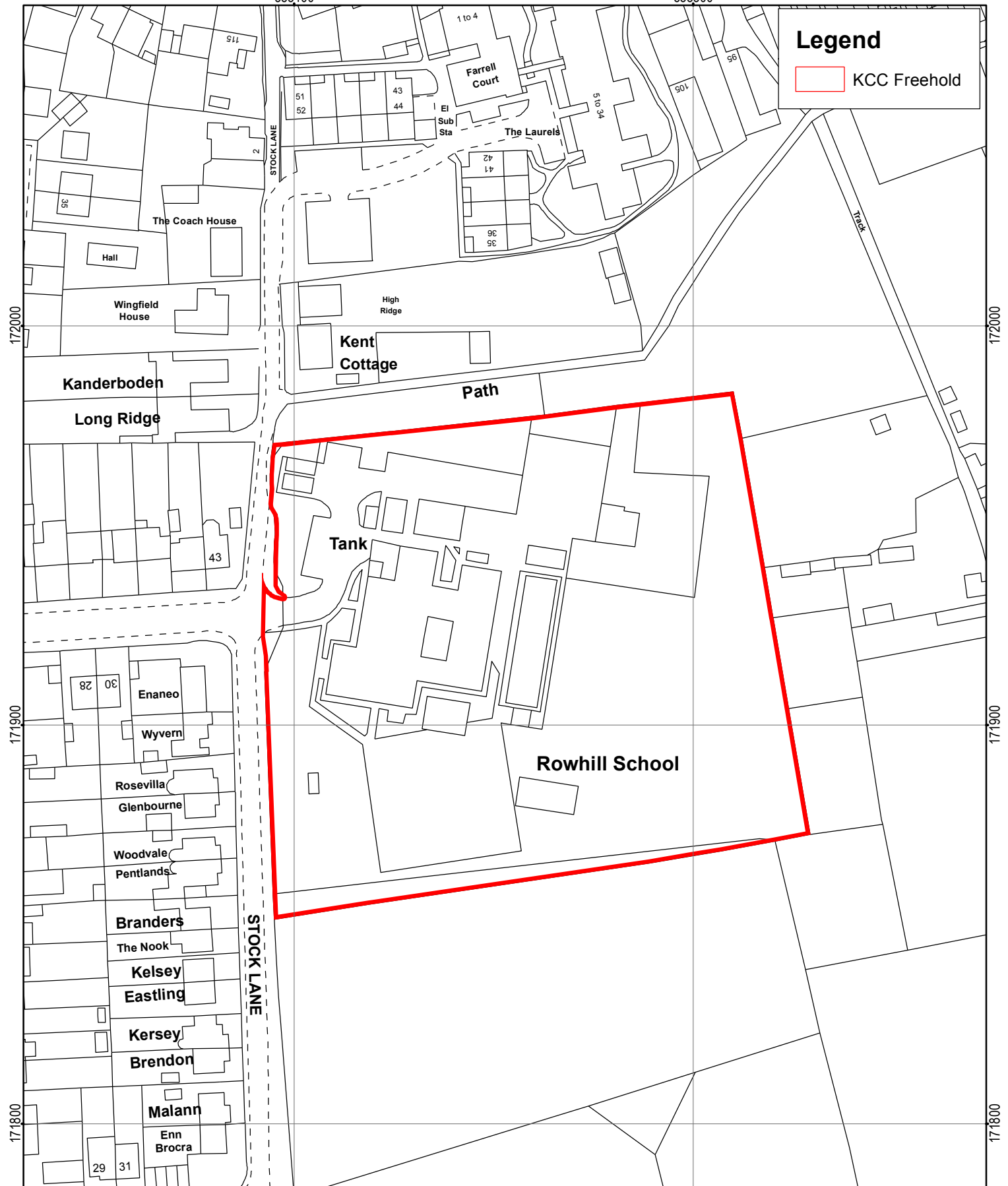
By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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553400

553500

Legend
 KCC Freehold


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553400

FORMER ROWHILL SCHOOL
STOCK LANE
WILMINGTON
DARTFORD
DA2 7BZ

553500

UPRN: 53190100

MasterMap

Kent
County
Council
kent.gov.uk



PROPERTY AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
County Hall, Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ
Tel:08458 247247

Drawn By

KP

Date

OCT 2014



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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NO:

25/00058

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key decision criteria: The decision will result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000)

Title: Freehold disposal of Former Rowhill School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ**Proposed decision:**

The Deputy Leader to agree to:

1. the disposal of former Rowhill School, Stock Lane, Wilmington, Dartford DA2 7BZ; and
2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

The property is surplus to the Council's operational requirements and due to its projected value, a key decision is now required as set out in Kent County Council's Constitution.

The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The matter is due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

The views of the Local Member will be sought and reported to the Cabinet Committee and the decision taker.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Other options considered were to:

- Reuse the site - KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- Continue to hold the site vacant in case of a future requirement.
- Disposal of the asset - *This is the recommended option.*

As the property is not required for the Council's operational purposes, the only alternative option would be to continue to hold the site, however, this would leave the Council exposed to ongoing costs and costs of securing the site against unauthorised access and potential claims for injuries arising from trespassing. Given that this approach does not align with the Council's investment strategy and a disposal provides an opportunity to reinvest capital in agreed priorities as set out in the Council's Capital Programme, it is proposed to proceed with the disposal of the site.

The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

.....
signed

.....
date

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EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Freehold disposal of land at Former Rowhill School Wilmington Dartford DA2 7BZ

Responsible Officer

Niral Patel - DCED INF

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

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

Disposal of surplus asset

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Infrastructure

Responsible Head of Service

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED I

Aims and Objectives

To obtain authority to dispose of the property asset.

To seek the delegation of authority for agreeing the specific terms of the disposal to the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services.

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?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

We are required to consult with the local division member per the Council's constitution.

As part of the key decision process other members of the authority are made aware of the decision to be taken and are able to raise queries in respect of the proposed decision.

It is our current intention that formal member consultation will take place at the next Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee

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

Redevelopment of the site is expected to add to the well-being of the area with new private and social housing. There may also be positive impacts in economic terms by employment generation and improvement of the local economy in the event the site is developed for commercial uses. There will also be positive impacts with potential for new businesses to be relocated to the area.

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: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Freehold disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass & South of the London Road, Leybourne

Decision no: 25/00059

Key Decision: Yes, the decision involves expenditure or savings of over £1m

Classification: *Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A, not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Malling North, Local Member – Dodger Sian (Reform UK)

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and land south of the London Road, Leybourne.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and land south of the London Road, Leybourne; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers the Council's intention to sell the Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and to the south of the London Road, Leybourne.
- 1.2 The property is located to the south of London Road and adjacent to Ashton Way, Leybourne. The site extends to approximately 4 hectares in area and comprises of agricultural land and existing woodland, enclosed by well-defined major road infrastructure and tree buffer to the north and west of the site. Located adjacent to the northern boundary are two existing residential properties.

1.3 The site is located within close proximity to West Malling Train Station.



1.4 Site plan below shows redline boundary for the proposed disposal, attached at Appendix B.



- 1.5 Exempt Appendix A which is commercially sensitive includes a full analysis of options with financials included.

2. Background

- 2.1 The property which extends to approximately 4 hectares is undeveloped and previously held by KCC's Growth Environment and Transport division (GET) for a road scheme and was declared surplus highways in December 2022, as it was no longer required.
- 2.2 KCC are the freeholders of the property Title Number K716157.
- 2.3 The property is currently tenanted with an agricultural business tenancy in place.
- 2.4 The site has been submitted as part of the "call for sites" to Tonbridge and Malling Local Plan Review in November 2023 and a positive pre-planning application response dated May 2025 for a development of up to 50 dwellings.
- 2.5 There are no other known KCC requirements that would require the use of this site, and it is therefore surplus to KCC requirements and is therefore being released for disposal.
- 2.6 It is proposed to dispose of the site on the open market, on an 'all enquiries' basis and any bids will be assessed against KCC's disposal policy and financial requirement.
- 2.7 The disposal value is in excess of £1m and therefore a Key Decision will be required.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 3.1 **Reuse the site:** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- 3.2 **Continue to hold the site subject to the existing license in case of a future requirement:** Whilst there are minimal ongoing costs and the income is currently £1 per annum, the option for holding as an investment has been discounted as the capital receipts generated are significantly higher in the event of planning consent being granted for development and a sale on this basis. KCC has no ongoing requirement to hold the property.
- 3.3 **Disposal of the asset:** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations.
- 3.4 **Recommended option:** A freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, seeking offers on an 'all enquiries' basis to ensure all potential interest is explored in line with the Council's statutory duties and policies.

4. Marketing

- 4.1 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Q4 2025 on an 'all enquiries' basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.
- 4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.
- 4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's legislative and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.
- 4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:
 - Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales.
 - Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions.
 - Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these.
 - Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
 - Funding security.
 - Any benefit cost that may be relevant.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.2 The disposal of the property will remove management costs associated with the site, easing pressure on revenue budgets.
- 5.3 The property is currently subject to a tenancy. There are no holding costs other than management costs and insurance costs.
- 5.4 Further financial information is set out in the exempt appendix A.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.
- 6.2 External legal advisors will be appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 As part of this approval process and in the handling of marketing/conveyancing of the site Data Protection regulations will be observed. No data or records are stored on the property.
- 8.2 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screener has confirmed that there are no DPIA implications and that a further DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

9. Other corporate implications

- 9.1 This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

- 10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.
- 10.2 The views of the local Member in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.
- 10.3 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 10.4 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 10.5 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next Steps and Conclusions

- 11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal is set out below:

| Stage | Timescale |
|--|------------------|
| Marketing | Q4 2025 |
| Bid Appraisal | Q1 2026 |
| Exchange of contracts | Q2 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale | Q4 2026 |

11.2 The site has been declared surplus to the Council's operational requirements. In accordance with the Council's strategy of recycling assets to produce capital receipts for reinvestment into capital project priorities, it is recommended that this site is progressed for disposal.

