



AGENDA

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 17 January 2024, at 10.00 am Ask for: **Katy Reynolds**
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Telephone: **03000 422252**
Hall, Maidstone

Membership (17)

- Conservative (12): Mr D L Brazier (Chairman), Mr M Dendor (Vice-Chairman),
Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr T Bond, Mr T Cannon,
Mr N J D Chard, Mr P C Cooper, Mr J P McInroy, Mr H Rayner,
Mr R J Thomas and Mr M Whiting
- Labour (2): Ms M Dawkins and Dr L Sullivan
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook
- Green and
Independent (2): Rich Lehmann and Mr P Stepto

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 22 November 2023 (Pages 1 - 6)
- 5 Draft Ten Year Capital Programme, Revenue Budget 2023-24 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023-26 (Pages 7 - 146)
- 6 Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent (Pages 147 - 168)

- 7 Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department (Pages 169 - 188)
- 8 23/00119 - Kent Public Service Network (KPSN) (Pages 189 - 206)
- 9 Update on New Asset Management Strategy Development (Pages 207 - 214)
- 10 23/00097 - Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (Pages 215 - 362)
- 11 23/00120 - Digital Strategy 2024 - 27 (Pages 363 - 394)
- 12 Work Programme (Pages 395 - 400)

EXEMPT ITEMS

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

Ben Watts,
General Counsel
03000 416814

Tuesday, 9 January 2024

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 Wednesday, 22 November 2023

PRESENT: Mr D L Brazier (Chairman), Mr M Dendor (Vice-Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King, Mr P Bartlett, Mr T Bond, Mr N J D Chard, Ms M Dawkins, Mr A J Hook, Rich Lehmann, Mr J P McInroy, Mr H Rayner, Mr R J Thomas, Mr P Stepto and Dr L Sullivan

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy), Ms J Hansen (Finance Business Partner (Strategic & Corporate Services), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance), Ms L Gannon (Director of Technology), Miss K Reynolds (Democratic Services Officer), Ms R Anderson (Asset Utilisation Lead), Mr H D'Alton (Investment and Disposal Surveyor), Ms C Maynard (Head of Commissioning Portfolio - Outcome 2 and 3), Miss K Phillips (Strategic Business Adviser - GET), Mr J Sanderson (Head of Property Operations) and Mr B Sherreard (Programme Manager)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**171. Apologies and Substitutes**

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Whiting and Mr Cannon. Mrs Prendergast was present as substitute for Mr Whiting.

172. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 3)

Ms Dawkins declared an interest as the Director of a Community Interest Company (CIC).

173. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023

(Item 4)

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2023 are correctly recorded and they be signed by the Chairman. There were no matters arising.

174. Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2024-27

(Item 5)

1. Mr Peter Oakford introduced the report which set out the background to the setting of the capital programme, revenue budget and medium-term financial plan (MTFP) for the forthcoming year. The report included fuller details of

funding, spending, savings, income and reserves estimates in the initial draft revenue budget together with analysis of risks. To avoid the risk of an unbalanced budget, it was said that spending controls had already been introduced and that all discretionary services were under review for 2024-25. It was highlighted that reserves could not be relied upon to balance the budget as this would negatively impact the financial sustainability of the Council.

2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) The Draft Budget 2024-25 for consideration at the January Committee meeting would be updated following the latest inflation forecasts. Mr Shipton highlighted that there would also be part-year increases.
 - b) The household waste recycling programme had been paused, however, the team were looking into an alternative proposal to deliver the savings in this area.
 - c) Commercial Services were being reviewed for the first time since these services had been set up. The dividends from these services were substantial and Mr Oakford assured Members that he did not have any concerns with this area of business.
 - d) Work was being undertaken with 9 districts that still had Council Tax discounts on empty properties. The districts were proposing to remove those discounts and KCC was incentivising this through funding the extra collection costs.
 - e) Regarding Appendix D, Members requested the addition of a column which indicates what the current value is, or percentage change, for ease of comparison.
3. RESOLVED to note the initial draft capital and revenue budgets including responses to consultation. There were no suggestions for changes to be made to the section of the budget related to the Cabinet Committee's portfolio area before the draft is considered by Cabinet on 25th January 2024 and presented to Full County Council on 19th February 2024.

175. Contract Management Review Group Update

(Item 6)

1. Ms Clare Maynard introduced the report which reflected on the work of the Contract Management Review Group (CMRG) since it was originally convened in September 2016. It also provided an update on amendments to the Terms of Reference (Annex A), including membership, of the CMRG and the approach to future meetings of the Group, following the Council's launch of a new Commercial and Procurement Division in September 2023.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) Members raised concerns regarding the composition of the CMRG and requested the membership of the group be increased to include more Members. Mr Peter Oakford confirmed that this was an intention of the Chair.
 - b) The work programme for the CMRG was being reviewed. There would be an opportunity for the CMRG Members to comment on the work

programme and ensure that this reflected the balance of risk and complexity of the contracts.

- c) Regarding the regular occurrence of contract extensions, Ms Maynard confirmed that there was a requirement to evidence that any contract extension was delivering best value.

3. RESOLVED to consider and note this report.

176. Annual Equality and Diversity Report

(Item 7)

1. Mr David Whittle introduced the report which set out progress against Kent County Council's six Equality Objectives, as set out within Framing Kent's Future; both the annual report and equality objectives forming part of KCC's statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. Mr Whittle thanked Laura McPherson who had led the delivery of the report. It was highlighted that the compilation of the Annual Equality & Diversity report had been underpinned by a more analytical and cross-council approach following the introduction of the new Equality Objectives for 2022-2026. It was said that the Corporate Equality Group would use evidence from the Annual Report to work with services and directorates to drive improvement in priority areas.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) The evidence in the report and the staff survey have been communicated to the Corporate Management Team, who engaged through management channels and staff groups to encourage the reporting of issues relating to equality and diversity.
 - b) It was highlighted that the duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 was to consider equalities, and thereby mitigate negative impacts where possible.
 - c) In relation to declaring disabilities, Mr Whittle agreed to explore potential opportunities with the Staff Communications team to provide staff with positive examples of disabled staff thriving and being supported in the council to encourage colleagues to self-declare their disabilities.
3. RESOLVED to approve the Annual Equality & Diversity Report for 2022-23, attached as Appendix A.

177. 23/00101 - Kent Communities Programme

(Item 8)

1. Mr Oakford introduced the draft report for discussion as to its further development before it was presented to the Cabinet for consideration ahead of the 30 November meeting. It was said that the Kent Communities programme aimed to rationalise KCC's physical estate and propose a greater mix of alternative methods of service delivery across the county in face of the Council's significant financial pressures.
2. In response to questions and comments from Members it was said that:
 - a) The cost of the consultation process was approximately £40,000. The headline cost of the Programme was included in the report and an updated

figure would be provided ahead of the decision being considered by Cabinet.

- b) Further information regarding the redevelopment of the Ray Allen South Ashford Centre would be provided to Members outside of the meeting.
 - c) It was said that youth would have better access to support services through the introduction of the Family Hubs than that offered by the current Youth Hub provision. The Family Hub Programme team would be able to provide further information regarding the cessation of the commissioned youth contracts and expected impact of this.
 - d) Service delivery could be undermined by the condition of the Council buildings should they not undergo the required maintenance. The Kent Communities Programme was intended to put the Council in a better position to address the maintenance issues with the current Council estate.
 - e) It was highlighted that the Kent Communities Programme sought to achieve savings for the Council while providing the right services, in the right way for Kent communities. While delivering savings was a key driver for the programme, the usage of the Council's buildings had been reviewed using the Needs Framework to understand both demand and need for services.
 - f) Regarding concerns raised in relation to the lack of sufficient information on the projected savings created by the Kent Communities Programme, Mr Oakford assured Members that Cabinet would be held accountable should the savings not be delivered. He confirmed that the capital receipts from the disposal of Council buildings would be reinvested into the maintenance of the remaining estate.
3. Following the debate, the Chairman put to the vote the recommendations set out in the report and the voting was as follows:

For (7)

Mr Dendor, Mr Barrington-King, Mr Bartlett, Mr Chard, Mr McInroy, Mr Rayner, Mr Thomas

Against (5)

Ms Dawkins, Mr Hook, Mr Lehmann, Mr Stepto, Dr Sullivan

Abstain (2)

