

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the County Council held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 12 February 2026.

PRESENT: Mr J Baker, Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr S Heaver, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms L Kemkaran, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr J Moreland, Miss D Morton, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Mr M J Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, MBE, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager) and Ms P Der Man (Head of Law – Monitoring Officer)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

**50. Apologies for Absence**  
*(Item 1)*

The Democratic Services Manager reported apologies from Mr Rich Lehmann, Mr Mark Mulvihill and Miss Amelia Randall.

**51. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests in items on the agenda**  
*(Item 2)*

- (1) The Monitoring Officer advised Members that if they had unpaid Council Tax they would have to announce it and not take part in any votes related to the budget.
- (2) Additionally, the Monitoring Officer explained that Members' Register of Interests detailed their main declarations and it was not necessary to declare any of those at the meeting. However,

Members were given the opportunity to disclose any new interest in relation to the agenda.

**52. Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2025 and, if in order, to be approved as a correct record**  
*(Item 3)*

- (1) The Chairman explained that the wording in paragraph 45 within Item 7, Report by Leader of the Council, was to be amended to say 'Islamic extremism'.
- (2) RESOLVED that, subject to the above correction being made, the minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 December 2025 be approved as a correct record.

**53. Chairman's Announcements**  
*(Item 4)*

- (1) With the deepest regret the Chairman advised Members of the sad passing of Ms Becki Bruneau and Mr Grahame Weston in December and said tributes would be heard at the March County Council meeting.
- (2) The Chairman shared his congratulations to all who received an Honour in His Majesty The King's New Year's Honours list, a list of Kent recipients was to be circulated to all Members.
- (3) The Chairman reminded Members of the importance of a timely and reasonable debate.

**54. Section 25 Assurance Statement**  
*(Item 5)*

- (1) The Chairman introduced the Section 25 Assurance Statement, explaining that it was a record of professional advice with the purpose of assisting in the consideration of the proposed budget. The Chairman reminded Members that it was a legal requirement to note and give due regard to the comments of the Section 151 Officer in the report.
- (2) Mr Collins proposed, and Ms Kemkaran seconded the motion that:  
  
"Pursuant to section 25 of the Local Government Act, County Council is asked to CONSIDER and NOTE this report and AGREE to have due regard to the contents when making decisions about the proposed budget."
- (3) The Chairman put the motion set out in Paragraph 2 to the vote and the voting was as follows:

For (77)

Mr J Baker, Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr A Brady, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brice, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Mr M Ellis, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Ms B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr S Heaven, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kennedy, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Mr J Moreland, Miss D Morton, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr P Osborne, Mr R Palmer, Mrs C Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr D Sian, Mr T L Shonk, Mr M Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Against (0)

Abstain (0)

*Motion carried.*

- (4) RESOLVED that pursuant to section 25 of the Local Government Act, County Council noted the report and agreed to have due regard to the contents when making decisions about the proposed budget.

**55. Revenue Budget 2026-27, 2026-29 MTFP and Capital Programme 2026-36**  
*(Item 6)*

- (1) The Chairman reminded Members that any Member of a Local Authority who was liable to pay Council Tax, and who had any unpaid Council Tax amount overdue for at least two months, even if there had been an arrangement to pay off the arrears, had to declare that they were in arrears and could not cast their vote on anything related to KCC's Budget or Council Tax.
- (2) The Chairman explained that Members had been given the opportunity to review the agenda papers in advance of the meeting. Members were reminded that a technical budget briefing had been held on 5 February 2026.