12. Conclusions

12.1 KCC has no operational requirement to retain the site. The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme and is required to support KCC's Medium Term Financial Plan. The disposal of the property will remove associated management costs associated with the property easing pressure on revenue budgets. It is recommended that the disposal of the property proceeds.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and land south of the London Road, Leybourne; and
 2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.
-

13. Appendices / Background Documents

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment

14. Contact details

| | |
|---|---|
| Report Author(s): Lead Officer: Mark Cheverton Head of Real Estate Services 03000 41 59 40 Mark.Cheverton@kent.gov.uk Principal Surveyor: Daniel Parkes Acquisitions Investments & Disposals | Director: Rebecca Spore Director of Infrastructure 03000 41 67 16 rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk |
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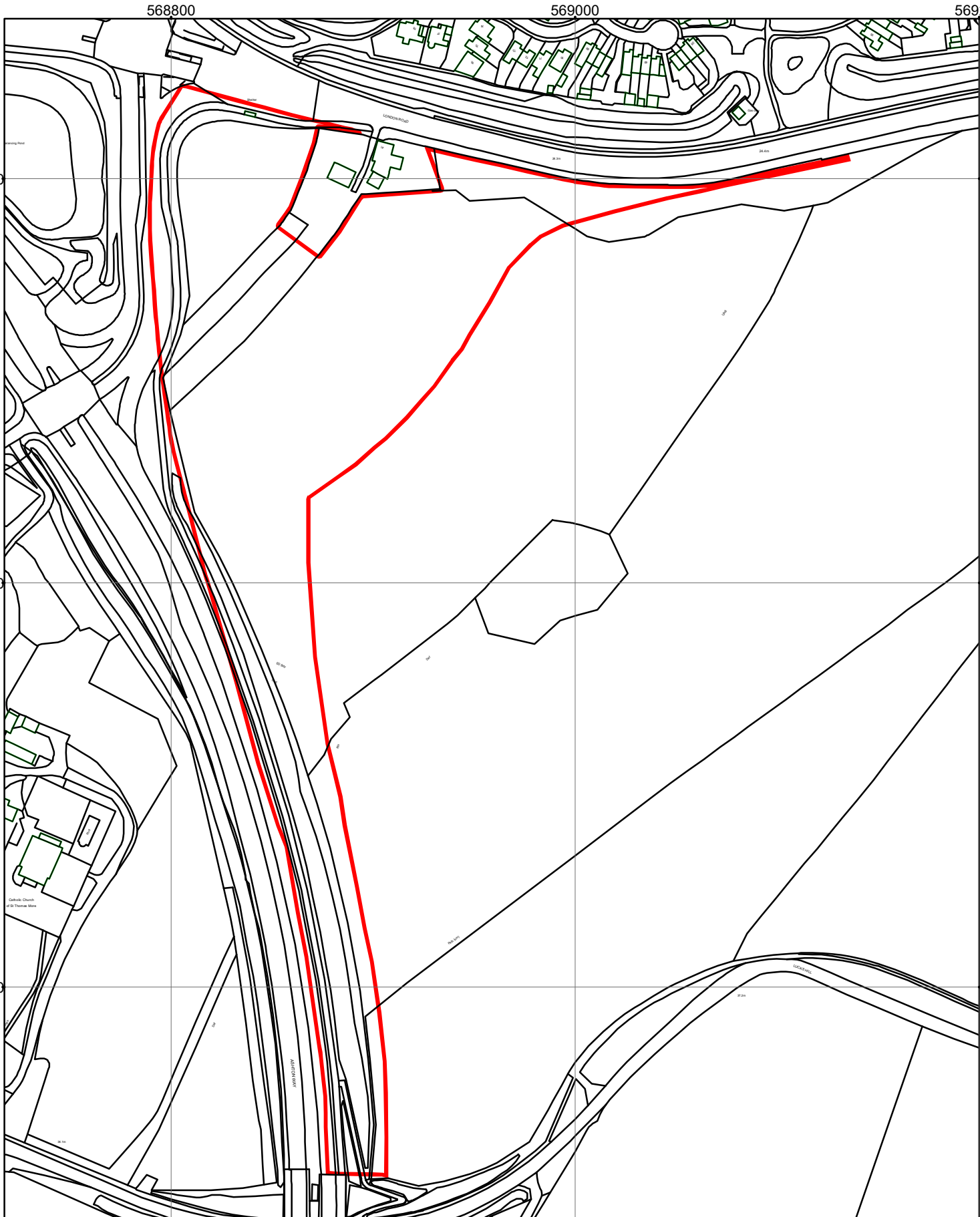
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|--|--|
| <p>03000 417 955 Daniel.Parkes@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Surveyor: Niral Patel Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 41 11 85 niral.patel@kent.gov.uk</p> | |
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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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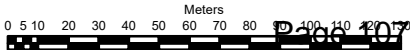


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LAND AT
WEST MALLING BYPASS
AND SOUTH OF
LONDON ROAD
LEYBOURNE

UPRN: 54480970

MasterMap



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Drawing No.

TQ6858/46D



PROPERTY AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
SESSIONS HOUSE
COUNTY HALL
MAIDSTONE
ME14 1XQ

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NUMBER:

25/00059

For publication

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000).

Title of Decision: Freehold disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass & South of the London Road, Leybourne.

Decision: As Deputy Leader, I agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and land south of the London Road, Leybourne; and
2. to delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

The property is surplus to the Council's operational requirements and due to the projected value, to pursue a disposal, will require a Key Decision as per Kent County Council's (KCC's) constitution. The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision is due to be discussed by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee. The views of the Local Member will be sought and reported to Cabinet Committee meeting and Cabinet Member taking the decision.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Other options considered were to:

- **Reuse the site:** KCC has no operational requirement for the site
- **Continue to hold the site subject to the existing license in case of a future requirement:** Whilst there are minimal ongoing costs and the income is currently £1 per annum, the option for holding as an investment has been discounted as the capital receipts generated are significantly higher in the event of planning consent being granted for development and sale on this basis.
- **Disposal of the asset:** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations. **Recommended option.**

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None.

.....
signed

.....
date

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EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Freehold disposal of Land at the junction of West Malling Bypass and South of the London Road Leybourne

Responsible Officer

Niral Patel - DCED INF

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

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

Disposal

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

INFRASTRUCTURE

Responsible Head of Service

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED INF

Aims and Objectives

To obtain authority to dispose of the property asset.

To seek the delegation of authority for agreeing the specific terms of the disposal to the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services.

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?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

We are required to consult with the local division member per the Council's constitution.
As part of the key decision process other members of the authority are made aware of the decision to be taken and are able to raise queries in respect of the proposed decision.

| |
|--|
| It is our current intention that formal member consultation will take place at the next Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee |
| 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 |
| Redevelopment of the site is expected to add to the well-being of the area with potential new private and social housing being provided. |
| The site may be developed for commercial uses with positive employment generation and improvement to the local economy. |
| 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: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Freehold disposal of Land to the South of Pratling Street, Aylesford

Decision no: 25/00060

Key Decision: Yes, the decision involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m

Classification: *Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A, not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Malling North East - Local Member, Andrew Kennedy (Conservative)

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of Land to the South of Pratling Street, Aylesford.

Recommendations:

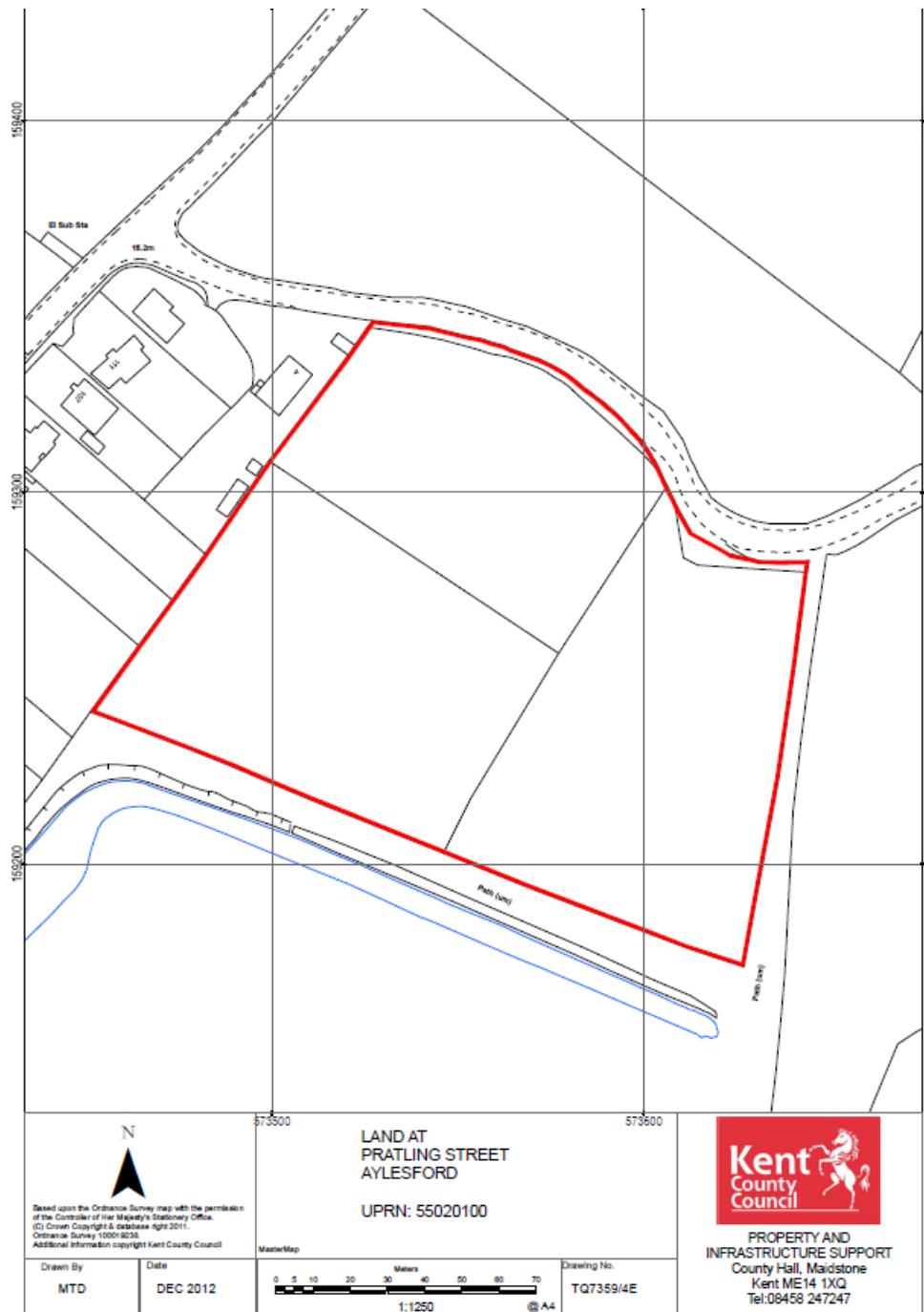
The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at Pratling Street, Aylesford; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report considers the Council's intention to sell the Land to the South of Pratling Street, Aylesford.
- 1.2 The property is located to the south of Pratling Street, approximately 100m west of Forstal Road Industrial Estate, a well-established industrial location approximately 1.5 miles from Junction 5 of the M20 Motorway. Maidstone town centre is approximately 3 miles to the south east.
- 1.3 To the west of the site is Aylesford Village, featuring numerous residential dwellings on Rochester Road and the surrounding roads. Adjoining the site's southern boundary is an area of woodland.

1.4 Site plan below shows redline boundary for the proposed disposal, attached at Appendix B.





- 1.5 Exempt Appendix A includes a full analysis of options with financials included. This information is commercially sensitive.

2. Background

- 2.1 The property which extends to approximately 4.75 acres is currently used for the grazing of horses, situated to the south of Pratling Street, approximately 100m west of Forstal Road Industrial Estate. The property has been declared surplus by the Council in November 2024, as it is no longer required for educational purposes.
- 2.2 KCC are the freeholders of the property Title Number K562706.
- 2.3 The site has been subject to a number of historic planning applications relating to the construction of a primary school on the site. Permission was initially granted in 1978, followed by a series of applications to renew the permission, however, the school was never built on the site and in September 2024, Education confirmed that this site was no longer required to be held for educational purposes. There are no other known KCC requirements that would require the use of this site, and it is therefore surplus to KCC requirements and is therefore being released for disposal.
- 2.4 The property currently has a tenant who occupies the site under a grazing license until December 2027.
- 2.5 The site has been submitted to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council in the “call for sites” to inform different options for development in March 2025.
- 2.6 Pre-planning advice was sought in May 2025 to obtain advice on the principle of residential development comprising 49 new dwellings.

2.7 It is proposed to dispose of the site on the open market, on an 'all enquiries' basis and any bids will be assessed against KCC's disposal policy and financial requirements.