Mr Bond, Mrs Prendergast

4. RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision to:
- a) Consider and note the feedback from the Kent Communities Consultation on the proposals, as well as responses to the Family Hub Consultation, insofar as they are relevant to the Kent Communities proposals, alongside the amended policy and financial position set out in the report 'Securing Kent's Future;'
 - b) Consider the options as set out in the decision report and confirm an option to be implemented including agreement of:
 - i. The network of buildings to be utilised to support the delivery of following services:
 - Open access youth and children services – including Public Health
 - Adults with Learning Disabilities

- CLS – Adult Education
 - Gateways
- ii. The decommissioning of services at those buildings which are no longer to be utilised to support the delivery of the services outlined above.
 - iii. The co-design of outreach services with partners.
- c) Approve expenditure from capital budget to enable adaptations to the agreed network of buildings in order to facilitate the co-location of multiple services;
 - d) Delegate authority to the Corporate Directors of Children Young People & Education (CYPE), Growth Environment & Transport (GET), Deputy Chief Executives Department (DCED) and Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) to design the staffing model to support the changes as agreed in part b of the decision above, undertake the necessary staff consultation and implement any changes as a result; and
 - e) Delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to enter into the necessary contracts and legal agreements to facilitate the implementation of the decisions.

178. 23/00108 - Disposal of former Halfway Houses Primary School, Southdown Road, Halfway, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3BE
(Item 9)

1. Mr Oakford and Mr Hugh D'Alton introduced the report which set out the proposed disposal of the Property, the Former Halfway Houses Primary School, Southdown Road, Halfway, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3BE. It was confirmed that the site had been declared surplus and that the Council had gained consent of the Secretary of State for Education to dispose of the school site and the playing field. It was emphasised that this would be a substantial capital receipt that would be re-invested in the Council's capital programme.
2. In response to questions and comments it was said that the intention was to openly market the site in quarter one (Q1) of 2024 on an "all enquiries" basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site. This included the opportunity for a joint venture where this could be shown to demonstrate best value for KCC in the disposal. However, it was said that the property was not of a scale that would usually warrant offers for a joint venture.
3. RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision to agree to the disposal of the Property, the former Halfway Houses Primary School, Southdown Road, Halfway, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 3BE and Delegate Authority to:
 - a) The Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to finalise the terms of the disposal; and
 - b) The Director of Infrastructure to authorise the execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

179. 23/00106 - Oracle Enterprise Business Capabilities System – Hosting and Support
(Item 10)

1. Mr Oakford and Ms Gannon introduced the report which set out the proposed decision to award a contract and the permitted contract term extensions to Rimini Street for the support of the Council's Oracle E-Business Suite. It was said that this was a short-term extension to ensure business continuity during the implementation of the Council's Oracle E-Business Suite.
2. RESOLVED to endorse the proposed decision to:
 - a) award a contract and the permitted contract term extensions to Rimini Street for the support of the Council's Oracle E-Business Suite (April 2024 to April 2026 with the potential for extensions to 2027);
 - b) delegate authority to the Director of Technology in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to activate the permitted contract term extensions; and
 - c) delegate authority to the Director of Technology to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to entering in contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

180. Work Programme
(Item 11)

RESOLVED to consider and note the planned work programme for 2023.

From: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council
Peter Oakford – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate & Traded Services
Dylan Jeffery – Cabinet Member for Communications and Democratic Services

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 17 January 2024

Subject: **Revised Draft Revenue Budget 2024-25 and 2024-27 MTFP, Draft Capital Programme 2024-34 and Treasury Management Strategy**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The attached report sets out the updated and balanced draft revenue budget 2024-25 and MTFP 2024-27, proposed capital programme 2024-34, and draft Treasury Management Strategy, for further Member consideration ahead of Cabinet on 25th January 2024 and full Council on 19th February. The purpose of the report is to enable the Scrutiny and Cabinet Committees to focus on the proposed changes from the initial draft revenue budget 2024-25 and 2024-27 MTFP published on 1st November for the November Scrutiny and Cabinet Committee meetings, and new additions in relation to the Capital Strategy and 10 year capital programme and the Treasury Management Strategy. The report includes fuller details of funding, spending, savings, income and reserves estimates that were set out in the initial draft revenue budget together with an analysis of risks.

The same budget report is being presented to each Cabinet Committee as it is a standard report for the whole council, focussing on the key strategic considerations underpinning the decisions necessary for County Council to agree the budget at the Budget Meeting in February.

The relevant Cabinet Member(s) will outline the key 2024-25 revenue budget changes from the initial draft, the further detail included in this draft for 2025-26 and 2026-27 plans, and capital programme proposals, relating to their portfolio as part of the Cabinet Committee consideration. This is to clarify the budget areas within the scope of the Committee and to seek feedback on the relevant proposals, following on from the November 2023 considerations and note the Member engagement and committee contributions to the budget development process so far.

To support ongoing budget consideration by Members, in addition to the Cabinet Committee stages of the budget development process, a separate interrogatable dashboard has been made available to Members, setting out key information about individual elements of the draft revenue budget and now incorporating medium term revenue plans.

Recommendations

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- a) NOTE the updated revenue budget and MTFP, draft capital strategy and programme, and draft Treasury Management Strategy
- b) PROPOSE, to the Executive, any changes which should be made to the relevant sections of the budget related to the Committee's portfolio area before the draft is finalised by Cabinet on 25th January 2024 and presented to Full County Council on 19th February 2024 for decision.

Contact details

Report Author(s)

- Dave Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy)
- 03000 419418
- dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Corporate Director:

- Zena Cooke
- 03000 416854
- zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk

Revised Draft Revenue Budget 2024-25 and 2024-27 MTFP, Draft Capital Programme 2024-34 and Treasury Management Strategy

	Sctn	Page
<u>Executive Summary</u>	1	2
<u>Background and Context</u>	2	5
<u>Provisional 2024-25 Local Government Finance Settlement</u>	3	6
<u>Council Tax</u>	4	10
<u>The Administration's Revised Draft Budget Proposals</u>	5	13
<u>Revenue Strategy and Revised Draft Budget</u>	6	19
<u>Capital Strategy and Draft Budget</u>	7	22
<u>Treasury Management Strategy</u>	8	24
<u>Reserves</u>	9	25
Appendices		
<u>Draft Capital Investment Strategy 2024-25 to 2033-34</u>	A	
<u>Draft Capital Investment Strategy by Directorate</u>	B	
<u>Potential New Capital Projects</u>	C	
<u>High Level 2024-27 Revenue Plan and Financing</u>	D	
<u>High Level 2024-25 Revenue Plan by Directorate</u>	E	
<u>Budget Dashboard (screenshots)</u>	F	
<u>List of individual spending, savings & reserve items</u>	G	
<u>Reserves Policy</u>	H	
<u>Budget Risks and Adequacy of Reserves</u>	I	
<u>Budget Risk Register</u>	J	
<u>Core Grants in Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement</u>	K	
<u>Economic & Fiscal Context</u>	L	
<u>Treasury Management Strategy</u>	M	

From Leader of the Council; Roger Gough
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services; Peter Oakford
Cabinet Members

Relevant Director(s) Corporate Director Finance; Zena Cooke
Chief Executive,
Corporate Directors, ASCH, CYPE and GET

Report author Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy; Dave Shipton

Circulated to Cabinet Committees and Scrutiny Committee

Classification Unrestricted

Contact details

Corporate Director, Finance	Zena Cooke	03000 419 205	zena.cooke@kent.gov.uk
Head of Finance Operations	Cath Head	03000 416 934	cath.head@kent.gov.uk
Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy	Dave Shipton	03000 419 418	dave.shipton@kent.gov.uk

Directorates – abbreviations in this report

ASCH - Adult Social Care and Health	CYPE - Children, Young People and Education
GET - Growth, Environment & Transport	CED - Chief Executive's Department
DCED – Deputy Chief Executive's Department	NAC - Non-Attributable Costs

1.1 This report updates the initial draft revenue budget 2024-25 and three-year medium term financial plan (MTFP) 2024-27 following its publication on 1st November 2023 and subsequent scrutiny during November, setting out the administration's strategy and proposals to close the budget gap and balance the budget. It sets out the draft 10-year capital programme 2024-25 to 2033-34 and the draft Treasury Management Strategy. The report and appendices provide the key information for the scrutiny process in advance of full Council approval on 19th February 2024.