- (3) The Chairman stated that Members had previously agreed to note, and give due regard to, the Section 25 Assurance Statement provided by the Chief Financial Officer. He confirmed that all budget amendments had been published on 6 February 2026, allowing Members time to consider them ahead of the meeting. Democratic Services had also circulated a procedural document to all Members, that outlined the process and order for the budget debate.
- (4) Mr Collins proposed, and Ms Kemkaran seconded the following motion:

“County Council, having given due regard to the s25 Report (published for consideration and noting as agenda item 5 of this meeting), is asked to agree the following:

2026-36 Capital Programme

- (a) The 10-year Capital programme and investment proposals of £1,967m over the years from 2026-27 to 2035-36 together with the necessary funding and subject to approval to spend arrangements.
- (b) The directorate capital programmes as set out in appendices A & B of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.
- (c) The net revenue budget requirement of £1,648.1m for 2026-27.
- (d) The directorate revenue budget proposals for 2026-27 and the 2026-29 medium term financial plan as set out in appendices D (high level 2026-29 plan), E (high level 2026-27 plan by directorate), F (individual spending, savings, income and reserves variations for 2026-29) and G (2026-27 key services) of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.

2026-27 Council Tax

- (e) To increase Council Tax band rates by 3.99% as set out in section 5 and appendix H of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (f) The total Council Tax requirement of £1,041,352,757 to be raised through precepts on districts as set out in section 5 and appendix H in the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.

Kent Pay Scheme 2026-27

- (g) Note the continuation of the transition of all Kent Scheme staff to the new pay structure agreed by County Council in May 2024.
- (h) Agree to the Personnel Committee recommendations on the uplift and changes to Kent Pay Scheme pay scales and spinal points as set out in section 6.8 of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.

## Key Policies and Strategies

- (i) The Reserves Policy as set out in appendix M of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.
- (j) The Treasury Management Strategy as set out in appendix N of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026, including the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.
- (k) The Investment Strategy for service/commercial investments as set out in appendix O in the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (l) The Capital Strategy to meet requirements of Prudential Code as set out in appendix P of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026 including the Capital Prudential Indicators.
- (m) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement as set out in appendix Q of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (n) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in appendix R of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (o) Fees and charges to continue to be reviewed in line with the policy agreed in the 2023-24 budget approval.

### In addition:

- (p) To delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to make any necessary technical adjustments and required amendments in line with relevant Treasury Management and Financial Policy arrangements, arising from the final funding announcement, retained Business Rates, and Business Rate Collection Fund balances, and to address minor technical or structural issues required for the final budget publication, provided these do not materially alter the approved budget. All changes will be reported to Cabinet via the appropriate governance process and will be reflected in the final approved version of the Budget Book when it is published at the end of March 2026.
- (q) To note the information on the impact of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, the County Council's share of retained business rates, and business rate collection fund balances on the revenue budget will be reported to and agreed by Cabinet once it has all been received.
- (r) To note the ongoing and escalating cost pressures on the Council's budget alongside insufficient funding in the multi-year local government finance settlement and knock on requirement for savings and income in the final draft 2026-27 budget and 2026-29 medium term financial plan.
- (s) To note that the planned use of reserves still ensures sufficient reserves are available in the short term with no immediate concerns triggering a Section 114 notice provided

the use of these reserves is replaced with sustainable savings over the medium term.

- (t) To note the rate of recent drawdown from reserves and potential drawdown to balance 2025-26 outturn is still cause for serious concern and reserves will still need to be maintained ahead of decisions on Local Government Reorganisation. Further unplanned drawdowns would weaken resilience and should only be considered as a last resort with an agreed strategy to replenish reserves at the earliest opportunity.
- (u) To note that the draft budget includes no assumption of potential structural changes under Local Government Reorganisation or any provision for additional costs of reorganisation. Any such costs incurred by KCC would need to be funded through the savings from reorganisation over the pay back period including any temporary borrowing costs.”

(5) Mr Hook (Leader of the Opposition), Mr Rayner (Leader of the Conservative Group), Mr Hood (Leader of the Green Group), Mr Thomas (Leader of the Independent Group), Mr Barrett (Leader of the Independent Reformers) and Mr Brady (Leader of the Labour Group) gave their responses to the recommendations.

(6) The Chairman outlined the debate process and called for cross-directorate amendments.

