KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:	DECISION NUMBER:
David Wimble, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects	26/00050

Executive Decision – Key 26/00050 Adoption of the Kent and Medway Local Growth Plan

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Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects, I agree to:

APPROVE and ADOPT, on behalf of Kent County Council, the Kent and Medway Local Growth Plan as a long-term, evidence-led, sector-focused growth plan for Kent and Medway

ENDORSE its use as a strategic framework to inform the Council's economic development activity and its work through the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership.(KMEP)

DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Special Projects, to agree any non-material amendments to the Plan and take the actions necessary to support its publication and implementation,

DELEGATE authority to the Director of Growth & Communities, to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision

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Reasons for decision:
The Government's English Devolution White Paper introduced Local Growth Plans as a mechanism for supporting place-based economic growth and investment.

Whilst Kent and Medway are not currently required to produce a Local Growth Plan as a non-devolved area, KMEP has chosen to develop one proactively to ensure Kent and Medway is well positioned to support future engagement with Government and investors and to articulate the area's economic strengths, opportunities and priorities.

The proposed decision is required to enable formal adoption of the Local Growth Plan and to support its use in future economic development, partnership and investment activity across Kent and Medway.

The Local Growth Plan is intended to complement the Kent and Medway Economic Framework and other emerging strategic planning and growth initiatives across Kent and Medway and should be viewed as part of the wider strategic framework supporting sustainable economic growth and investment in the area.

Financial Implications
Approval of the Local Growth Plan does not in itself commit Kent County Council or its partners to specific expenditure.

The Plan identifies growth opportunities and emerging investment propositions. Any future projects requiring KCC or future Unitary or Strategic Authority funding, procurement activity, commissioning activity or capital investment will be subject to separate business case development and governance approvals where required.

The investment pipeline remains under development and further stakeholder engagement is planned.

Legal Implications
There is currently no statutory requirement for Kent and Medway to produce a Local Growth Plan as it is not a devolved area.

The decision provides formal governance approval for Kent County Council's support of the Plan through its role within KMEP.

Future activity arising from the Plan will be subject to separate legal, financial, procurement and governance requirements where applicable.

Equalities implications
An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) accompanies this decision.

The Local Growth Plan is expected to support inclusive economic growth through improved employment, skills and business opportunities across Kent and Medway.

No significant adverse equality impacts have been identified at this strategic planning stage. However, as the Local Growth Plan develops and future actions, investment propositions and delivery activity are progressed, equality impacts will continue to be reviewed to ensure equalities considerations remain embedded in future decision-making.

Data Protection implications
Adoption of the Local Growth Plan does not require significant processing of personal data beyond normal stakeholder engagement and partnership activity.

Any future projects arising from the Plan will consider data protection requirements as appropriate.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
This version of the PROD is included in the agenda pack for committee members to review ahead of the meeting.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:
Option 1: Do not adopt the Local Growth Plan (**not** recommended**).** This would leave Kent and Medway without an agreed, evidence-led plan, weakening its ability to present shared economic priorities and engage with Government, investors and funding opportunities.
Option 2: Delay adoption pending further development (not recommended). This would allow further refinement of actions and investment proposals but delay use of the Plan, reduce momentum and limit near-term engagement with Government, investors and partners.

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

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Signed Date