1.2 The budget gaps of £48.8m for 2024-25 and £13.9m for later years in the initial draft budget report have been balanced through a mix of recurring and one-off measures, including the use of reserves. The measures that have a recurring impact include increased funding assumptions (higher inflation flowing into retained business rates and grant settlement), reductions in spending growth from the initial draft, and further areas for savings and increased income (including bringing forward savings and income from later years). The savings and income arise largely from a review of policy-based service changes and reductions, and the scope of the Council's ambitions and further transformation of the Council's operating model as set out in Securing Kent's Future (SKF). The one-off measures that are replaced in the subsequent years of the MTFP include the use of the final year of New Homes Bonus grant to fund revenue pressures, flexible use of capital receipts to fund revenue spending, and use of reserves.

1.3 The amount of one-off actions and use of reserves, particularly in the first year, is significant and will reduce the Council's financial resilience to absorb any future financial shocks, with the need to make recurring savings and cost reductions in the following two years as these one-off measures are not a sustainable solution to increased recurring costs. The late and unexpected reduction of the Services Grant and other changes in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 published on the 18th December 2023 have increased the gap by £5.4m. Given the lateness in the budget setting process of this funding reduction, it has been addressed by increasing the level of one-off measures in 2024-25.

1.4 The one-off measures used to balance the budget for 2024-25 will need to be replaced by an equivalent level of savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27. As highlighted above, these will be from further proposals under the SKF objectives on policy choices and transformation of the Council's operating model. At this stage all that is required is an agreement that all one-off actions to balance 2024-25 will be replaced by matched savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27 and that the detail of these savings proposals will be developed, consulted on as required and agreed during the first half of 2024-25 for implementation in 2025-26 wherever possible, although the full financial effect may not impact until 2026-27 where there is a part-year effect in 2025-26.

1.5 The spending growth pressures impacting the Council are being experienced by most other councils and the financial sustainability of councils in general is a concern. Whilst the Council will seek to take all the necessary steps to manage future spending within resources available through savings, income and future cost avoidance this will not necessarily fully secure the Council's financial resilience and sustainability if future spending growth continues at unsustainable levels. If the structural deficits in key spending areas in adults and children's services are not addressed there will come a point within the medium-term plan period where the Council is unable to balance the budget on a sustainable basis from savings in other spending areas.

1.6 The draft capital programme for 2024-25 to 2033-34 is based on the principle of rolling forward the previous programme, avoiding the need for any additional borrowing over and above that already identified in the existing programme and reducing wherever possible the need to borrow in the existing programme. Any new schemes must be funded from sources other than borrowing, including government departmental grants, other external funding, developer contributions and capital receipts. The draft capital programme includes the recently announced additional highways capital grants from the Department for Transport for 2023-24 and 2024-25 following the cancellation of the HS2 project, estimated grants from the Department for Education for schools' modernisation and basic need, and the proposed use of capital receipts to cover some current overspends and the modernisation of assets programme for two years. The capital programme also includes the use of £8m capital receipts (under the Government direction that allows revenue costs of projects that will reduce costs, increase revenue or support a more efficient provision of services to be funded from asset sale proceeds) as a one-off measure to balance the 2024-25 revenue budget. This reduces the level of receipts available to fund capital expenditure.

1.7 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2024-25 is included as an appendix to this report and requires approval by full Council in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice. The strategy sets out the Council's approach to borrowing to finance capital expenditure and investment of cash balances, including the associated monitoring arrangements. The Council's prime objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The prime objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and low investment returns, and ensuring sufficient liquidity to manage cashflows.

1.8 The administration's draft budget includes a 4.992% assumed increase in Council Tax. This would increase the County Council share of the bill for a typical band D household by £1.47 per week (£76.59 per year). Council Tax is the Council's most significant source of income to fund essential services, and whilst the administration seeks to keep increases to a minimum, the assumed amount is in line with the government's Council Tax referendum principles for 2024-25 (confirmed in the 2024-25 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement) of a 3% referendum limit and 2% adult social care precept. The tax base (the number of dwellings liable for council tax after discounts, exemptions and assumed collection rates) is assumed to increase by 1.7%, which is around the normal level the Council would expect from growth in the number of households and anticipated changes to discounts. The council tax precept is based on a combination of the council tax band D charge and the estimate of the net number of band D equivalent properties in the tax base for 2024-25. The tax base estimate is ultimately determined by collection authorities (district and borough councils) for the final draft budget and council tax precept for full Council approval on 19th February.

1.9 The usable revenue reserves at the start of 2023-24 were £355.1m, comprising of £37.6m general reserve, £300.6m earmarked reserves and £16.9m public health reserve, this represents a reduction of £53m (13%) on the previous year. A further net drawdown from usable reserves is forecast in 2023-24 (including the transfer to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve for the 2023-24 local authority contribution to the Safety Valve programme). The use of usable reserves to support revenue spending significantly reduces the council's ability to withstand unexpected circumstances and costs and reduces the scope to smooth timing differences between spending and savings plans. The levels of reserves now pose a more significant risk to the council's financial resilience than levels of debt. Reserves will need to be replenished at the earliest opportunity and will need to be factored into future revenue budget plans.

2.1 The background and context set out in the initial draft budget report published at the end of October are largely unchanged. The following paragraphs set out the main updates to the draft budget since the publication date.

2.2 This revised draft revenue budget and MTFP are based on the latest estimates from the actions in Securing Kent's Future, which recognises that changing the spending patterns on adult social care, children in care and home to school transport in a sustainable way will take time. The draft budget includes some reductions in future cost increases in adult social care and home to school transport. For transparency and on-going monitoring, the spending growth is shown as a gross amount in the cost forecasts before any corrective action, and the reductions in planned spending from these actions are shown as savings. Even with these actions the net spending in these three key service areas is still forecast to grow faster than the funding available in the 2024-25 settlement and future government spending plans, and further work will be needed over the coming months to set out the detail how spending on these services will be reduced.

2.3 As well as the impacts of current year overspends and future forecast costs and demand, inflation is still forecast to remain at historically high levels during 2023-24 and into 2024-25. Inflation impacts on the costs of goods and services in revenue budgets and costs of labour, fees and materials on capital projects. The impact of inflation built into the draft budget is based on the November 2023 forecasts from the Office of Budget responsibility (OBR). The November 2023 OBR forecasts were for Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation to peak at 10.7% in quarter 4 2022, thereafter reducing to:

- 10.2% in quarter 1 2023
- 8.4% in quarter 2 2023
- 6.7% in quarter 3 2023
- 4.8% in quarter 4 2023
- 4.6% in quarter 1 2024
- 3.7% in quarter 2 2024
- 3.3% in quarter 3 2024
- 2.8% in quarter 4 2024
- 2.3% in quarter 1 2025

2.4 Inflationary uplifts are applied according to the terms of individual contracts including timing. This means that in many cases mid-year uplifts have a part year impact in 2023-24 and full year impact in 2024-25. The rate of inflation in 2023 has not reduced as quickly as the March 2023 OBR forecast, with reported CPI from Office for National Statistics (ONS) of 10.2% quarter 1, 8.4% quarter 2 and 6.7% quarter 3 2023. The rate of inflation for the year to November 2023 fell unexpectedly to 3.9% from 4.6% in October. Revenue spending subject to inflation is around £1.4bn, so each 1% adds £14m to council costs.

3.1 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2024-25 was published on 18th December 2023. A policy statement on the settlement was published on 5th December 2023 which was intended to give an early indication of what was to be included in the settlement. The settlement largely confirms amounts announced in principle in the 2023-24 settlement last year for 2024-25. This included confirmation of council tax referendum limits for 2024-25 and further increases in the additional social care grants. As in previous years the settlement is based on a core spending power from council tax and the main departmental grants for local government from the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLHUC) within the government's overall spending plans. The settlement does not include specific grants from other government departments, retained growth from business rates or collection fund balances.