2.8 The disposal value is in excess of £1m and therefore a Key Decision will be required. Therefore, to avoid unexpected delays in the disposal process, a Key Decision is being sought in advance of marketing.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

3.1 **Reuse the site:** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.

3.2 **Continue to hold the site subject to the existing license in case of a future requirement:** Whilst there is minimal ongoing costs and the income is currently £1,500 per annum, the option for holding as an investment has been discounted as the capital receipts generated are significantly higher in the event of planning consent being granted for development and sale. KCC has no ongoing requirement to hold the property.

3.3 **Disposal of the asset:** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and supports the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations.

3.4 **Recommended option:** A freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, seeking offers on an 'all enquiries' basis to ensure all potential interest is explored in line with the Council's statutory duties and policies.

4. Marketing

4.1 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Q4 2025 on an 'all enquiries' basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.

4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.

4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's legislative and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.

4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:

- Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales
- Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions
- Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these
- Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
- Funding security
- Any benefit cost that may be relevant

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.2 Currently there are no holding costs associated other than KCC administration with this site with a small income (£1500 per annum) received from the current tenant.
- 5.3 The disposal of the site will remove management costs and liabilities associated with holding this site.
- 5.4 Further financial information is set out in the exempt appendix A.
- 5.5 The property is currently subject to a grazing license and generates a small income to KCC of £1500. There are no holding costs.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.
- 6.2 External legal advisors will be appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 As part of this approval process and in the handling of marketing/conveyancing of the site Data Protection regulations will be observed. No data or records are stored on site.
- 8.2 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screener has confirmed that there are no DPIA implications and that a further DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

9. Other corporate implications

- 9.1 This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

- 10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.
- 10.2 The views of the local Member in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.

- 10.3 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 10.4 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 10.5 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next Steps and Conclusions

- 11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal is set out below:

| Stage | Timescale |
|--|------------------|
| Marketing | Q4 2025 |
| Bid Appraisal | Q1 2026 |
| Exchange of contracts | Q2 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale | Q4 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming conditional sale | Q4 2028 |

- 11.2 The site has been declared surplus to the Council's operational requirements. In accordance with the Council's strategy of recycling assets to produce capital receipts for reinvestment into capital project priorities, it is recommended that this site is progressed for disposal.

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 KCC has no operational requirement to retain the site.
- 12.2 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 12.3 The disposal of the property will remove holding costs associated with the property easing pressure on revenue budgets.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at Pratling Street, Aylesford; and

2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.
-

13. Appendices / Background Documents

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment

14. Contact details

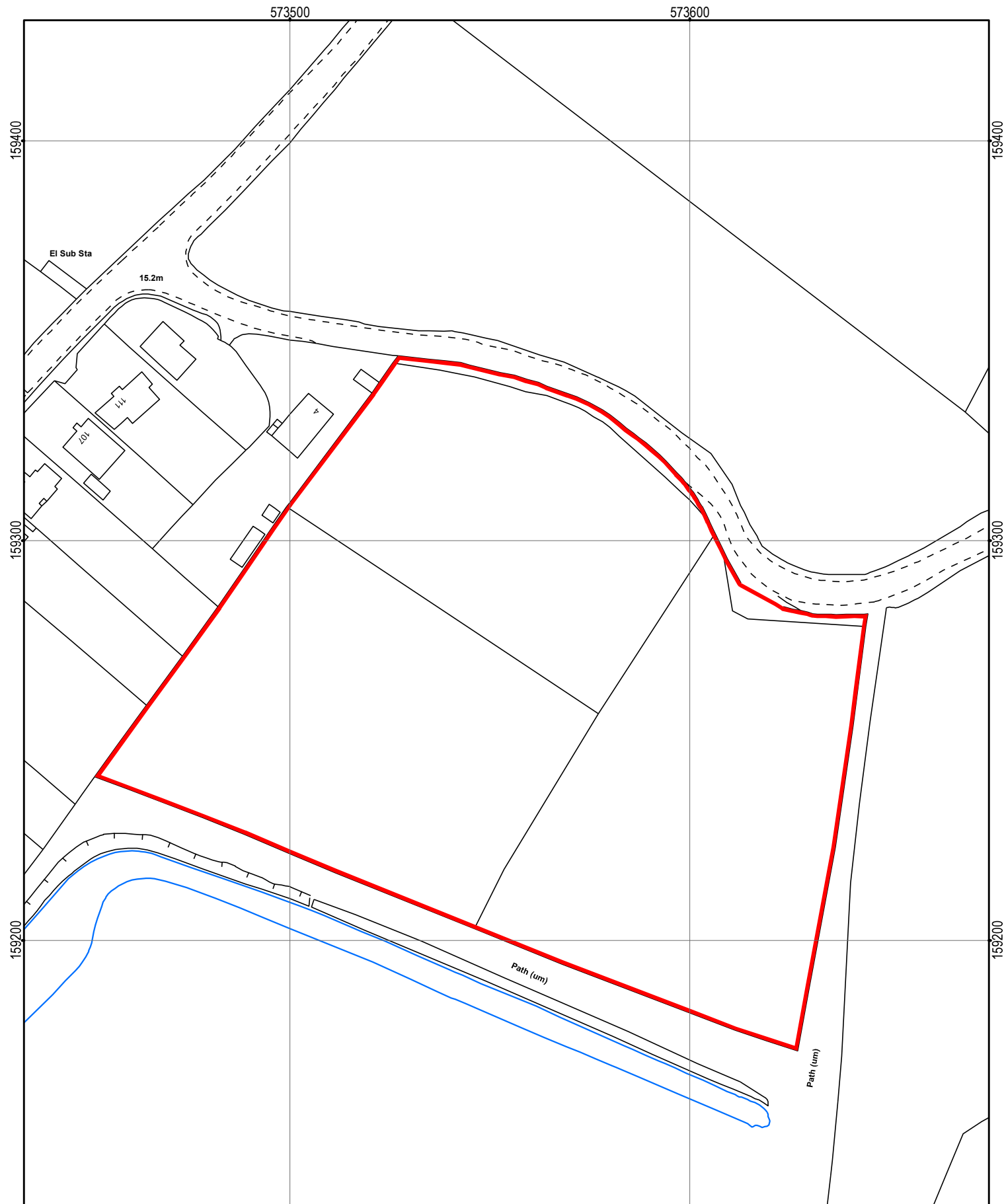
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|---|---|
| Report Author(s): Lead Officer: Mark Cheverton Head of Real Estate Services 03000 41 59 40 Mark.Cheverton@kent.gov.uk Principal Surveyor: Daniel Parkes Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 417 955 Daniel.Parkes@kent.gov.uk Surveyor: Niral Patel Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 41 11 85 niral.patel@kent.gov.uk | Director: Rebecca Spore Director of Infrastructure 03000 41 67 16 rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk |
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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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UPRN: 55020100

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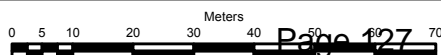
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Date

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TQ7359/4E



PROPERTY AND
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
County Hall, Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ
Tel:08458 247247

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NO:

25/00060

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key decision criteria: The decision will result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000)

Title: Freehold disposal of Land to the South of Pratling Street, Aylesford**Proposed decision:**

The Deputy Leader to agree to:

1. the disposal of Land at Pratling Street, Aylesford; and
2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

The property is surplus to the Council's operational requirements and due to its projected value, a key decision is now required as set out in Kent County Council's Constitution.

The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The matter is due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

The views of the Local Member will be sought and reported to the Cabinet Committee and the decision taker.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Other options considered were to:

- Reuse the site - KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- Continue to hold the site subject to the existing license agreement in case of a future requirement.
- Disposal of the asset. *This is the recommended option.*

As the property is not required for the Council's operational purposes, the only alternative option would be to continue to hold the site, however, this would leave the Council exposed to ongoing costs and costs of securing the site against unauthorised access and potential claims for injuries arising from trespassing. Given that this approach does not align with the Council's investment strategy and a disposal provides an opportunity to reinvest capital in agreed priorities as set out in the Council's Capital Programme, it is proposed to proceed with the disposal of the site.

The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.

Whilst under contract, a decision not to perform under its terms would be possible, however this would have legal and cost implications. The recommendation therefore will be to perform under the contractual agreement for the sale of the property unless it expires in the meantime.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

.....
signed

.....
date

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Freehold disposal of land at Pratling Street Aylesford

Responsible Officer

Niral Patel - DCED INF

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

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

Service Change

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Infrastructure

Responsible Head of Service

Mark Cheverton - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED INF

Aims and Objectives

To obtain authority to dispose of the property asset.

To seek the delegation of authority for agreeing the specific terms of the disposal to the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and

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?

We are required to consult with the local division member per the Council's constitution.

| |
|---|
| <p>As part of the key decision process other members of the authority are made aware of the decision to be taken and are able to raise queries in respect of the proposed decision.</p> <p>It is our current intention that formal member consultation will take place at the next Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee</p> |
| 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 No |
| Residents/Communities/Citizens No |
| Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing? |
| Yes |
| Details of Positive Impacts |
| Redevelopment of the site is expected to add to the well-being of the area with new housing proposed. This will benefit local businesses and existing community facilities. |
| 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 |
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| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
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| 23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race |
| Are there negative impacts for Race |
| No |
| Negative impacts for Race |
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| Mitigating actions for Race |
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| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race |
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| Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief |
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| Mitigating actions for Religion and belief |
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| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief |
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| 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: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
Rebeca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP

Decision no: 25/00061

Key Decision: Yes

Classification: **Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A**, *not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Northfleet and Gravesend West, Local Members – Matthew Fraser Moat (Reform UK) and Sharon Roots (Reform UK)

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP.