(7) Mr Hood proposed, and Mr Stepto seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“To allocate funding to mitigate the impact of the Kent Travel Saver price increase and to maintain the Post-19 discretionary travel offer.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£1,229,000”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Increase in Council Tax. £792,006 Remove funding for Political Assistants - £140k

Freezing the increase in Member’s Allowances of £54k

Reduce funding allocation to Member Allowances by £242,994 (deliverable via reduction in appointment to Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member posts) – note any finalisation of the budget allocation for Allowances to be dependent on future MRP informed Full Council

decisions regarding the overall Member Allowance Scheme for 2026-2030.”

- (8) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 7 above and the voting was as follows:

For (5)

Mr B Barrett, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery and Mr P Stepto.

Against (53)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mrs S Hudson, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mr N Williams, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (20)

Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild and Mr P Thomas.

*Amendment lost.*

- (9) Ms Nolan proposed, and Mr Brady seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“This amendment brings together a set of targeted “invest to save” proposals that strengthen early intervention, expand in-house capacity and reduce long-term pressures in Adult Social Care and Children’s Services.”

*Proposed amount and funding source:*

## Financial Modelling and Funding

Directorate	Proposal	2026-27 £'000	2027-28 £'000	2028-29 £'000	TOTAL £'000
ASCH	In House Homecare Service - <del>KEaH</del> Extension	250.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0
ASCH	Mental Health preventative services	327.0	-771.6	-111.8	-556.4
ASCH	In-House Supported Homes Provision for Young Adults with Complex Needs	183.6	295.8	-694.2	-214.8
CYPE	School Improvement & Skills Employability	400.0	-675.0	-675.0	-950.0
CYPE	Multi-Agency Support Network for Families Below Early Help Threshold	300.0	75.0	-450.0	-75.0
GET/CYPE	Safe Walking Routes for Schoolchildren	0.0	0.0	-20.0	-20.0
CED/CYPE	Parent-Centred Journey Confirmation for Home to School Transport	100.0	0.0	-100.0	0.0
DCED	Removal of Political Assistant Posts	-140.0	0.0	0.0	-140.0
	<b>TOTAL &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>	<b>1,420.6</b>	<b>-1,325.8</b>	<b>-2,051.0</b>	<b>-1,956.2</b>

### FUNDING:

Use of earmarked reserves >>>	-1,420.6	-1,515.4	0.0
Remove prior year use of reserves >>>		1,420.6	1,515.4
Replenish reserves >>>		1,420.6	1,515.4
Remove replenishment of reserves >>>			-1,420.6
<b>Surplus to return to reserves by year 3 &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-440.8</b>

(Further background to this amendment can be seen here: [\(Public Pack\) Supplement pack - Budget Amendments Agenda Supplement for County Council, 12/02/2026 09:30](#))

(10) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 9 above and the voting was as follows:

For (10)

Mr B Barrett, Mr A Brady, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Ms C Nolan and Mr P Stepto.

Against (50)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (18)

Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas, and Mr N Williams.

*Amendment lost.*

(11) Mr Brady proposed, and Ms Nolan seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“This amendment brings together a set of service transformation and efficiency proposals designed to strengthen early help for children and young people, support vulnerable adults, improve the Council’s efficiency and use of resources.”

*Proposed amount and funding source:*

**Financial Modelling and Funding**

Directorate	Proposal	2026-27 £'000	2027-28 £'000	2028-29 £'000	TOTAL £'000
CYPE	Children's Services - Play Service	100.0	700.7	133.6	934.3
CYPE	Youth Provision	203.1	1,497.3	2,082.2	3,782.6
CYPE	Youth Provision - Public Health Grant Funding		-53.0	-158.9	-211.9
CYPE	Youth Provision - Savings to High Cost Placements	0.0	-171.4	-1,028.6	-1,200.0
CYPE	Adult Social Care - Provider Prices	508.7	-127.2	-127.2	254.3
GET	Nature Benefits for our Residents	93.3	-33.5	-59.8	0.0
CED	Reduce Cabinet & Deputy Cabinet roles	-243.0	0.0	0.0	-243.0
CED	Analytics Function Reduction	-456.3	-152.1	0.0	-608.4
CED	Strategic Partnerships Team Amalgamation	-146.7	-48.9	0.0	-195.6
NAC/CHB	Disposal of portion of KCC Companies	200.0	0.0	550.0	750.0
	<b>TOTAL &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>	<b>259.2</b>	<b>1,611.9</b>	<b>1,391.4</b>	<b>3,262.4</b>