3.2 The headline from the settlement is an overall £3.9bn (6.5%) increase in spending power between 2023-24 and 2024-25. The increase for the Council is £86.3m (6.7%). The majority of the increase £2.1bn (3.5%) nationally and £54.3m (4.2%) for the Council comes from council tax. The council tax referendum principles allow for up to but not exceeding 3% increase in the general precept with a further 2% for adult social care levy for upper tier and single tier authorities. Lower tier authorities can increase council tax by the greater of up to but not exceeding 3% or £5 for band D. Police and crime commissioners can increase band D by up to £13. There are additional flexibilities allowing larger increases for specific named authorities - Slough Council, Thurrock Council and Woking Borough Council. The core spending power assumes every authority increases council tax up to maximum allowed and is based on DLHUC's autumn tax base information. The Council's budget and council tax precept is based on the council tax increase proposed to be agreed by full council, and council tax base estimates for 2024-25 provided by district and borough councils as required for the precept notification.

3.3 The previously announced additional grants for social care include:

- Social Care Grant an extra £612m nationally for adults and children's social care. The grant also includes a further additional £80m recycled from Services Grant. The total grant nationally for 2024-25 is £4,544m. £3,852m is rolled forward as the same amounts as for 2023-24, £532m is allocated according to adult social care relative needs formula (ASC RNF) and £160m (including the £80m recycled from Services Grant)_equalising the amount that can be raised through the 2% ASC council tax levy. The Council's allocation is £104.2m comprising £88.8m rolled forward from 2023-24, £13.7m from the ASC RNF and £1.8m from council tax equalisation, an overall expected increase of £15.4m on 2023-24.
- Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund an extra £283m nationally as previously announced in Autumn Budget 2022 plus further £205m nationally from the announcement of a further tranche for workforce fund in July 2023. These increase the total from £562m to £1,050m. The entire grant is allocated according to ASC RNF, the Council's share for 2024-25 is £27.0m, an expected increase of £12.5m.
- Discharge Fund an extra £200m nationally in the local authority 50% (increasing the total grant from £300m to £500m). The grant is allocated on the same basis as Improved Better Care Fund and managed in accordance with the requirements of the Better Care fund. The Council's share for 2024-25 is £11.7m, an expected increase of £4.7m

3.4 The increased social care grants in the provisional settlement have been included in the revised draft budget. The additional social care grants and increase in the adult social care council tax precept must be passported into social care budgets (with an allowable share of the social care grant for children's). This effectively sets a minimum increase in net spending on social care services between 2023-24 and 2024-25 and therefore caps the amount that can be delivered from efficiency, service reductions and transformation programmes in social care services to offset increasing costs.

3.5 The Services Grant has been unexpectedly reduced by approx. 84%. This reduces the national amount by £406.4m from £483.3m to £76.9m. This grant was introduced in the 2022-23 settlement as an un-ringfenced grant in recognition of additional spending pressures across the whole range of local services in advance of the significantly delayed Fair Funding reforms for local government that were intended to address the current outdated local government finance system. The grant was initially £822m in 2022-23. This was reduced to £483.3m in 2023-24 largely to reflect the cancellation of the employer's national insurance increase to fund social care reforms. The unexpected reduction in 2024-25 has been recycled elsewhere within the settlement including the increases in social care grant, revenue support grant, and minimum 3% funding guarantee. At this stage this still leaves a balance of £140m available, but it is not clear what this balance is for. The grant is allocated on the same basis as the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). The Council's provisional allocation for 2024-25 is £1.2m, which represents a 84% reduction of £6.4m on 2023-24, not including any share of the unallocated £140m. The reduced grant is reflected in the revised draft budget and due to the lateness of the announcement, has increased the amount required to be found from one-off measures in 2024-25 which will need to be replaced by additional savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

3.6 One final year of the New Homes Bonus (NHB) grant will be paid to authorities based upon the previous year's taxbase growth. As in recent year's this will no longer generate legacy payments in future years. 80% of NHB is paid to lower tier councils and 20% to upper tier. The Council's allocation for 2024-25 is £2.1m. This is assumed to be a one-off for 2024-25 and is included as part of the one-off solutions to balancing 2024-25 which will need to be replaced by additional recurring savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27.

3.7 The Non-Domestic Rating Act has received Royal Assent and will be implemented from April 2024. The Act confirms that the annual indexation of business rates (BR) will be based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than Retail Price Index (RPI) and the increase in the small business and standard multipliers are decoupled. This makes the arrangement for the retained business rate baseline in the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) more complex. The SFA comprises revenue support grant (RSG) and business rates baseline. RSG will continue to be uplifted each year in line with CPI uplift to the business rate multiplier (6.6% for 2024-25). The business rate baseline will be uplifted by separate amounts for small business rate multiplier uplift and the uplift to the standard multiplier. This results in a separate and unique weighted % uplift for each council based on the mix of standard rated and small businesses in the local area.

3.8 For 2024-25 the uplift in standard BR multiplier is the same September CPI as RSG, raising the multiplier from 51.2p to 54.6p. The small business rate multiplier has been frozen at 49.9p. This results in a weighted uplift of approx. 4.6% for the Council. The highest weighted uplift is Westminster (6.09%) and the lowest Cornwall (4.01%). Councils are to be fully compensated for the freezing of the business rate multiplier through Business Rate Compensation Grant. This should mean in theory every Council has the same uplift when SFA and the compensation grant are taken into account. At this stage there is not sufficient detail within the BR compensation grant included in the core spending power to confirm this and the allocation in the spending power is assumed to be indicative at this stage (as it has been in previous years).

3.9 The SFA for the Council has increased by £9.8m (4.7%) to £215.8m, a common 6.6% uplift would have resulted in an SFA of £219.6m, an estimated reduction of £3.9m due to freezing the small business rate multiplier. The BR compensation grant for 2023-24 was £44.2m for previous freezes in BR multipliers and additional discounts. We would normally expect these previous freezes and discounts to increase by annual uplift i.e. £2.9m based on 6.6%. The BR compensation grant in the provisional settlement has increased by £5.6m i.e. an estimated £2.7m in additional grant for the small business freeze for 2024-25, a shortfall of £1.2m when compared the assumed standard uplift through in SFA. In the draft budget we have assumed this shortfall will eventually come through in the BR compensation grant along with other changes when the grant is updated for the full impact of previous freezes and discounts. This is line with the principle that the combination of SFA and compensation for small business rate freeze result in the same % uplift for all councils. Should the final calculation not result in a combined 6.6% for every council then the draft budget will need to be updated either for County Council or Cabinet (as has been the case in recent years where the final business rate retention impact has not been available in time for the budget County Council publication date).

3.10 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement includes a number of other announcements including an extension to March 2030 on the flexibility for revenue costs to be funded from capital receipts (under the direction that allows revenue costs of projects that will reduce costs, increase revenue or support a more efficient provision of services to be funded from capital receipts). The settlement also includes a consultation that would introduce “financial levers” to disincentivise councils from operating part-time working week arrangements for full time pay. The Exceptional Financial Support framework has also been announced and provides support where a council has specific and evidenced concerns about its ability to set or maintain a balanced budget.

3.11 The overall increase in the core spending power (and therefore assumed funding for the 2024-25 draft budget) is significantly less than the forecast spending demands. This leaves a substantial gap which needs to be closed from savings, income and one-off measures such as reserves. There is no indicative settlement for 2025-26 or later years. At this stage the MTFP assumes existing grants will roll forward along with inflationary uplifts to the SFA and further permitted council tax increases.

3.12 A summary of the change in core spending power between the restated 2023-24 position and the provisional 2024-25 position is set out in table 1 below:

Table 1 – Core Spending Power

	KCC			England		
	2024-25 £'m	2023-24 £'m	Change £'m	2024-25 £'m	2023-24 £'m	Change £'m
Council Tax	931.0	876.8	54.3	36,062.2	33,984.3	2,077.9
Settlement Funding Assessment	215.8	206.0	9.8	16,562.7	15,671.1	891.5
Business Rate Compensation	38.8	33.2	5.6	2,581.3	2,204.6	376.7
Social Care Grant	104.2	88.8	15.4	4,544.0	3,852.0	692.0
MSIF/Hospital Discharge	38.7	21.4	17.2	1,550.0	862.0	688.0
iBCF	50.0	50.0	0.0	2,139.8	2,139.8	0.0
Services Grant	1.2	7.6	-6.4	76.9	483.3	-406.4
New Homes Bonus	2.1	2.3	-0.2	291.4	291.3	0.1
Rural Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	95.0	95.0	0.0
Funding Guarantee	0.0	0.0	0.0	196.5	133.3	63.2
Rolled in Grants	0.0	9.4	-9.4	0.0	480.0	-480.0
Totals	1,381.8	1,295.5	86.3	64,099.8	60,196.7	3,903.0
			6.7%			6.5%

4.1 Council Tax income is a key source of funding for council services. The amount generated through Council Tax is based on a precept on collection authorities derived from the estimated band D equivalent Council Tax Base (the number of weighted properties in each band adjusted for exemptions, discounts and assumed collection rates) and the County Council share of the band D household charge.