Recommendations:

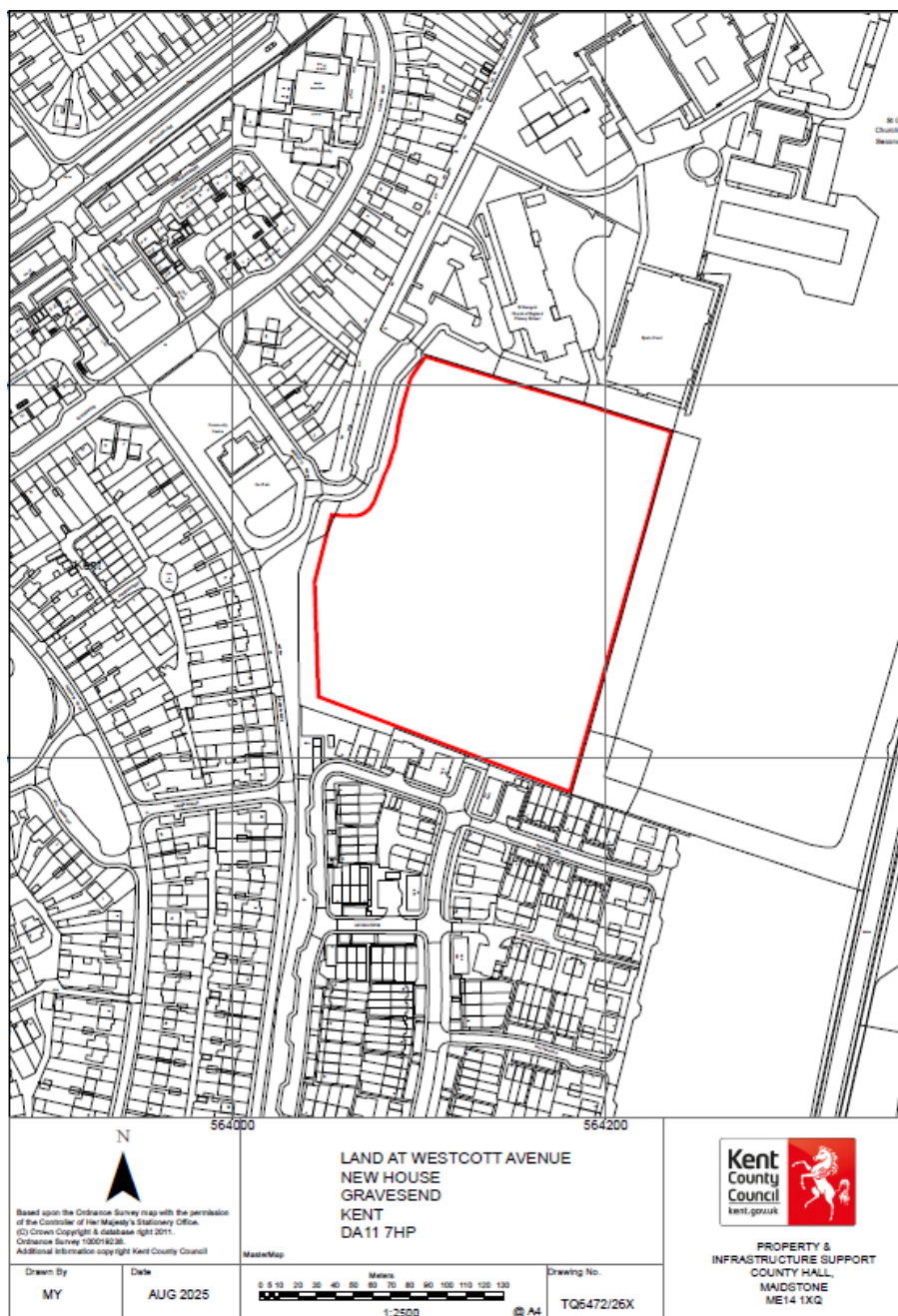
The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report addresses the Council's intention to sell land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP, which comprises approx.3.02 ha (7.46 acres). The site is mainly grassland with some border shrubs and trees.
- 1.2 The land is located on the eastern side of Westcott Avenue and Lanes Avenue. It is approximately 1 mile south of Gravesend town centre accessed via the A227.

- 1.3 Site plan below shows redline boundary for the proposed disposal, attached at Appendix B.



- 1.4 Exempt Appendix A attached includes more detailed considerations and financial information which is considered commercially sensitive.

2. Background

- 2.1 The property, which covers approximately 7.46 acres, was formerly a farm tenancy but is now vacant. KCC holds the freehold to the property under Title Number K518366. The site is unoccupied.
- 2.2 Originally held for potential future educational use, the Education Directorate has declared the land surplus as it is no longer required for this purpose.

- 2.3 Other KCC service needs have been reviewed, but there are presently no operational requirements for this site. As a result, the land is considered surplus to KCC's requirements and is being prepared for disposal.
- 2.4 The proposal is to dispose of the site on the open market on an 'all enquiries' basis, with any offers to be evaluated according to KCC's disposal policy and financial criteria.
- 2.5 As the disposal value exceeds £1 million, a Key Decision will be necessary.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 3.1 ***Reuse the site:*** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- 3.2 ***Continue to hold the site vacant in case of a future requirement:*** There is no current indication that KCC requires this land for future use. If no reasons are identified to retain an asset, the Council is legally obligated to dispose of it and seek best consideration, as retaining unnecessary assets may result in additional costs and liabilities. Not recommended.
- 3.3 ***Disposal of the asset:*** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations and reduce any holding costs and risk associated with the property. The disposal will also release land suitable for residential redevelopment of up to 106 homes in line with National Policy. *Recommended.*
- 3.4 ***Letting the asset to generate an income:*** The land will not generate an income of substance and furthermore any such tenancy is likely to reduce the assets value potential. Not recommended.
- 3.5 ***Recommended option:*** A freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, and this will be pursued in accordance with adopted KCC Freehold Property Assets Disposal Policy.

4. Marketing

- 4.1 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Q4 2025 on an 'all enquiries' basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.
- 4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.
- 4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's legislative and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.
- 4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:

- Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales.
- Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions.
- Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these.
- Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
- Funding security.
- Any benefit cost that may be relevant.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.2 The disposal will remove any holding costs associated with the site, easing pressure on revenue budgets. It will also eliminate holding risk where costs may arise.
- 5.3 Further financial information is set out in the Exempt Appendix A.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Council has an overarching duty under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain not less than best consideration in the disposal of property assets and it also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.
- 6.2 External legal advisors have been appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 As part of this approval process and in the handling of the disposal of the site, Data Protection regulations will be observed.
- 8.2 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screening has been sought to confirm that there are no DPIA implications and that a (further) DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

9. Other corporate implications

- 9.1 This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

- 10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.

- 10.2 The views of the local Members in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.
- 10.3 The Secretary of State's permission is not required as the land has never been used for education purposes and was never used for playing fields.
- 10.4 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 10.5 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 10.6 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next steps and Conclusions

- 11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal and collaboration agreement is set out below:

| Stage | Timescale |
|--|------------------|
| Marketing | Q4 2025 |
| Bid Appraisal | Q1 2026 |
| Exchange of contracts | Q2 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale | Q4 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming conditional sale | Q2 2028 |

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 KCC has no operational requirement to retain the site.
- 12.2 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 12.3 The disposal of the property will remove associated management costs associated with the property easing pressure on revenue budgets.
- 12.4 At the point where an exchange of contracts is imminent the Directorate of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, will reexamine the circumstances taking account all relevant matters such as KCC statutory duties, the latest LGR position etc and make the final decision on the terms.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree:

1. the disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP; and
 2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.
-

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment

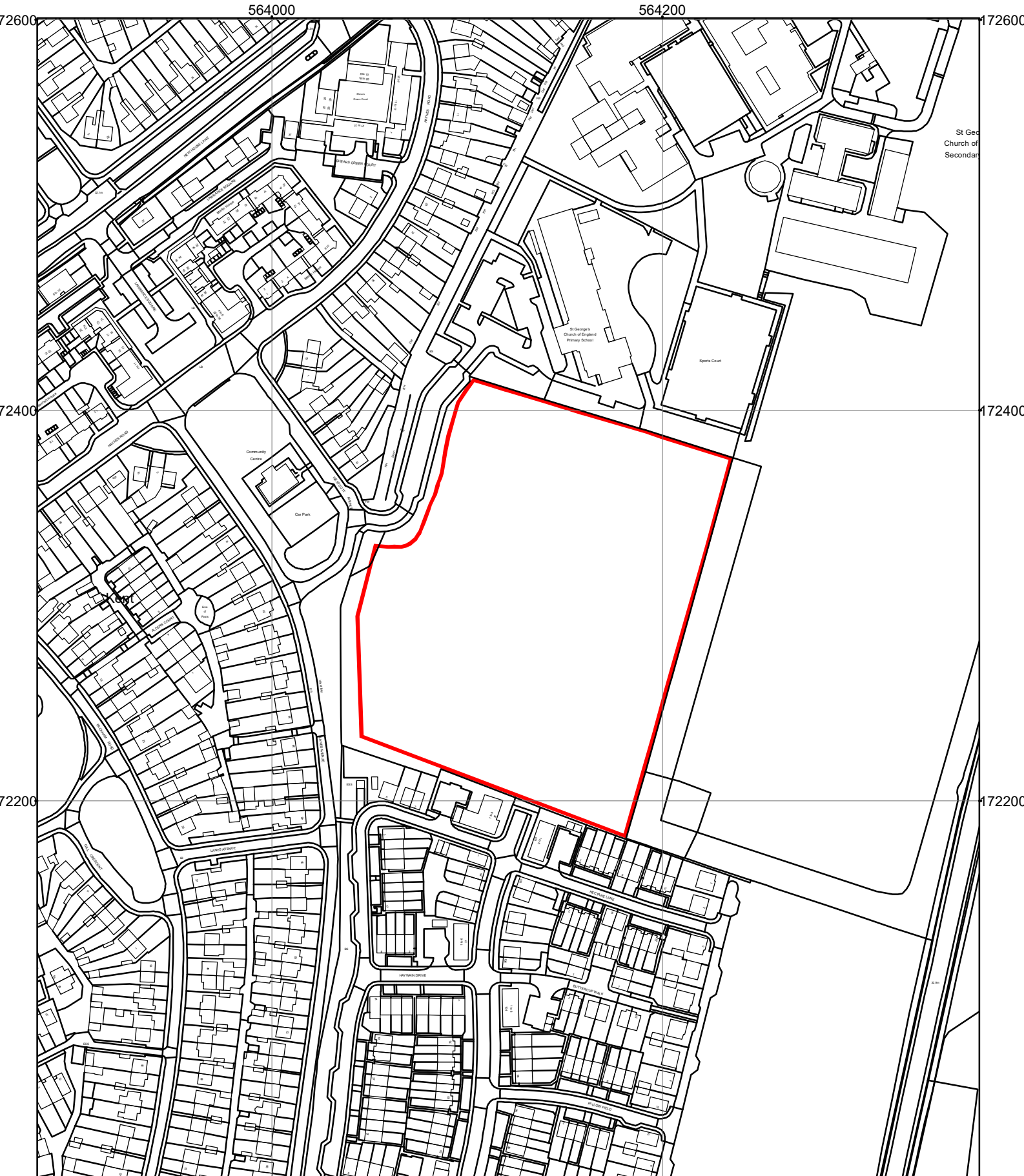
14. Contact details

| Report Author(s): | Relevant Director: |
|---|---|
| <p>Lead Officer: Mark Cheverton Head of Real Estate Services 03000 41 59 40 mark.cheverton@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Principal Surveyor: Daniel Parkes Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 417 955 Daniel.Parkes@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Surveyor: Linda Martin Disposals Acquisitions & Investments 03000 41 90 78 Linda.Martin@kent.gov.uk</p> | <p>Rebecca Spore Director of Infrastructure 03000 41 67 16 rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk</p> |

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

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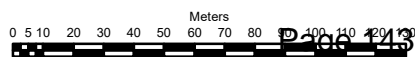
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Additional information copyright Kent County Council

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LAND AT WESTCOTT AVENUE
NEW HOUSE
GRAVESEND
KENT
DA11 7HP

MasterMap



@ A4

Drawing No.

TQ6472/26X

Kent
County
Council
kent.gov.uk



PROPERTY &
INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
COUNTY HALL,
MAIDSTONE
ME14 1XQ

Drawn By

MY

Date

AUG 2025

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NO:

25/00061

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key decision criteria: The decision will result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000)

Title: Freehold Disposal of Land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP.**Proposed decision:**

The Deputy Leader to agree to:

1. the disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

The land is declared surplus to the Council's operational requirements and due to its projected value, a Key Decision is now required as set out in Kent County Council's Constitution.