**FUNDING:**

Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (FUCR) - Disposal of portion of KCC Companies >>>				-6,000.0
Use of earmarked reserves >>>	-259.2	-2,130.2		
Remove prior year use of reserves >>>		259.2	2,130.2	
Replenish reserves >>>		259.2	2,130.2	
Remove replenishment of reserves >>>				-259.2
<b>Surplus to return to reserves/FUCRs by year 3 &gt;&gt;&gt;</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-607.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>

*(Further background to this amendment can be seen here: [\(Public Pack\) Supplement pack - Budget Amendments Agenda Supplement for County Council, 12/02/2026 09:30](#))*

(12) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 11 above and the voting was as follows:

For (8)

Mr B Barrett, Mr A Brady, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Ms C Nolan and Mr P Stepto.

Against (50)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (20)

Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas, and Mr N Williams.

*Amendment lost.*

### **Adult Social Care and Health Directorate**

(13) The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health introduced the budget for the Adult Social Care and Public Health Directorate.

(14) The Chairman called for directorate specific amendments.

(15) Mr Jeffery proposed, and Mr Heaver seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“To increase the Hardship Fund to provide additional support to Residential and Nursing Care providers facing financial difficulty.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£3,900,000”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Increase in Council Tax £3.9m.”

(16) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 15 above and the voting was as follows:

For (8)

Mr B Barrett, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery, Mr A Kennedy, Mr P Stepto and Mr N Williams.

Against (50)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mrs S Hudson, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian,

Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (20)

Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Ms I Kemp, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild and Mr P Thomas.

*Amendment lost.*

(17) Mr Barrett proposed, and Mr Ford seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“We propose establishing a small, in-house homecare pilot as an alternative strategy for managing the rising costs of Adult Social Care, particularly in areas such as Sevenoaks where the external contracted provision is difficult to secure. The pilot requires a one-off £500k investment in year one, funded from earmarked reserves. These reserves will be fully repaid through savings achieved by helping more people remain safely at home, particularly in areas where homecare has been hard or expensive to secure, thereby avoiding higher-cost residential placements.

Once set up, the ongoing service will operate within existing adult social care budgets on a cost neutral or surplus basis, because the hours delivered directly by the in-house team would be offset by reduced provision in other care settings including commissioned homecare and residential care. The creation of an in-house homecare team would not in itself create any additional demand for adult social care.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£500k for start-up costs, cost neutral by end of year two, with reserve draw down fully re-paid via savings in reduced placements to residential care.”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Ear marked reserves.”

(18) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 17 above and the voting was as follows:

For (18)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr R Ford, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I

Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Ms C Nolan, Mr H Rayner, Ms C Russell, Mr P Stepto, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (12)

Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr A J Hook, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole and Mr R G Streatfeild.

*Amendment lost.*

(19) The Chairman opened the discussion to general debate on the Adult Social Care and Public Health Directorate budget.

### **Children, Young People and Education Directorate**

(20) The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services introduced the budget for the Children, Young People and Education Directorate.

(21) The Chairman called for directorate specific amendments.

(22) Mr Streatfield, MBE proposed, and Mr Hook seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

"This amendment provides funding for the recruitment of an additional in-house Educational Psychologists and/or Speech and Language Therapists, strengthening the Council's capacity to deliver timely assessments, support statutory responsibilities and improve the continuity and quality of specialist support for children and young people in Kent."

*Proposed amount:*

"£180k"

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Remove the Political Assistant posts - £140k.