4.2 A significant proportion of the funding towards the revenue budget is derived from the County Council’s share of council tax. The County Council share of council tax typically amounts to around 70% of a household council tax bill. The County Council charge is the same for all households in the county (as is the share for Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire and Rescue authority), the amount for district/borough and town/parish councils will vary depending on the local area and the individual decisions of these councils.

4.3 The Council currently can, subject to legislative constraints, increase its Council Tax rate through two mechanisms, the Adult Social Care (ASC) precept and general tax rate increases. Each 1% increase in the Council Tax rate generates circa £8.9m per annum in 2024-25, which equates to an extra 29.5 pence per week for a band D property.

4.4 The council tax referendum principles for 2024-25 allow for up to but not exceeding 3% general tax rate increases without a referendum plus an additional Adult Social Care levy of up to 2%. These increases are based on the total county council share of the household charge for 2023-24 (£1,534.23 for band D household). The administration’s draft budget 2024-25 includes a proposed 2.998% increase for the general precept (up to but not exceeding the referendum level) and a further 1.994% increase for the adult social care levy (ASCL). The proposed council tax increases and overall charge by individual bands are shown in tables 2 and 3.

Table 2 – Proposed Council Tax Increases by Band

Band	Proportion of Band D Tax Rate	2023-24 (incl. ASCL) £p	2024-25 (incl. increase in ASCL) £p	Increase £p
A	6/9	1,022.82	1,073.88	51.06
B	7/9	1,193.29	1,252.86	59.57
C	8/9	1,363.76	1,431.84	68.08
D	9/9	1,534.23	1,610.82	76.59
E	11/9	1,875.17	1,968.78	93.61
F	13/9	2,216.11	2,326.74	110.63
G	15/9	2,557.05	2,684.70	127.65
H	18/9	3,068.46	3,221.64	153.18

Table 3 – Proposed Council Tax Charges by Band

Band	Proportion of Band D Tax Rate	2023-24 (incl. ASCL) £p	2024-25 (excl. increase in ASCL) £p	2024-25 (incl. increase in ASCL) £p
A	6/9	1,022.82	1,053.48	1,073.88
B	7/9	1,193.29	1,229.06	1,252.86
C	8/9	1,363.76	1,404.64	1,431.84
D	9/9	1,534.23	1,580.22	1,610.82
E	11/9	1,875.17	1,931.38	1,968.78
F	13/9	2,216.11	2,282.54	2,326.74
G	15/9	2,557.05	2,633.70	2,684.70
H	18/9	3,068.46	3,160.44	3,221.64

4.5 The County Council's 2023-24 council tax charge (including Fire and Rescue Authority to ensure valid like for like comparison) is currently mid-range at 10th highest of the 21 counties in England and 4th of the 7 south east counties. We will not know the Council's relative position on Council Tax for 2024-25 until all county councils have agreed their precept and Council Tax charge for 2024-25.

4.6 The initial draft budget assumed a tax base increase of 1.7%, based on previous patterns of housing growth and changes in discounts, exemptions and collection rates including assumption for the removal of remaining empty property discounts. The provisional estimated tax base from the 12 district and borough councils (collection authorities) is 580,886.03 band D equivalent properties compared to the final estimated tax base for 2023-24 of 571,478.39 band D equivalents, an increase of 1.65%. The change in the tax base includes increases in the number of dwellings, changes in discounts, exemptions and assumed collection rates. Most districts have removed the remaining discounts on empty dwellings contributing to the increase in tax base.

4.7 The final council tax precept and council tax funding levels will have to be based on tax base estimates notified by the 12 district and borough councils. We have received provisional estimates of tax base increases from all 12 and these are shown in table 3 below. The total estimated tax base increase of 1.65% is very close to our initial estimate of 1.7%. We are due to receive final tax base estimate figures from the 12 district and borough councils on 15th January and we have therefore left the tax base increase at 1.7% for this revised draft, and we will reflect any changes in the final draft budget papers for County Council on 19th February.

Table 4 – Provisional estimates of tax base increases from the 12 collection authorities

Collection Authority	Final 2023-24 taxbase £p	Estimated 2024-25 taxbase £p	Change £p	Change %
Ashford	48,906.00	49,832.00	926.00	1.89%
Canterbury	52,372.76	53,370.27	997.51	1.90%
Dartford	40,288.37	41,029.46	741.09	1.84%
Dover	39,974.37	40,874.50	900.13	2.25%
Folkestone & Hythe	39,977.09	40,466.09	489.00	1.22%
Gravesham	35,266.50	35,994.62	728.12	2.06%
Maidstone	67,161.69	68,263.60	1,101.91	1.64%
Sevenoaks	51,990.30	52,394.75	404.45	0.78%
Swale	49,673.46	50,367.85	694.39	1.40%
Thanet	45,759.46	46,454.06	694.60	1.52%
Tonbridge & Malling	52,706.29	53,477.93	771.64	1.46%
Tunbridge Wells	47,402.10	48,360.90	958.80	2.02%
Total	571,478.39	580,886.03	9,407.64	1.65%

4.8 The district and borough councils also have to notify us of their estimated collection fund balance for over/under collection by 24th January 2024. This must also be reflected in the final draft budget as over/under collection has to be taken into account as part of the final decision on the council tax charge for 2024-25. The revised draft budget includes an assumed £7m collection fund balance. Any variation in the assumed balance will be reflected through the local taxation equalisation reserve, which avoids any impact on the revenue budget.

5.1 The administration's initial draft revenue budget report published on 1st November was subject to the budget scrutiny process during November. This revised draft budget sets out the proposals to close the budget gap in 2024-25 and over the MTFP and the proposals to minimise the level of borrowing on the capital programme and is therefore subject to further scrutiny during January. The administration's final draft budget will take account of any feedback from the scrutiny process and will be recommended by Cabinet to County Council. The final draft budget will be published by 9th February 2024 for consideration and approval by County Council at its meeting on 19th February 2024. As required by the Council's Constitution and Financial Regulations, the final draft budget for County Council approval will be proposed by the Leader and published in a format recommended by the Corporate Director, Finance and agreed by the Leader.

5.2 The presentation of the administration's revised draft revenue budget 2024-25 and 2024-27 MTFP focuses on the key policy and strategic implications of the proposals. The revenue proposals are summarised in appendices D to G of this report. These appendices show the spending, income and savings changes from the current year's approved budget (2023-24) and the financing requirements. Appendix D provides a high-level summary of the proposed three-year plan for the whole council, showing separately the spending growth, savings & income, changes in reserves for core Council funded activity (funding from the local government settlement and local taxation) from changes in externally funded activities (largely specific grant funded).

5.3 As set out in section 3 above, the provisional local government settlement included an unexpected net reduction in grants of £5.4m for 2024-25 through the changes in Social Care Grant and Services Grant increasing the £48.8m budget gap published on the 1st November to £54.2m. The 2024-25 gap has been closed by £13.9m from increased funding through the increased indexation of SFA and business rate compensation grant and revised spending forecasts and savings plans, and further recurring savings of £16.3m from removing the risk contingency included in the initial draft and further progress on the SKF objective 2 for further savings to set a sustainable 2024-25 budget and MTFP. The remaining £23.9m has been balanced through one-off measures. These one-off measures will be replaced in 2025-26 and 2026-27 through further policy savings under SKF objective 3 (scope of Council's ambitions) and objective 4 (operating model of the Council). The revised draft budget includes as a minimum requirement the principle of replacing one-off measures with sustainable recurring savings and cost reductions, although the detail of the proposals will need to be developed and agreed over the coming months to ensure they are implemented to impact the 2025-26 budget.