The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

Sale of the land will release land suitable for residential development for up to 106 homes in line with national policy.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The matter is due to be considered by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

The views of the Local Members will be sought and reported to the Cabinet Committee and the decision taker.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Other options considered were to:

- Reuse the site - *KCC has no operational requirement for the site.*
- Continue to hold the site in case of a future requirement - *contrary to the Council's Freehold Assets Disposal Policy.*
- Disposal of the asset. *This is the recommended option.*

As the land is not required for the Council's operational purposes, the only alternative option would be to continue to hold the site, however, this would leave the Council exposed to ongoing costs and for securing it against unauthorised access and potential claims for injuries arising from trespassing. Given that this approach does not align with the Council's investment strategy and a disposal provides an opportunity to reinvest capital in agreed priorities as set out in the Council's Capital Programme, it is proposed to proceed with the disposal of the site.

The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

.....
signed

.....
date

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP

Responsible Officer

Linda Martin - DCED INF

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

Daniel Parkes - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

seeking authority as per KCC's constitution to dispose of surplus property asset in line with adopted policy

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Real Estate Services

Responsible Head of Service

Daniel Parkes - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED INF

Aims and Objectives

To seek authority to dispose of the property asset.

To seek the delegation of authority for agreeing the specific terms of the collaboration agreement and eventual disposal to the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services.

To dispose of the asset.

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?

| |
|---|
| <p>We are required to consult with the local division member as per the Council's constitution.</p> <p>As part of the Key Decision process other members of the authority are made aware of the decision to be taken and are able to raise queries in respect of the proposed decision.</p> <p>It is our current intention that formal member consultation takes place at the Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee in September 2025.</p> |
| 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 |
| <p>The property, together with adjoining land to the South, has been allocated for Housing in the Gravesham Borough Council Local Plan. The land to the South has since been developed</p> <p>A residential development of the land is expected to add to the well-being of the area in economic terms by employment generation and improvement of the local economy due to the presence and increased spending of a larger local population.</p> |
| Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions |
| 19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age |
| Are there negative impacts for age? |
| No. Note: If Question 19a is "No", Questions 19b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Details of negative impacts for Age |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating Actions for Age |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age |
| Not Completed |
| 20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability |
| Are there negative impacts for Disability? |
| No. Note: If Question 20a is "No", Questions 20b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Details of Negative Impacts for Disability |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Disability |

| |
|--|
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Disability |
| Not Completed |
| 21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex |
| Are there negative impacts for Sex |
| No. Note: If Question 21a is "No", Questions 21b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Details of negative impacts for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| 22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender |
| No. Note: If Question 22a is "No", Questions 22b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| 23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race |
| Are there negative impacts for Race |
| No. Note: If Question 23a is "No", Questions 23b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Race |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Race |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race |
| Not Completed |
| 24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief |
| Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief |
| No. Note: If Question 24a is "No", Questions 24b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Religion and belief |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Religion and belief |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief |
| Not Completed |
| 25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |
| Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation |
| No. Note: If Question 25a is "No", Questions 25b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |

| |
|--|
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |
| Not Completed |
| 26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| 27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| 28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities |
| Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities |
| No. Note: If Question 28a is "No", Questions 28b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |

From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
Rebeca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10th September 2025

Subject: Disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG.

Decision no: 25/00082

Key Decision: *Yes, the decision involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m.*

Classification: **Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A**, *not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Swanley – Local Member Dean Truder (Reform UK).

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG.

Recommendation(s):

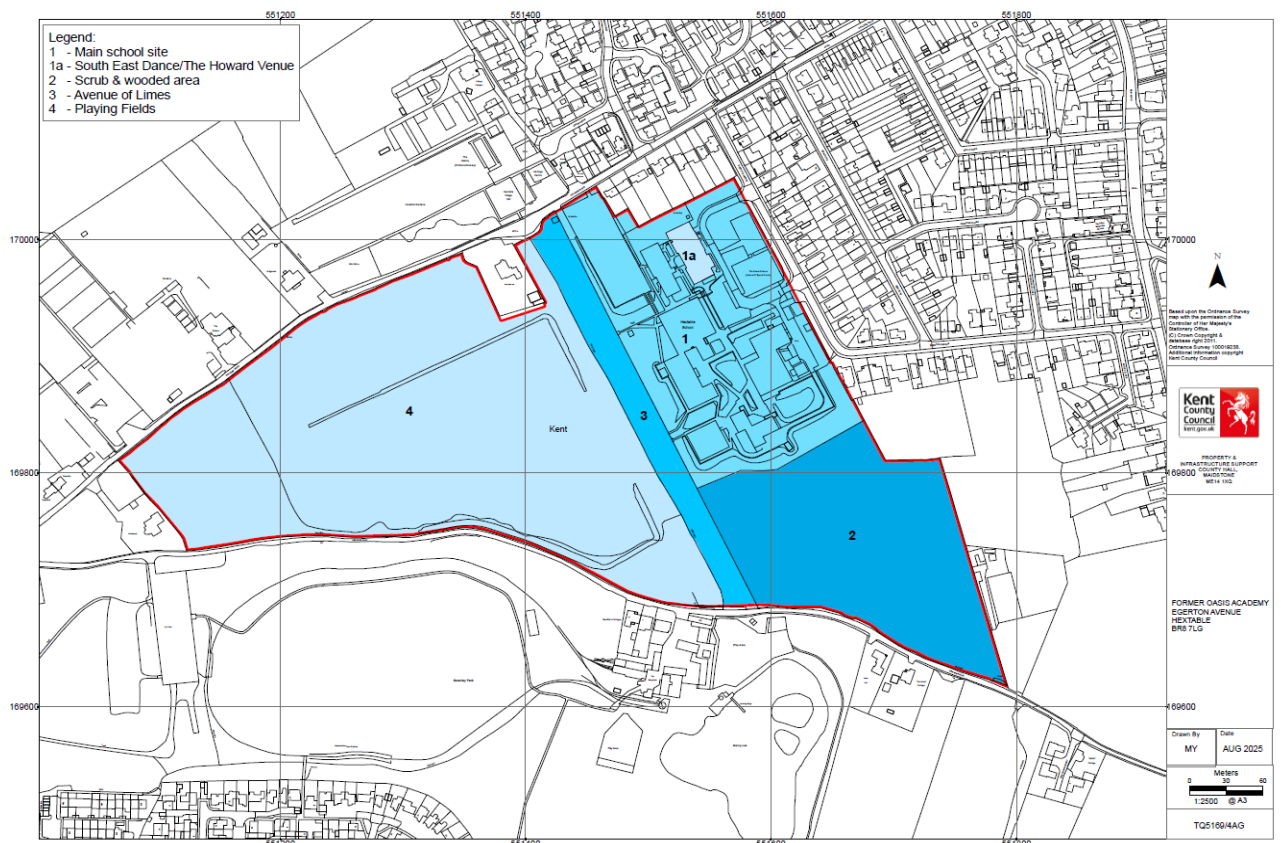
The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG; and
 2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary documentation required to implement the above.
-

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report addresses the proposal to dispose of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable.
- 1.2 The land comprises the former school and adjacent playing fields (totalling approximately 38 acres) situated between the village of Hextable and the town of Swanley and is made up of 4 distinct areas:

- 1.2.1 Area 1 - the main school buildings accessed off Egerton Avenue (approximately 8.5 acres) which includes the South East Dance Studio/Howard Venue (outlined separately in Blue on the site plan at Appendix B and labelled 1a).
- 1.2.2 Area 2 - a scrub and wooded area to the south of the main school buildings (approximately 7.5 acres).
- 1.2.3 Area 3 - the Avenue of Limes which runs approximately north to south and separates the school buildings from the playing fields (approximately 4.5 acres).
- 1.2.4 Area 4 - the playing fields (approximately 17.5 acres).
- 1.3 Exempt Appendix A includes more detailed and financial information which is commercially sensitive.
- 1.4 Appendix B includes a site plan with labelling for the above areas.





2. Background

- 2.1 The former Oasis Academy closed in August 2016 due to declining pupil numbers; the site has since remained vacant.
- 2.2 The property has been held for education in case there was a need for a new school in the district. In April 2025, the site was declared surplus to educational needs. KCC service requirements have been reviewed against this asset, but there are none that could locate here effectively or efficiently, nor is there any value in deriving income from the site; the asset has therefore been declared surplus to other KCC requirements.
- 2.3 The South East Dance Studio is located on the site adjacent to the former school buildings and main car park. It was built in 2005 with funding from a Lottery grant and was shared by the Oasis Academy and South East Dance School. KCC does not plan to relocate the South East Dance School and is currently considering a new lease to support its continued use.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 3.1 **Reuse the site:** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- 3.2 **Continue to hold the site vacant in case of a future requirement:** Continuing to hold the site will leave the Council with ongoing costs for securing it against unauthorised access and potential claims for injuries arising from any

trespassing. Continuing deterioration of the redundant buildings and use of the Playing Fields by the public remain an inherent risk for KCC.

- 3.3 **Disposal of the asset:** A freehold disposal will reduce holding costs associated with the property and allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities as set out in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations. It will also facilitate the development of between 75 to 250 homes subject to planning consent, delivering substantially to national policy objectives.
- 3.4 **Letting the property as part of the Tenanted Estate to generate an income:** With the exception of the South East Dance Studio/Howard Venue, the current buildings on the site are in a dilapidated condition and the prospect of securing a tenant is considered unlikely and unviable. KCC would forgo any capital receipt whilst this option was pursued. Leasing land/space for any certain period may also reduce the asset's value.
- 3.5 A Freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, seeking offers on an 'all enquiries' basis to ensure all potential interest is explored in line with the Council's statutory duties and to deliver a capital receipt.
- 3.6 KCC is not intended to relocate or seek vacant possession of the dance school (identified as 1a on the accompanying site plan – Appendix B) but instead seek solutions to work around the facility or exclude the dance school from any sale.

4. Marketing

- 4.1 Following preparation of the asset for disposal and subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Quarter 1 2026 on an 'all enquiries' basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.
- 4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.
- 4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's legislative and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.
- 4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:
- Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales.
 - Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions.
 - Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these.
 - Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
 - Funding security.
 - Any benefit cost that may be relevant.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.2 The disposal will remove holding costs associated with the site, easing pressure on revenue budgets.
- 5.3 Further financial information is set out in the Exempt Appendix A.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 KCC has a fiduciary duty not to hold assets that it no longer needs. The Council has an overarching duty under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain not less than best consideration in the disposal of property assets and it also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.
- 6.2 External legal advisors have been appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 The Key Decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member does not relate to a service delivery or change.
- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) (Appendix D) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 6.2 As part of this approval process and in the handling of marketing/conveyancing of the site Data Protection regulations will be observed. Records were removed by a service when it moved out. As a precautionary measure Infrastructure still undertakes a check to ensure that no records were missed and remained at the premises.
- 6.3 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screening has confirmed that are no DPIA implications and that a further DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision, unless it is later found that personal data will be processed as part of the disposal in which case the DPIA will be reviewed.