Reduce the funding allocation to Member Allowances by £40k (deliverable via reduction in appointment to Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member posts) – note any finalisation of the budget allocation for Allowances to be dependent on future MRP informed Full Council decisions regarding the overall Member Allowance Scheme for 2026-2030.”

(23) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 22 above and the voting was as follows:

For (29)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (0)

*Amendment lost.*

(24) The Chairman opened the discussion to general debate on the Children, Young People and Education Directorate budget.

(25) The Chairman proposed that, under s14.48 of the Constitution, Council resolve to extend the meeting beyond 5pm with business to conclude no later than 8pm and it was agreed unanimously.

(26) RESOLVED that the County Council agree to continue the meeting beyond 5pm with business to conclude no later than 8pm.

### **Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate**

(27) The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, the Cabinet Member for Community and Regulatory Services, the Cabinet Member for Environment, Coastal Regeneration and Special Projects and the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects introduced the budget for the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate.

(28) The Chairman called for directorate specific amendments.

(29) Mr Hook proposed, and Mr Streatfeild, MBE seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“This amendment seeks to reduce the cost of the 16+ Travel Pass by £38, providing additional financial relief to Kent residents aged 16 and over who attend a school or college of further education, and supporting improved access to education and training opportunities.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£180k”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Remove the Political Assistant posts - £140k.

Reduce the funding allocation to Member Allowances by £40k (deliverable via reduction in appointment to Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member posts) – note any finalisation of the budget allocation for Allowances to be dependent on future MRP informed Full Council decisions regarding the overall Member Allowance Scheme for 2026-2030.”

(30) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 29 above and the voting was as follows:

For (29)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (1)

Mrs M Fothergill.

*Amendment lost.*

(31) Mr Sole proposed, and Mr Prater seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“This amendment proposes an increase to the Highways Asset Maintenance Fund, with the additional £180k specifically allocated for pothole repairs across the county.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£180k”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Remove the Political Assistant posts - £140k.

Reduce the funding allocation to Member Allowances by £40k (deliverable via reduction in appointment to Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member posts) – note any finalisation of the budget allocation for Allowances to be dependent on future MRP informed Full Council decisions regarding the overall Member Allowance Scheme for 2026-2030.”

(32) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 31 above and the voting was as follows:

For (29)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, , Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C

Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (1)

Mrs M Fothergill.

*Amendment lost.*

(33) The Chairman opened the discussion to general debate on the Growth, Environment and Transport Directorate budget.

### **Corporate Functions (Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department)**

(34) The Deputy Leader introduced the budget for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department.

(35) The Chairman called for directorate specific amendments.

(36) Mr Stepto proposed, and Mr Hood seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

"To allocate funding to support activity required to help pay for disaggregation cost for Local Government Reorganisation as most responsible councils including Kent districts are."

*Proposed amount:*

"£4,443,994"

*Proposed Funding Source:*

"Increase in Council Tax £4,443,994."

(37) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 36 above and the voting was as follows:

For (5)

Mr B Barrett, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery and Mr P Stepto.

Against (51)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Mrs S Hudson, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (22)

Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

*Amendment lost.*

(38) Mr Kennedy proposed, and Mr Rayner seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“The budget should be reduced by the amount being paid for political advisors and that money should be transferred into the Combined Member Grants so that it can be used for the benefit of our residents and communities rather than on partisan politics.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£140k”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Reduce funding for Political Advisor(s) by £140k (which we believe should be funded by the individual Political Groups, not KCC tax payers) and then re-direct this money to the Combined Member Grant funding.”

(39) In addressing the dispute regarding the debate process, the Chairman invited the relevant proposers and seconders to immediately close out the debate before moving to the vote.

(40) The Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 38 above and the voting was as follows:

For (29)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mrs S Hudson, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr P Stepto, Mr R G Streatfeild, Mr P Thomas and Mr N Williams.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (1)

Mrs M Fothergill.

*Amendment lost.*

(41) Mr Heaver proposed, and Mr Jeffery seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“To provide additional funding for maintenance of council-owned buildings, supporting the upkeep and safe operation of the estate to keep the most under threat of closure open.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£1m”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Increase in Council Tax £1m.”