5.4 Table 5 summarises the change to achieve a balanced budget for 2024-25 and MTFP.

Table 5 – Summary of Changes from Initial Draft Budget 1st November 2023

	2024-25	2025-26 & 2026-27
	£'m	£'m
Initial draft budget gap as at 1 st November 2023	48.8	13.9
Funding increase from higher inflation forecast	-3.5	-11.2
Revised spending and income forecasts	-9.2	+14.8
Further policy savings including staffing considerations	-1.2	-5.9
Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement	+5.4	
One-off solutions 2024-25	-23.9	+23.9
Remove Risk Contingency	-14.0	-1.0
Recurring savings from Securing Kent's Future	-2.3	-10.6
Policy savings to replace one-off solutions used in 2024-25		-23.9
Revised draft budget gap	0.0	0.0

5.5 Appendix E provides a directorate high level summary of the proposed plan for 2024-25, separately showing spending growth, savings & income, changes in reserves and funding for core council funded activity (funding from the local government settlement and local taxation) from changes in externally funded activities (largely specific grant funded). Throughout this report the focus is on core funded spending, savings, income and reserves as changes on externally funded spend are financially neutral.

5.6 Appendix F illustrates examples of the more detailed information available through dashboards that have been created to support the scrutiny process and for future in-year monitoring and reporting. Appendix G provides a full list of individual spending, savings & income, and reserves items including full details of the changes from the initial draft published on 1st November 2023. This appendix shows the spending forecasts, savings and income proposals, and changes in reserves for all the three years 2024-27. New savings and income for later years are included to highlight the areas that will need to deliver the required level of recurring savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27 although inevitably these savings proposals will need to be developed in more detail and subject to consultation and scrutiny in the coming months as the full detail for the subsequent years is not essential for the approval of 2024-25 budget and the MTFP at this stage. The changes between the initial draft and revised draft budget for 2024-25 are summarised in table 6.

Table 6 – Main Changes between Initial and Revised Draft Budget 2024-25

	Core Funded £'m	Externally Funded £'m	Total £'m
Planned Spending Changes	-17.0	+1.0	-16.0
Remove risk contingency (base budget) *	-14.0		-14.0
Review of provision for debt charges (base budget)	-7.0		-7.0
Energy price revisions (base budget)	-2.3		-2.3
Highway investment	-2.2		-2.2
Adult Social Care (demand & cost drivers)	+3.4		+3.4
Home to School Transport (demand & cost drivers)	+1.0		+1.0
Higher inflation forecasts (prices)	+3.3		+3.3
Other changes	+0.8	+1.0	+1.8
Savings & Income	-18.3		-18.3
One-off use of Capital Receipts	-8.0		-8.0
Policy	-4.0		-4.0
Company Dividends (income)	-3.0		-3.0
Other Income	-2.3		-2.3
Transformation & Efficiency	-0.9		-0.9
Change in Reserves	-13.4	-1.0	-14.4
Net Change in Funding	-0.2		-0.2
Total (Gap Resolved)	-48.8		-48.8

* The £14m risk contingency represents 1% of the net revenue budget. The removal of the risk contingency weakens the Council's resilience and ability to manage financial risk and it is therefore important that the recurring savings identified for 2025-26 and 2026-27 provide the ability to restore as much of the risk contingency as possible.

5.7 The final draft budget presented to County Council will include the key service analysis for 2024-25 which sets out the spending in the main service areas by directorate (at director level) as used for budget monitoring reports. The original planned spending on key services is set out in appendix E of the final approved Budget Book for 2023-24 (published in March) and is available on KCC website at [2023-24 Budget Book](#). It is not feasible or appropriate to produce a key service presentation in the revised draft budget for scrutiny as the scrutiny process needs to focus on the proposed changes to the approved budgets for 2023-24 before more detailed delivery plans are completed and these plans will inform the key service budgets for 2024-25.

5.8 The final draft budget presented to County Council on 19th February will include the impact of the Personnel Committee recommendations on Kent Scheme pay for 2024-25. The County Council agreed the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-2025 on 4th November 2021. This included agreement to an annual indexation formula. The annual increase under this formula is the average of two figures. The first is the average of the increases arising in sectors covered by 8 national public sector pay review bodies. The second is the percentage awarded to staff awarded 'Successful' in the Total Contribution Pay scheme based on the proposals from Personnel Committee for 2024-25. The revised draft budget includes provisional figures for both Kent Scheme pay and member allowances.

5.9 Additional proposed spending growth includes the impact of decisions and activities already being delivered in the current year not included in the current base budget and known future contractual obligations. It also includes forecasts for future cost or activity changes for the forthcoming year, or changes in Council policy. These are set out in fuller detail in dashboards including an explanation of the reasons for the change, key impacts and risks, dependencies and sensitivities. The dashboards have been introduced this year so will inevitably need further development.

5.10 The savings and income options in the dashboards follow a similar pattern with proposed savings amounts derived from the full year effect of 2023-24 plans already agreed; savings and income for 2024-25 in the original 2023-26 MTFP (albeit updated); savings/income from the application of existing policies; savings/income that do not require any changes in policy; and those that require policy changes presented as policy savings, efficiency/transformation savings, income or financing savings. Given the scale of the savings, detailed delivery plans will need to be prepared and monitoring arrangements will be put in place in addition to the arrangements already embedded through the monthly monitoring with budget managers and regular budget monitoring reports to Cabinet.

5.11 The high-level equation for changes in planned revenue spending for 2024-25 (growth and savings), income and net budget, together with the balancing changes in funding is shown in table 5 below. This summarises how the requirement to set a balanced budget will be met once the outstanding actions for 2024-25 outlined in Securing Kent's Future have been finalised and confirmed. To improve transparency the spending, savings and reserves from core Council funds are shown separately from externally funded changes (consistent with the revised presentation of appendices D and E).

5.12 The Council continues to operate its policy of full cost recovery through fees and charges that can be determined locally other than where Cabinet/County Council has agreed to provide services at a subsidy or concession e.g. Kent Travel Saver. Under this policy fees and charges are subject to an annual uplift with periodic review to ensure that uplifts ensure full cost recovery continues to apply. The uplifts and full cost reviews are reflected in the 2024-25 budget proposals and form part of the budget recovery plan within Securing Kent's Future.

Table 7 – Net Change in Spending and Funding

Change in Net Spending	Core Funded £'m	External Funded £'m	Change in Net Funding	Core Funded £'m
Estimated additional spending	184.5	-23.1	Increase in Social Care grants	32.6
Proposed savings from spending reductions and future cost avoidance	-72.2*		Net Increase in other government grants	7.5
Proposed changes in income	-15.4*	-0.3	Change in council tax base	14.9
Assumed changes in specific government grants		20.9	Assumed increase in council tax charge	44.5
Proposed net change in reserves	3.1	2.5	Change in retained business rates	2.6
			Change in net collection fund balances/S31 compensation	-2.1
Total Change in Net Spending	100.0	0.0	Total Change in Net Funding	100.0

*Net figures from original 2023-26 plan updated and new proposals

5.13 In addition to the spending pressures in core Council services, pressures arising from Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND) impact upon both the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and the General Fund revenue budget. Pressures on DSG are being addressed primarily through the Safety Valve mechanism, whereby the Department for Education provides a substantial contribution (up to £140m), in return for improvements to the SEND system and a contribution (£82.3m) from the Council. SEND pressures on the General Fund are reflected primarily through the number of requests to assess, produce and then annually review Education & Health Care Plans (EHCP) and the associated increased SEND home to school transport costs.

5.14 There is already substantial work being undertaken to manage down this financial pressure and additional work will focus on identifying and reviewing changes to existing policy and practice so that we are meeting statutory minimum requirements, but ceasing discretionary services where they are not cost effective and only issuing EHCPs where they are necessary, and needs cannot be reasonably met by other means.

5.15 Consultation and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) will need to be undertaken on individual new savings and income proposals where required. The final planned amounts can only be confirmed following consideration of consultation responses and EQIAs. Any variances between the approved budget and final planned amounts will be included in the budget monitoring reports to Cabinet, together with progress on delivery and any additional measures that may be required.