9. Other corporate implications

- 9.1 None - This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

- 10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the Constitution and the Council's governance processes.
- 10.2 The views of the local Member in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.
- 10.3 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 10.4 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 10.5 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next steps and Conclusions

- 11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal is set out below:

| Stage | Timescale |
|--|--------------------|
| Disposal Preparation Work | Q3 2025 to Q4 2025 |
| Marketing | Q1 2026 |
| Bid Appraisal | Q2 2026 |
| Exchange of contracts | Q4 2026 |
| Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale | Q1 2027 |
| Completion of sale assuming conditional sale | Q4 2028 |

- 11.2 The site has been declared surplus to the Council's operational requirements.
- 11.3 In accordance with the Council's strategy of recycling assets to produce capital receipts for reinvestment into capital project priorities, it is recommended that this site is progressed for disposal.
- 11.4 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will instruct Solicitors and Surveyors to prepare and execute a disposal strategy to affect a disposal in accordance with adopted KCC Freehold Property Asset Disposal Policy and its statutory and fiduciary obligations.
-

Recommendation(s):

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG; and
 2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary documentation required to implement the above.
-

12. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D - Equalities Impact Assessment

13. Contact details

| | |
|--|---|
| Report Author(s): Lead Officer: Mark Cheverton Head of Real Estate Services 03000 41 59 40 mark.cheverton@kent.gov.uk Principal Surveyor: Daniel Parkes Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 41 79 55 Daniel.Parkes@kent.gov.uk Surveyor: David Oyler Acquisitions Investments & Disposals 03000 42 33 00 David.Oyler@kent.gov.uk | Director: Rebecca Spore Director of Infrastructure 03000 41 67 16 rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk |
|--|---|

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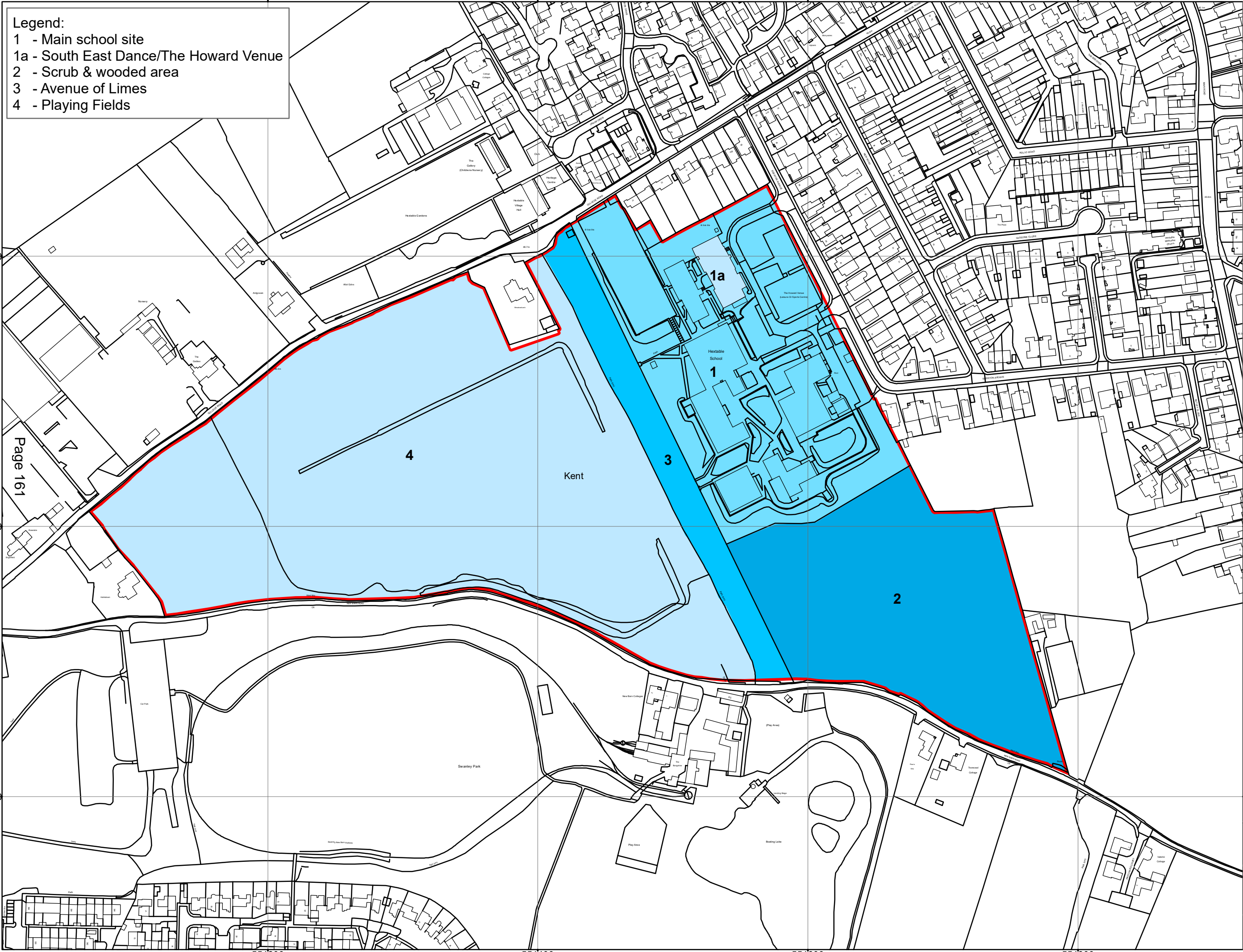
By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Legend:

- 1 - Main school site
- 1a - South East Dance/The Howard Venue
- 2 - Scrub & wooded area
- 3 - Avenue of Limes
- 4 - Playing Fields



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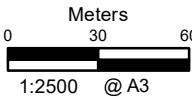
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PROPERTY & INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT
COUNTY HALL,
MAIDSTONE
ME14 1XQ

FORMER OASIS ACADEMY
EGERTON AVENUE
HEXTABLE
BR8 7LG

| | |
|----------|----------|
| Drawn By | Date |
| MY | AUG 2025 |



TQ5169/4AG

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NO:

25/00082

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key Decision criteria: The decision will result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000).

Title: Disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG.**Decision:** The Deputy Leader to agree to:

1. the disposal of the former Oasis Academy, Egerton Avenue, Hextable, BR8 7LG; and
2. delegate authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary documentation required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

The land is surplus to the Council's operational requirements and due to the projected value will require a Key Decision as per Kent County Council's (KCC) constitution.

The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.

The disposal will mitigate any revenue costs associated with the site and the management/ property risks.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The decision will be considered at Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

The views of the Local Member will be sought and reported to both the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee meeting and Cabinet Member taking the decision.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

As the site is not required for the former use other options considered were to:

- **Reuse the site** - no other services have a requirement for the land and the remaining buildings are too dilapidated to bring back into beneficial use;
- **Continue to hold the site vacant in case of a future requirement** - Not considered practical due to on-going holding costs and risk and the opportunity cost associated with the capital receipt.
- **Let the property as part of the Tenanted Estate to generate an income** - Not considered feasible due to the poor condition of the buildings and the opportunity cost associated with the capital receipt.
- **A disposal of the asset to reduce the revenue holding costs and deliver a capital receipt** - *This is the recommended option.*

The Council has an overarching duty under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to secure not less than best consideration in respect of property disposals. It also has a fiduciary duty to the taxpayers of Kent.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None.

.....
Signed

.....
Date

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

authority to dispose of former Oasis Academy Egerton Aveunue Hextable BR8 7LG

Responsible Officer

David Oyler - DCED INF

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

Daniel Parkes - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

authority to dispose of surplus property

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Infrastructure - Real Estate services

Responsible Head of Service

Daniel Parkes - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED I

Aims and Objectives

to seek authority to dispose of the Freehold interest in this surplus property.

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?

we are required to consult with the Local Division Member as per the Council's constitution.

as part of the Key Decision process other members of the authority are made aware of the decision taken and are able to raise queries i respect of the proposed decision.

| |
|---|
| it is our current intention that formal memebr consultation will occur at the Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee meeting on 10th September 2025. |
| 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 capital receipt generated from the disposal of the surplus property will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme which will benefit Residents/Communities/Citizens of Kent. |
| a disposal of the surplus and vacant property should lead to it being reused/repurposed/redeveloped which is expected to add to the wellbeing and prosperity of the locality in which it is situated. |
| 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 |

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| 13 November 2025 – 10am | | |
| Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan | John Betts Dave Shipton | <i>Regular item</i> |
| Homes for Ukraine Update Report | David Whittle | |
| Commercial and Procurement Division Performance Report | Clare Maynard Michael Bridger Katie Smith | <i>Regular Item –six monthly</i> |
| Work Programme 2025/2026 | | <i>Standing item</i> |
| 14 January 2026 – 10am | | |
| Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan | John Betts Dave Shipton | <i>Regular item - annual</i> |
| Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department | David Whittle Matt Wagner | <i>Regular Item</i> |
| Asset Management Strategy | Rebecca Spore | <i>Suggested by Mr Brady – P&R 8 July</i> |
| Freehold Property Assets Disposal Policy | Rebecca Spore | <i>Suggested by Mr Brady – P&R 8 July</i> |
| Leases and Peppercorn Rents | | <i>Suggested by Mr Brady – P&R 8 July</i> |
| Work Programme 2025/2026 | | <i>Standing item</i> |
| 11 March 2026 – 10am | | |
| Risk Management (Including RAG ratings) | David Whittle Mark Scrivener | <i>Regular item - Annual</i> |
| Cyber Security | Lisa Gannon | <i>Regular Item – six monthly</i> |
| Contract Management Review Group update | Clare Maynard | <i>Regular Item –six monthly</i> |

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| | | |
| Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update | John Betts Dave Shipton | <i>Regular item</i> |
| Work Programme 2025/2026 | | <i>Standing item</i> |
| 6 May 2026 – 10am | | |
| Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department | David Whittle | <i>Regular item</i> |
| Work Programme 2025/2026 | | <i>Standing item</i> |
| 8 July 2026 – 10am | | |
| Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update | John Betts Dave Shipton | <i>Regular item</i> |
| Work Programme 2025/2026 | | <i>Standing item</i> |

PATTERN OF REGULAR ITEMS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| JANUARY | Annual | Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan | John Betts Dave Shipton |
| | Every other meeting | Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department | David Whittle Matt Wagner |
| MARCH | Annual | Risk Management (Including RAG ratings) | David Whittle Mark Scrivener |
| | Six-monthly | Cyber Security | Lisa Gannon |
| | Six-monthly | Contract Management Review Group update | Clare Maynard |
| | Every other meeting | Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update | John Betts Dave Shipton |
| MAY | Every other meeting | Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department | David Whittle Matt Wagner |
| | Every other meeting | Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update | John Betts Dave Shipton |
| JULY | Every other meeting | Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department | David Whittle Matt Wagner |
| SEPTEMBER | Every other meeting | Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update | John Betts Dave Shipton |
| NOVEMBER/DECEMBER | Annual | Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan | John Betts Dave Shipton |

ITEMS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOCATED TO A MEETING

| | | |
|--------|--|---------------------------------|
| LATCOs | | Suggested by Mr Brady at P&R CC |
|--------|--|---------------------------------|

| | | |
|---------------|--|--|
| | | 8 July 2025 |
| Oracle Update | | Suggested by Mr Brady at P&R CC 8 July 2025 |

From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10th September 2025

Subject: Property Accommodation Strategy – Strategic Headquarters (SHQ)

Decision no: 25/00057

Key decision Yes - The delivery of the strategy is likely to involve expenditure / savings in excess of £1m.

Classification: Unrestricted Report with Exempt Appendix A, B, D – *not for publication. Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers.*

Past Pathway of report:

Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 11 September 2020
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 6 November 2020
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 13 July 2021
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 24 March 2022
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 23 November 2022
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 26 July 2023
 Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 27 November 2024

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member decision.

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary:

In light of the further detail now known about the potential for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and a desire to find savings in the immediate term, the new administration wish to reconsider the previous decision taken on 27th November 2024 (24/00100).