(42) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 41 above and the voting was as follows:

For (7)

Mr B Barrett, Mr S Heaver, Mr M A J Hood, Mr S Jeffery, Mr A Kennedy, Mr P Stepto and Mr N Williams.

Against (56)

Mr J Baker, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Ms I Kemp, Mr J Finch, Mr R Ford, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hesse, Mrs S Hudson, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mr H Rayner, Mrs S Roots, Ms C Russell, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr P Thomas, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (15)

Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr A J Hook, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr A Ricketts, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole and Mr R G Streatfeild.

*Amendment lost.*

(43) Mr Thomas proposed, and Mr Bradshaw seconded the following amendment:

*Proposed Purpose:*

“This amendment seeks to reduce political administrative costs and recognise the cost-of-living crisis Increasing the Crisis and Resilience fund together with reinstating a base budget to the Kent Support and Assistance Service.

Removal of the Political Assistants funding and a reduction in Cabinet / Deputy Cabinet Member Allowances or positions funding (Executive SRAs) would provide the funding for this.”

*Proposed amount:*

“£200k total.

£100k increase to the household support Crisis & resilience fund (formerly managed via the Household Support Grant). This is topping up an existing Government Grant.

£100k to reinstate a specific base budget for Kent Support & Assistance Service, which is a discretionary service.”

*Proposed Funding Source:*

“Reduce funding allocation to Member Allowances by £60k (deliverable via reduction in appointment to Cabinet Member and Deputy Cabinet Member posts) – note any finalisation of the budget allocation for Allowances to be dependent on future MRP informed Full Council decisions regarding the overall Member Allowance Scheme for 2026-2030.

Remove Political Assistants funding (£140K)”

(44) Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the amendment set out in paragraph 43 above and the voting was as follows:

For (26)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mrs M Fothergill, Mr S Heaven, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild and Mr P Thomas.

Against (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Abstain (0)

*Amendment lost.*

(45) The Chairman opened the discussion to general debate on the budgets for the Chief Executive’s Department and the Deputy Chief Executive’s Department.

(46) *At various points throughout the debate, in response to different points of order, the Chairman reminded Members of the Nolan Principles.*

(47) Ms Kemkaran and Mr Collins summarised the debate. As all the amendments had either been determined or withdrawn, the Chairman put to the vote the substantive motion as set out in Item 6, paragraph 4 above and the voting was as follows:

For (48)

Mr J Baker, Mr M Brown, Mr D Burns, Mr C Burwash, Mr A Cecil, Mr P Chamberlain, Mr W Chapman, Mr B Collins, Mr J Defriend, Mr S Dixon, Ms S Emberson, Mr J Eustace, Mr L Evans, Mr P Evans, Mr J Finch, Mrs B Fordham, Mrs G Foster, Mr M Fraser Moat, Mr B Fryer, Mr M Harrison, Mr J Henderson, Mr C Hespe, Ms L Kemkaran, Mr A Kibble, Mr P King, Mrs M Lawes, Mr M Logen, Mr T Mallon, Mr R Mayall, Mr T Mole, Miss D Morton, Mr P Osborne, Mrs C Palmer, Mr R Palmer, Mr M Paul, Mrs B Porter, Mrs S Roots, Mr T L Shonk, Mr D Sian, Dr G Sturley, Mr D Taylor, Mr A Thorp, Mr D Truder, Mr R Waters, Mr P Webb, Mr N Wibberley, Mrs P Williams and Mr D Wimble.

Against (26)

Mr B Barrett, Mr B Black, Mr O Bradshaw, Mr A Brady, Mr M Brice, Mrs T Dean, Mr M Ellis, Mr R Ford, Mr S Heaver,, Mr M A J Hood, Mr A J Hook, Mr S Jeffery, Ms I Kemp, Mr A Kennedy, Mr J Moreland, Mr M Munday, Ms C Nolan, Mr T Prater, Mr H Rayner, Mr A Ricketts, Ms C Russell, Mr G R Samme, Mr C Sefton, Mr M Sole, Mr R G Streatfeild, and Mr P Thomas.