5.16 The administration's draft ten-year capital programme is set out in appendices A and B of this report. Appendix A provides a high level summary of the proposed capital programme and financing requirements. The spending plans in appendix B set out proposed spending on individual projects and rolling programmes by directorate. The financing is a combination of government departmental capital grants, forecast developer contributions, external funding, capital receipts and borrowing. Inflationary and other cost pressures have significantly impacted the capital programme on both rolling programmes and individual schemes. In recognition of the financial challenge facing the Council the additional unfunded cost estimates have been absorbed within the existing programme. No new schemes with prudential borrowing have been added to the programme to avoid increasing the revenue burden of borrowing to fund capital expenditure. As a result, planned maintenance will only be carried out on the highest priority sites (those dealing with safeguarding issues and highways/waste operations) and the modernisation of assets work will need to be prioritised which is likely to result in the closure of non-priority sites. There will be consequential impact on risks and maintenance backlogs, but these will continue to be managed to mitigate risks as far as possible. This is a necessary short-term measure while the Council reviews and reduces its estate over the medium term to an affordable level which in turn should reduce future maintenance and modernisation requirements. The additional funding provided by Department for Transport for highway maintenance programmes has been included in spending plans for 2024-25. Some additional spending for 2024-25 and 2025-26 has been funded from capital receipts to maintain the policy of keeping council buildings safe, warm and dry.

5.17 Appendix C of this report provides an indication of new potential capital projects which could come forward within the next 10 years. These are identified as future proposals but have not been formally included in the administration's draft capital programme and will only be added in later years subject to business cases being completed and reviewed and affordable funding solutions being identified. Indicative costings have been provided as a guide, however, no funding or budget is being set aside for these projects at this time.

5.18 The capital strategy recognises that the capital programme must align with the Council's strategic priorities and support the priorities and principles in other key strategies such as Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework, Local Transport Plan, Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, Asset Management Strategy etc. It is equally important that these key strategies are regularly reviewed and updated to take into account legislative requirements and the financial operating environment including both capital and revenue funding settlements. The review and updating of these strategies also needs to reflect the objectives set out in Securing Kent's Future and contribute to the delivery of the budget recovery plan.

Proposed Revised Draft 2024-25 Revenue Budget – key numbers

£1,415.7m	Assumed net revenue budget for 2024-25. This represents a £100.0m increase on the final approved budget for 2023-24 of £1,315.6m.
£184.5m	Additional estimated core funded spending growth – see paragraph 7.1 for more detail.
-£87.6m	Assumed savings, income and future cost increase avoidance. Of this £41.9m relates to proposed savings, £15.4m additional income generation (mainly fees and charges), and £30.3m reductions in the amount assumed for future demand and cost increases in adult social care and home to school transport – see paragraph 6.2 for more detail.
£3.1m	Estimated net impact on the budget of changes in the use of reserves including new contributions and removing previous years drawdown and contributions – see section 8 for more detail.
£936.2m	Estimated to be raised from Council Tax precept. An increase of £59.4m on 2023-24. £14.9m is due to a 1.7% estimated increase in the tax base due to additional dwellings, changes in discounts and exemptions and assumed collection rates. £44.5m is from the estimated increase in the household charge up to but not exceeding 5% (including £17.8m from the adult social care levy).
£40.6m	Net increases as announced in the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. This comprises of the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £15.4m expected increase in Social Care Grant announced in the 2023-24 settlement from repurposed funding from social care charging reforms • £12.5m expected increase in Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund to support capacity and discharge (including £7.3m announced in 2023-24 settlement and £5.2m further announcement in summer 2023) • £4.7m expected increase in the Adult Social Care Discharge Fund • -£6.4m unexpected reduction in the Services Grant • £14.1m indexed linked uplifts in business rate top-up, business rate compensation (including estimated amount not yet announced) and Revenue Support Grant • -£0.2m continuation of New Homes Bonus Grant but at a lower value than 2023-24 • £0.5m expected net increase in local share of retained business rates and removal of S31 compensation for local taxation losses during Covid

Revenue spending: a reminder of what it is

Revenue spending is spent on the provision of day to day services, either directly through KCC staff and operational buildings, or commissioned from third parties. Revenue spending is identified as gross spend and net spend after taking account of service income and specific government grants. The net revenue budget requirement is funded by a combination of council tax, locally retained business rates and un-ring-fenced grants from the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) included in the local government finance settlement. Grants from other government departments are ring-fenced to specific activities and are shown as income to offset the related spending.

6.1 The additional estimated core funded spending growth (i.e. excluding changes arising from external funding changes) of £184.5m for 2024-25 is summarised in appendices D and E and set out in more detail in appendix G together with more detail in the dashboard. It has been subdivided into the following categories:

Net base budget changes £22.1m	Changes to reflect full year effect of variations in the current year's monitoring forecast compared to approved budget. These adjustments are necessary to ensure the draft budget is based on a robust and sustainable basis.
Demand and future cost increase drivers £85.3m	Forecast estimates for future non-inflationary cost and demand increases such as additional care hours, increased journey lengths, etc. across a range of services including adult social care, integrated children's services, home to school transport and waste tonnage.
Price uplifts £49.6m	Contractual and negotiated price increases on contracted services, including full year effect of planned mid-year uplifts in current year and forecast future price uplifts.
Pay £14.3m	Additional net cost of estimated pay award and progression after savings from appointing new staff lower in pay ranges.
Service Strategies & Improvements £11.9m	Other estimated spending increases to deliver strategic priorities and/or service improvements and outcomes including financing the capital programme.
Government & Legislative £1.3m	Additional spending to meet compliance with legislative and regulatory changes.

6.2 The proposed savings, income and future cost increase avoidance of £87.6m for 2024-25 are summarised in appendices D and E and set out in more detail in appendix G together with more detail in the dashboards. They have been subdivided into the following categories:

Policy Savings £10.6m	Savings arising from proposed changes in Council policies including full year effect of 2023-24 savings and new proposals for 2024-25 (full year effect in later years shown in summary and will be shown in more detail in the final draft). Savings in this category are changes to charging policies and changes in the service offer.
Transformation & Efficiency Savings £50.3m	Savings aimed at achieving improved or the same outcomes at less cost including full year effect of 2023-24 savings and new proposals for 2024-25 (full year effect in later years shown in summary and will be shown in more detail in the final draft) shown in summary and will be shown in more detail in the final draft). Savings in this category include future cost increase avoidance as well as reductions to existing recurring spend. Transformation and efficiency savings include contracted spending as well as in-house spending on staffing and premises.
Financing Savings £11.3m	Review of amounts set aside for debt repayment (MRP) based on asset life and increased investment income returns.
Income Generation £15.4m	Increases in fees and charges for council services from applying existing policies on fee uplifts (including contributions from other bodies) and new income generation proposals. Existing policies include increases in client contributions in line with estimated 2024-25 benefits and other personal income increases and increases in contributions to Kent Travel Saver and 16+ pass linked to fare increases.

Proposed Draft 2024-34 Capital Programme – key numbers

£1,646m	Total planned capital spending over the ten years 2024-25 to 2033-34
£992m	Confirmed or indicative government grants to fund capital expenditure
£376m	Total proposed borrowing to fund the programme
£278m	Funding from other sources (capital receipts, developer contributions, external funding and revenue)

7.1 The ten-year Capital Programme 2023-34 was approved by County Council in February 2023. This took into account the need to set a realistic and deliverable programme and avoid the significant over-programming and subsequent underspending against capital that has been a feature for several years. The ten-year horizon allows for a longer-term plan for capital investment, taking into consideration an updated assessment of the capital financing requirements and the consequent impact on the revenue budget and borrowing strategy.

7.2 The capital programme is under pressure from inflation in the same way as revenue spending, if anything these consequences are more significant due to the longer-term nature of capital plans. Inflationary pressures and overspends on existing schemes have been absorbed within the existing programme. The capital programme is also under significant pressure due to the backlog of maintenance on highways and buildings. These backlogs cannot be addressed within the current financial constraints and the need to avoid additional borrowing that would add pressure on the revenue budget through increased financing costs. This approach does not come without increased risks.

7.3 The increased risks which include danger to life and limb if repair works are not completed, an increase in maintenance backlogs which in turn could lead to additional revenue costs for reactive works, increased future costs of works due to inflation, and costs relating to climate change resilience/adaptation will be mitigated as far as possible. For example prioritising emergency works that would avoid risk of death or serious harm, prioritising maintenance on essential assets (although this means non-essential assets would not be maintained leading to possible closures on safety grounds) and doing the minimum to meet statutory requirements at lowest cost. This is only a short term necessity while the Council reviews and reduces its estate over the medium term which in turn will reduce future maintenance and modernisation requirements. The programme will continue to be regularly reviewed and re-prioritised within the funding available.