Following that instruction, this paper provides an update on the work carried out following the previous decision and considers other options that would see the retention of Sessions House rather than Invicta House. The reports set out the assessment of each and the proposed decision of the Deputy Leader.

Recommendation(s):

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. **AGREE** to discontinue with the Preferred Option as set out decision 24/00100;

2. Given the proposed Local Government Reorganisation timetable indicated by Government, **CONFIRM** Sessions House will continue to be the strategic headquarters for KCC for the remaining life of the Authority
 3. **ALLOCATE** £4m from the 2025-34 approved capital budget to enable the essential and urgent backlog maintenance works at Sessions House to be completed
 4. **WITHDRAW** from the sale of Sessions House and Albert Street car park with immediate effect
 5. **DISPOSE** of Invicta House and the associated car park as soon as practical to reduce holding costs and liabilities for the Council.
 6. **REALIGN** the capital and revenue budget as required to enable the above to be implemented.
 7. **DELEGATE** authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to, authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreements required to implement the above.
-

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Policy and Resources cabinet Committee since 2020 have considered a number of options and Business Cases that have set out a range of factors that have evolved and changed over time including the financial position and accommodation requirements.
- 1.2 The previous reports to the Policy and Resources Committee as referenced above set out the historical considerations and the last decision that was taken on the 27th November 2024 to progress with the disposal of Sessions House and Albert Street Car Park and to invest in Invicta House and relocate/ consolidate all activity into Invicta House which would become KCC's SHQ accommodation. The decision made provision for future arrangements to secure Council Chamber facilities, subject to additional capital funding being made available at the relevant time.
- 1.3 Following the decision, WW Martin were appointed to develop design proposals for Invicta House. This work has since been concluded, with the next step to enter into a works contract for implementation of the works (intended for September 2025).
- 1.4 The disposal activities associated with Sessions House have since continued in line and subsequent draft Heads of Terms agreed in early 2025 with the preferred bidder. The preferred bidder is an established and award-winning family run developer specialising in listed building conversions are seeking to develop Block A for residential, parts of C for residential, D for event space and B for residential or co-working. The offer was conditional on title, MOJ consents and planning considerations being satisfied. This included a deferred completion to 2028 enabling Sessions House to be retained for temporary decant use until Invicta House works were complete.

Further detail on the disposal of Sessions House can be found in the Exempt Appendix A and in Appendix B.

- 1.5 The decant of staff and services into Sessions House (A block) from Invicta House on a like for like basis for this period is complete. It should be noted that further works would be required to Sessions House for an extended period of occupation.
- 1.6 During this period, the timetable for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has been developing. The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill sets out the Government's intention in more detail and will see the abolition of two-tier government by April 2028. Whilst no directions have specifically been made in respect of Kent, based on the current timeline, KCC would be replaced by its successor organisation in April 2028.

2. Mini Business Case update (August 2025)

- 2.1 A review and update of the Mini Business case prepared in August 2025.
- 2.2 The revised strategic drivers context of LGR and its time frames identified by the new administration in July 2025 are as follows:
 - A. Reduce capital borrowing requirements in the short term
 - B. Keep Sessions House legacy for future administration
 - C. Ensure future flexibility to increase office estate capacity
 - D. Meet minimum legal obligations for warm, safe & dry and heritage conservation
- 2.3 As a result of the revised strategic drivers, the following four options were identified:

Option 1 - Current Option (Previous administration preferred option) – Progress as planned with the current 2024 Key Decision option to enhance the utilisation of Invicta House and Disposal of Sessions House and Albert Street Car Park.

Option 2 - Retain some presence in Sessions – Retain Sessions House with limited compliance & condition works which have been assessed in the Bidwell's building condition survey as those that are urgent or likely to become urgent in the next few years (Red & Amber Only) and dispose of Invicta House and its associated Car Park. Within this option it should be noted that two level of expenditure have been modelled. 2a relates to all the Red and Amber items being completed and option 2b based on the Red items only.

Option 3 – Disposal of Sessions House (with deferred completion arrangement up to April 2028 as per terms agreed) and **disposal of Invicta House and Car Park** (with short term leaseback of parking only, not accommodation)

Option 4 – Retain Sessions House & Retain Invicta House with limited compliance & condition works (Red & Amber Only)

- 2.4 Refer to Exempt Appendix A for the Mini Business Case update paper which sets out in more detail the considerations surrounding the above options.

3 Qualitative/ Financial Assessment Criteria for Business Case

- 3.1 As part of the main business case developed in 2023, a series of qualitative scoring criteria was identified, to rank the impact and delivery risk of each option.
- 3.2 Whilst the key project drivers have changed since the 2023 business case, several of the key criteria remain relevant.
- 3.3 The evaluation criteria have been reviewed and updated to reflect the options being considered within this Mini Business Case along with the financial assessment of each option. Further detail is set out in the Exempt Appendix A.
- 3.4 All options passed the pass/ fail criteria with no options being discounted at that stage. The qualitative assessments ranks the options as follows:

| | Option 1 - Current Option (Previous administration preferred option) | Option 2 - Retain Sessions & Dispose of Invicta | Option 3 – Disposal of Sessions House and disposal of Invicta House and car park | Option 4 – Retain Sessions House & Retain Invicta House |
|-------|---|--|---|--|
| Score | 65% | 62% | 40% | 39% |
| Rank | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th |

- 3.5 The financial scoring sets out the revenue and capital assessment of each option as follows:

- 3.5.1 Revenue position against MTFP assumption once Invicta House is sold.

| | Option 1 - Current Option (Previous administration preferred option) | Option 2a - Retain Sessions & Dispose of Invicta (All Red and Amber backlog items completed) | Option 2b - Retain Sessions & Dispose of Invicta (Min capital investment) | Option 3 – Disposal of Sessions House and disposal of Invicta House and car park | Option 4 – Retain Sessions House & Retain Invicta House |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| Revenue Variance against the current scheme after the sale of Invicta | 0 | £1,526,548 | £295,510 | £295,510 | £1,341,668 |
| Rank based on lowest revenue costs | 1 st | 4 th | 2 nd | 2 nd | 5 th |

- 3.5.2 Short Term Capital position against MTFP assumptions.

| | Option 1 - Current Option (Previous administration preferred option) | Option 2a - Retain Sessions & Dispose of Invicta (All Red and Amber backlog items completed) | Option 2b - Retain Sessions & Dispose of Invicta (Min capital investment) | Option 3 – Disposal of Sessions House and disposal of Invicta House and car park | Option 4 – Retain Sessions House & Retain Invicta House |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| Net Capital Expenditure | £16,160,000 | £20,402,586 | £3,946,605 | £5,636,000 | £25,340,000 - £5,636,000 |
| Rank based on lowest short term capital expenditure | 3 rd | 4 th | 1 st | 2 nd | 5 th |

4 The Selected Option

- 4.1 After reviewing the options provided in Exempt Appendix A, considering the government's LGR timetable, evaluating the risks detailed in the exempt appendix B, and the importance of reducing capital expenditure, it is considered that the best option for KCC is to discontinue the current option and proceed with an alternative that requires minimal capital investment. Sessions House would remain as the strategic headquarters for KCC until LGR occurs in Kent in 2028.
- 4.2 This option offers the lowest capital cost, saving the Council up to £12m in capital expenditure. While it introduces a revenue pressure, it allows future authorities flexibility to decide on Sessions House and any related capital spending.
- 4.3 The qualitative appraisal and business case identified several limitations associated with Sessions House. Previously, it was intended that Sessions House would serve as temporary accommodation until Invicta House was completed. These relocations are now complete, along with statutory compliance and case conferencing works.
- 4.4 The selected option permits minimal further capital expenditure; however, there remains a risk of building failure, which could, depending on the circumstances, exceed available budgets and result in operational disruption. In such an event, the situation would need to be reviewed at the time, with either additional capital allocated, or use alternative accommodation within the estate along with increased home working.
- 4.5 Under the chosen option, some accessibility limitations will persist, although these have been mitigated as much as possible given current financial and building constraints. Further management actions will be required where physical constraints cannot be overcome.
- 4.6 The option of the sale of both Invicta and Sessions is financially attractive in the short term. given the challenging LGR timetable, there is a significant risk should LGR not happen in Kent or it is delayed. Under the chosen option, Invicta House could be sold

quickly to reduce costs and liabilities for KCC and any successor authority. Retaining both Sessions House and Invicta House may offer additional flexibility but results in unsustainable revenue demands for the Council. Sessions House Block A provides the same number of desks as Invicta House, with parts of Sessions House remaining unoccupied.

- 4.7 While the Sessions House disposal presented several complex encumbrances, Invicta House is a modern building with no listing issues, simpler planning consent, and clear title. Switching the disposal focus to Invicta House would likely result in a quicker, less complicated sale, eliminating holding costs and necessary capital works, while providing a capital receipt that could partially offset ongoing essential work at Sessions House during KCC's occupation.
- 4.8 As a result of the proposed changes there will be some abortive costs, the extent of which will depend on how much of the current Invicta House material can be reused as part of any sale. Estimated abortive costs are £946k which will need to be funded as part of the 2025-26 revenue budget.

5 Risks

5.1 Key risks in relation to the selected option are set out below:

| Risk Type | Impact | Mitigation Options | Assessment |
|--|--|---|------------|
| Bidder appetite with the sale of Invicta House | Reduced capital receipt | Marketing information has been sought with a high degree of confidence that Invicta House is an attractive disposal | Low |
| Risk of critical building failure | Costs exceed those that are allowed for in the budget. | Consideration will need to be given at the time as to whether additional capital funding should be allocated or whether a building closure is necessary. In the event of a building closure alternative accommodation with KCC estate would need to be utilised with additional working from home. Alternative hiring arrangements would be to be made for the provision of formal County Council meetings, in particular Full Council. | High |
| Building limitations | Accessibility constraints | All staff are able to utilise offices across the estate with accessibility guides published to help staff and visitors. Spares and common parts kept on site for lifts at sessions house to enable a swift repair. | Medium |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|-----|
| | | Improvements are being made to sessions house where possible within financial and building constraints. | |
| Revenue and capital assumptions not met | Increased budget pressure | Financial assessment has been updated using the data available Regular monitoring | Low |

6 Financial Implications

6.1 As set out above the proposed decision will have implications on both the capital and revenue assumptions that are presenting associated to the accommodation at SHQ. This will include:

- 6.1.1 Generating a capital receipt associated with the sale of Invicta House which will be reinvested back into the Councils Programme and the removal of holding costs associated with the site. The Exempt Appendix A sets out the assumptions regarding the sale of Invicta House.
- 6.1.2 The reprofiling of the envisaged capital expenditure associated with the delivery of the accommodation levels with £4million allocated from the existing budget to support the minimum levels of works identified by the condition surveys and a reduction of £12 million of capital borrowing and associated borrowing costs.
- 6.1.3 Realignment of the revenue budget to support the running costs associated with Sessions House, the reduction in borrowing costs and operating costs associated with Invicta House and any abortive costs. As set out in section 3.4 this is estimated to create a revenue pressure of £0.3m which will be considered as part of the budget setting process for future years. The exempt business case sets out the forecast spend. The abortive costs will be an in year pressure in the current financial year.

7 Equalities and Data Protection Implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact assessment (EQIA) has been completed and submitted in support of the report.
- 7.2 A Data Protection impact assessment (DPIA) has also been completed and submitted in support of the report.