Abstain (1)

Mrs M Fothergill.

*Motion carried.*

(48) RESOLVED that:

County Council, having given due regard to the s25 Report (published for consideration and noting as agenda item 5 of this meeting), is asked to agree the following:

2026-36 Capital Programme

- (a) The 10-year Capital programme and investment proposals of £1,967m over the years from 2026-27 to 2035-36 together with the necessary funding and subject to approval to spend arrangements.
- (b) The directorate capital programmes as set out in appendices A & B of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.

- (c) The net revenue budget requirement of £1,648.1m for 2026-27.
- (d) The directorate revenue budget proposals for 2026-27 and the 2026-29 medium term financial plan as set out in appendices D (high level 2026-29 plan), E (high level 2026-27 plan by directorate), F (individual spending, savings, income and reserves variations for 2026-29) and G (2026-27 key services) of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.

#### 2026-27 Council Tax

- (e) To increase Council Tax band rates by 3.99% as set out in section 5 and appendix H of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (f) The total Council Tax requirement of £1,041,352,757 to be raised through precepts on districts as set out in section 5 and appendix H in the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.

#### Kent Pay Scheme 2026-27

- (g) Note the continuation of the transition of all Kent Scheme staff to the new pay structure agreed by County Council in May 2024.
- (h) Agree to the Personnel Committee recommendations on the uplift and changes to Kent Pay Scheme pay scales and spinal points as set out in section 6.8 of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.

#### Key Policies and Strategies

- (i) The Reserves Policy as set out in appendix M of the final draft budget report published on 4th February 2026.
- (j) The Treasury Management Strategy as set out in appendix N of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026, including the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators.
- (k) The Investment Strategy for service/commercial investments as set out in appendix O in the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (l) The Capital Strategy to meet requirements of Prudential Code as set out in appendix P of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026 including the Capital Prudential Indicators.
- (m) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement as set out in appendix Q of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (n) The Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy as set out in appendix R of the final draft report published on 4th February 2026.
- (o) Fees and charges to continue to be reviewed in line with the policy agreed in the 2023-24 budget approval.

In addition:

- (p) To delegate authority to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to make any necessary technical adjustments and required amendments in line with relevant Treasury Management and Financial Policy arrangements, arising from the final funding announcement, retained Business Rates, and Business Rate Collection Fund balances, and to address minor technical or structural issues required for the final budget publication, provided these do not materially alter the approved budget. All changes will be reported to Cabinet via the appropriate governance process and will be reflected in the final approved version of the Budget Book when it is published at the end of March 2026.
- (q) To note the information on the impact of the Final Local Government Finance Settlement, the County Council's share of retained business rates, and business rate collection fund balances on the revenue budget will be reported to and agreed by Cabinet once it has all been received.
- (r) To note the ongoing and escalating cost pressures on the Council's budget alongside insufficient funding in the multi-year local government finance settlement and knock on requirement for savings and income in the final draft 2026-27 budget and 2026-29 medium term financial plan.
- (s) To note that the planned use of reserves still ensures sufficient reserves are available in the short term with no immediate concerns triggering a Section 114 notice provided the use of these reserves is replaced with sustainable savings over the medium term.
- (t) To note the rate of recent drawdown from reserves and potential drawdown to balance 2025-26 outturn is still cause for serious concern and reserves will still need to be maintained ahead of decisions on Local Government Reorganisation. Further unplanned drawdowns would weaken resilience and should only be considered as a last resort with an agreed strategy to replenish reserves at the earliest opportunity.
- (u) To note that the draft budget includes no assumption of potential structural changes under Local Government Reorganisation or any provision for additional costs of reorganisation. Any such costs incurred by KCC would need to be funded through the savings from reorganisation over the pay back period including any temporary borrowing costs.