8 Other corporate implications

- 8.1 SHQ and its future direction is a key strand of the office strategy as part of the SRP and the delivery of the MTFP savings.

9 Governance and Corporate Assurance

- 9.1 The proposal represents a substantive shift in policy from the existing Key Decision taken by the previous Administration. A Key Decision is therefore being proposed in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.
- 9.2 Cabinet Committee will have an opportunity to make comments or recommendations on the key strategic proposals set out in this report via normal committee consideration and the views of the local Member, in accordance with the property management protocol, will be sought in relation to any disposal and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.
- 9.3 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise any works over £1m that are required and the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 9.4 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 9.5 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors, including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

10 Staff and stakeholder communications

- 10.1 Many staff retain an interest in the futures of both Sessions House and Invicta House from a historic and a work-related/employment-based point of view. The need for ongoing engagement with staff and stakeholders remains to keep them informed of future decision-making processes and changes.
- 10.2 The decant into Block A at Sessions House has now completed. There have been regular communications with staff and new building pages have been published to staff along with familiarisation tours.

11 Conclusion

- 11.1 The capital budget for the project was reduced to £20m in October 2022 and agreed by full Council in February 2023. Following the key decision in September 2023 a further marketing exercise for the sale of Sessions House was undertaken which is set out in the Exempt Appendix A.
- 11.2 Following this marketing exercise, bids were only received for the disposal of the whole of Sessions House. A preferred bidder was appointed, and this engagement continues. Disposal risk as set out in Exempt Appendix B remains, particularly as KCC works through the encumbrance matters with the prospective purchaser and stakeholders.

- 11.3 The decant and transfer of desks from Invicta House to Sessions House is complete, in accordance with KCC's HQ Strategy to refurbish Invicta House and eventually dispose of Sessions House.
- 11.4 Due to ongoing sale issues with Sessions, future local government changes with LGR and the need to reduce capital costs and reduce borrowing, the HQ Strategy has been reviewed.
- 11.5 While acknowledging the risks, it is proposed to realign KCC's HQ accommodation strategy by designating Sessions House as KCC's headquarters for KCC's remaining lifespan. This approach could save £12m in capital and facilitate the disposal of another property which will secure a more reliable receipt, allowing KCC's successor to decide on the future of Sessions.
- 11.6 The new proposal is therefore that KCC will keep Sessions House as its headquarters for its remaining lifespan and cancel plans to sell it. All spending on Invicta House should stop immediately; only essential repairs will be made to Sessions House to keep it functional for up to four years. Invicta House will be put on the market to minimise ongoing costs.

Recommendation(s):

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. **AGREE** to discontinue with the Preferred Option as set out decision 24/00100;
2. Given the proposed Local Government Reorganisation timetable indicated by Government, **CONFIRM** Sessions House will continue to be the strategic headquarters for KCC for the remaining life of the Authority
3. **ALLOCATE** £4m from the 2025-34 approved capital budget to enable the essential and urgent backlog maintenance works at Sessions House to be completed
4. **WITHDRAW** from the sale of Sessions House and Albert Street car park with immediate effect
5. **DISPOSE** of Invicta House and the associated car park as soon as practical to reduce holding costs and liabilities for the Council.
6. **REALIGN** the capital and revenue budget as required to enable the above to be implemented.
7. **DELEGATE** authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to, authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreements required to implement the above.

12 Background Documents

- 12.1 Exempt Appendix A – Mini Business Case
- 12.2 Exempt Appendix B – Supporting Information
- 12.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 12.4 Exempt Appendix D – Bidder Credentials and proposal pack (appended to the Business Case)
- 12.5 Appendix E – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 12.6 Exempt Appendix F – July 2023 Business Case – available on request

13 Contact details

Relevant Director:

Rebecca Spore
Director of Infrastructure
Telephone: 03000 41 67 16
Rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Brian Collins, Deputy Leader

DECISION NUMBER:

25/00057

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

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) *result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or*

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Property Accommodation Strategy – Strategic Headquarters (SHQ)

Decision:

The Deputy Leader to agree to:

1. **AGREE** to discontinue with the Preferred Option as set out decision 24/00100;
2. Given the proposed Local Government Reorganisation timetable indicated by Government **CONFIRM** Sessions House will continue to be the strategic headquarters for KCC for the remaining life of the Authority
3. **ALLOCATE** £4m from the 2025-34 approved capital budget to enable the essential and urgent backlog maintenance works at Sessions House to be completed
4. **WITHDRAW** from the sale of Sessions House and Albert Street car park with immediate effect
5. **DISPOSE** of Invicta House and the associated car park as soon as practical to reduce holding costs and liabilities for the Council.
6. **REALIGN** the capital and revenue budget as required to enable the above to be implemented.
7. **DELEGATE** authority to The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to, authorise the execution of necessary contractual and land agreements required to implement the above.

Reason(s) for decision:

Following a change in administration and confirmation of the indicative Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) timetable, the Administration has reconsidered the current property strategy relating to KCC Strategic Headquarters (SHQ).

The English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill sets out the Government's intention in more detail which will see the abolition of two-tier government by April 2028. Whilst no directions have specifically been made in respect of Kent, based on the current timeline. KCC would be replaced by its successor organisation in April 2028.

The revised strategic drivers context of LGR time frames were identified by the new administration in July 2025 :

1. Reduce capital borrowing requirements in the short term
2. Keep Sessions House heritage legacy for a future administration
3. Ensure future flexibility to increase office estate capacity
4. Meet minimum legal obligations for warm, safe & dry and heritage conservation

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

Reports on the extant Key Decision (24/00100) were taken to the following Committees:

Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 11th September 2020
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 6th November 2020
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 13th July 2021
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 24th March 2022
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 23rd November 2022
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 26th July 2023
Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 27th November 2024

This Proposed Decision is to be consider by Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 10 September 2025

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

A number of alternatives were considered which are set out in the Policy Resources committee reports from July 2023 and November 2024 that included consideration of a number of options.

The following options were considered and rejected

1. **Option 1 - Current Option (2024 Key Decision)** – Progress as planned with the current 2024 Key Decision option to enhance the utilisation of Invicta House and Dispose of Sessions House and the Albert Street Car Park.
2. **Option 2a - Retain some presence in Sessions with all Red and Amber backlog works undertaken** – Retain Sessions House and Albert Street Car Park with limited compliance & condition works (Red & Amber Only) and dispose of Invicta House + Car Park
3. **Option 3 – Disposal of Sessions House** and Albert Street Car Park (with deferred completion arrangement up to April 2028 as per terms agreed) and **disposal of Invicta House and car park** (with short term leaseback of parking only until 2028)
4. **Option 4 – Retain Sessions House & Retain Invicta House** with limited compliance & condition works (Red & Amber Only)

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

None

.....
signed

.....
date

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EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

SHQ Decant from Invicta House into Session House for foreseeable future.

Responsible Officer

Joanne Taylor - DCED INF

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

Joanne Taylor - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

Project/Programme

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Infrastructure

Responsible Head of Service

Joanne Taylor - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED INF

Aims and Objectives

Aim:

Due to a change in leadership, our aim is to decant all staff from Invicta House to Sessions House for a longer period of time, initially thought to be 2 years but will now ultimately be for a minimum of 3 to 4 years. The initial phase involved decanting into Sessions House A Block, successfully replicating the desk and meeting room provisions from Invicta House. This includes the case conferencing business unit retaining their own reception, office space and VC enabled meeting facilities.

Limited additional compliance works have been carried out across A block, however there may be additional compliance works required from an accessibility perspective, because the works conducted were on the basis of a semi-permanent 24-month relocation whereas the spaces may continue to be occupied beyond the initial intended period.

In addition to this, we may look to utilise additional space within Sessions House. Namely B block, currently vacant but could be an option when looking for additional desk capacity. Further accessibility works may also be required to this block to accommodate occupants.

Objective:

Provide a more permanent, accessible office space for KCC staff in Sessions House; using Blocks A, C and D initially – with potential to expand back into blocks B and E. in line with the 'Safe, Warm and Dry' guidelines.

Step: To give good communication to all staff and listen to staff requests for access, egress and working arrangements within Sessions House on a more permanent basis.

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?

Members
Strategic Reset Programme Board
Corporate Management team
Officers across the Council
Stakeholder groups for SHQ

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

No

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

No. Note: If Question 17 is "No", Question 18 should state "none identified" when submission goes for approval

Details of Positive Impacts

Due to the age and lack of consistent improvement works to Sessions House, there are significant accessibility issues within the building with limited accessible pathways to A block and the restaurant area due to smaller lift spaces. There are other office spaces within the KCC estate that offer varying levels of accessibility with a mixture of building solutions and management arrangements.

Due to the change in circumstances, there could come a time where KCC will need to address the accessibility issues within Sessions House and explore options for a scope of works to aid accessibility.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

| |
|---|
| 19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age |
| Are there negative impacts for age? |
| No. Note: If Question 19a is "No", Questions 19b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Details of negative impacts for Age |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating Actions for Age |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age |
| Not Completed |
| 20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability |
| Are there negative impacts for Disability? |
| Yes |
| Details of Negative Impacts for Disability |
| There are accessibility restrictions as mentioned above, which over the mid-long term use of Sessions House will eventually require management to take action. While the current vision is to make minimal building fabric changes, there may be a requirement for a higher level of changes to be made to the building fabric for the retained use of Sessions House. This building is the most convenient for staff which do not drive. |
| Mitigating actions for Disability |
| <p>FM will be responsible for managing these enhanced requirements via a maintenance strategy, that identifies existing and potential maintenance issues – with the strategy designed to pipeline and prioritise each element, allowing for a fast turnaround in maintaining Sessions House.</p> <p>Increased signage around Sessions House should give people clear indications for accessible pathways, toilets and office spaces.</p> <p>Further information as to the accessibility features and limitations in respect of Sessions House to be made available on Knet</p> <p>Increased capacity at other offices such as Worrall house which is accessible for all, providing an alternative accessible working location for staff which drive and do not need public transport due to the location of our other buildings.</p> <p>Managers to work with FM as to what management actions can be put in place over the mid-long term period within Sessions House.</p> |
| Responsible Officer for Disability |
| Anthony Carty |
| 21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex |
| Are there negative impacts for Sex |
| No. Note: If Question 21a is "No", Questions 21b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Details of negative impacts for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Sex |
| Not Completed |
| 22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender |
| No. Note: If Question 22a is "No", Questions 22b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |

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| approval |
| Negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender |
| Not Completed |
| 23. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Race |
| Are there negative impacts for Race |
| No. Note: If Question 23a is "No", Questions 23b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Race |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Race |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race |
| Not Completed |
| 24. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief |
| Are there negative impacts for Religion and belief |
| No. Note: If Question 24a is "No", Questions 24b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Religion and belief |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Religion and belief |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief |
| Not Completed |
| 25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |
| Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation |
| No. Note: If Question 25a is "No", Questions 25b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation |
| Not Completed |
| 26. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| No. Note: If Question 26a is "No", Questions 26b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity |
| Not Completed |
| 27. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| No. Note: If Question 27a is "No", Questions 27b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |

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| approval |
| Negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Marriage and Civil Partnerships |
| Not Completed |
| 28. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities |
| Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities |
| No. Note: If Question 28a is "No", Questions 28b,c,d will state "Not Applicable" when submission goes for approval |
| Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |
| Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |
| Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities |
| Not Completed |

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