7.4 Appendix A of this report sets out a summary of the administration's proposed 2024-34 programme and associated financing requirements for each year. The summary provides a high-level overview for the whole council. The individual directorate pages in appendix B provide more detail of rolling programmes and individual projects.

Capital spending: a reminder of what it is

Capital spending is expenditure on the purchase or enhancement of physical assets where the benefit will last longer than the year in which it is incurred e.g. school buildings, roads, economic development schemes, IT systems, etc. It includes the cost of purchasing land, construction costs, professional fees, plant and equipment and grants for capital expenditure to third parties. Capital spending plans are determined according to the Council's statutory responsibilities and local priorities as set out in the MTFP, with the aim of delivering the vision set out in the Strategic Plan.

Capital spending is funded via a variety of sources including government grants, capital receipts, external contributions and borrowing. Borrowing has to be affordable as the cost of interest and setting aside sufficient provision to cover the loan repayments are borne by the revenue budget each year based on the life of the asset.

8.1 The proposed treasury management strategy for next year is largely unchanged from the current strategy for 2023-24. This is not necessarily unexpected: the Council's strategy is designed to provide ongoing effective risk control and not to be overfitted to a particular stage of the economic cycle. That being said, the current economic outlook is an important building block of the Council's treasury strategy (as well as the overall budget strategy) and, in particular, officers have taken account of the medium term interest rate forecasts from Link Group, the Council's appointed treasury advisors. Link estimate that Bank Rate (currently at 5.25%) has likely peaked and expect both short term and long term rates to decline over the medium term.

8.2 The most pertinent internal factor, and the key driver of the treasury strategy, is the Council's capital expenditure and financing plans, which determines the Council's borrowing requirement. As set out in paragraph 22 of the strategy, the capital financing requirement, is forecast to rise marginally over 2024-25 before declining gradually in the following two years. Most of this borrowing requirement has already been met through external borrowing, and debt balances themselves are expected to decline over the medium term as existing loans mature and are not replaced. Notwithstanding this the Council is expected to have ample capacity to continue supporting internal borrowing over the medium term to meet the residual borrowing requirement not fulfilled by external debt. This is demonstrated most clearly in the liability benchmark graphic, at paragraph 32. Therefore, given that interest rates are forecast to decline and that the Council does not necessarily require new external debt at this stage, officers are not recommending that new external borrowing is undertaken in 2024/25. The proposed strategy retains the flexibility to depart from this central expectation should circumstances change during the next financial year.

8.3

The investment strategy has been reviewed and is judged to remain fit for purpose. The Council will keep the current split between internally managed, highly liquid and high-quality cash instruments (approximately two thirds of overall cash under management) and the strategic pooled funds portfolio (circa one third). One technical change proposed in the new strategy is to reduce the minimum average credit quality for the portfolio to AA- (one notch down from the current limit of AA). This has not been proposed in order to increase credit risk, but simply for consistency with the UK sovereign rating (which itself is AA-). Officers do not expect the overall credit quality of the actual investment portfolio to be reduced. All other limits and indicators have been reviewed to ensure their continued appropriateness.

9.1 Reserves are an important part of the Council's financial strategy and are held to create long-term financial stability. They enable the Council to manage change without undue impact on the Council Tax and are a key element of its financial standing and resilience.

9.2 The Council's key sources of funding face an uncertain future and the Council therefore holds earmarked reserves and a working balance to mitigate future financial risks.

9.3 There are two main types of reserves:

- Earmarked Reserves – held for identified purposes and are used to maintain a resource in order to provide for expenditure in a future year(s).
- General Reserves – these are held for 'unforeseen' events.

9.4 The Council maintains reserves both for its General Fund activities and it accounts for the reserves of its maintained schools. Schools are funded by a 100% government grant, Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Local authorities cannot fund DSG activities from the general fund without express approval from the Secretary of State. Under the Safety Valve agreement with the DfE KCC is required to make a contribution totalling £82.3m between 2022-23 to 2027-28. The contributions for 2022-23 and 2023-24 are reflected through transfers from the Council's reserves into the DSG reserve. The contributions into the DSG reserve from 2024-25 onwards are reflected in the changes to reserves in the 2024-25 revised draft revenue budget and 2024-27 MTFP. The Safety Valve agreement does not fully eliminate the risk of DSG overspends until the plan has been fully delivered and high needs spending is contained within the block of funding available within DSG.

9.5 There remains a significant risk to reserves if the forecast overspend for 2023-24 is not balanced through the further management action that is being put in place for the remainder of the current financial year. The level of reserves held is a matter of judgment which takes into account the reasons why reserves are maintained and the Council's potential financial exposure to risks. A Reserves Policy is included as Appendix H to this report. An analysis of budget risks and adequacy of reserves is included as Appendix I, and a budget risk register at Appendix J.

9.6 The Council holds reserves in order to mitigate future risks, such as increased demand and costs; to help absorb the costs of future liabilities; and to enable the Council to initially resource policy developments and initiatives without a disruptive impact on Council Tax. Capital reserves play a similar role in funding the Council's capital investment strategy.

9.7 The Council also relies on interest earned through holding cash and investment balances to support its general spending plans.

9.8 Reserves are one-off monies and, therefore, the Council generally aims to avoid using reserves to meet on-going financial commitments other than as part of a sustainable budget plan. The Council has to balance the opportunity cost of holding reserves in terms of Council Tax against the importance of interest earning and long-term future planning.

9.9 Reserves are therefore held for the following purposes:

- Providing a working balance
- Smoothing the impact of uneven expenditure profiles between years e.g. collection fund surpluses or deficits, local elections, structural building maintenance and carrying forward expenditure between years.
- Holding funds for future spending plans e.g. capital expenditure plans, and for the renewal of operational assets e.g. information technology renewal.
- Meeting future costs and liabilities where an accounting 'provision' cannot be justified.
- Meeting future costs and liabilities so as to cushion the effect on services e.g. the Insurance Reserve for self-funded liabilities arising from insurance claims.
- To provide resilience against future risks.
- To create policy capacity in the context of forecast declining future external resources.

9.10 All earmarked reserves are held for a specific purpose. A summary of the movement on each category of reserves is published annually, to accompany the annual Statement of Accounts.

9.11 The administration's revised draft budget 2024-25 includes an assumed net £3.1m increase in reserves in 2024-25 and a net reduction of £3.9m over the medium term 2024-25 to 2026-27 on the core funded budget. The externally funded element includes a net contribution of £2.5m in 2024-27 and net contribution of £3.8m over the medium term. The movement in reserves includes new contributions and removing previous years drawdown and contributions. These changes include the following main changes:

Increased/new contributions (core budget) £36.7m

- £16.2m general reserves including £11.1m repayment of 50% of the amount drawn down to balance the 2022-23 budget and £5.1m for the additional annual contribution to reflect the increase in net revenue budget to maintain general reserves at 5%. The phased repayment of 2022-23 drawdown means general reserves are not planned to be returned to the agreed 5% of the net revenue budget until 2025-26
- £15.1m DSG reserve for the planned 2024-25 Council contribution to the safety valve programme
- £4.3m repayment to smoothing reserves for planned drawdowns to support the 2023-24 budget
- £1.0m annual contribution to establish new Emergency Capital Events Reserve for emergency capital works and revenue costs related to capital spend such as temporary accommodation, and condition surveys which don't result in capital works

Drawdowns and Removal of Prior Year Drawdown and Contributions -£33.6m

- -£12.9m drawdown from reserves/reduced contributions to reserves to balance the budget as part of the package of £23.9m one-off solutions for 2024-25. These one-off solutions will need to be replaced through further savings in 2025-26 and 2026-27
- -£1.3m for funding of specific projects within the 2024-25 revenue budget proposals
- -£5.8m removal of 2023-24 contribution to general reserve for increase in net budget
- -£12m removal of the contribution to the risk reserve (now treated as contingent spend rather than reserve)
- -£5.6m removal of 2023-24 contribution to Local Taxation Equalisation reserve
- -£1.2m removal of the annual contribution for the phased repayment of long term reserves borrowed to fund grant reductions in 2011-12 as these are now fully repaid
- +£4.3m to replace the drawdown from reserves to support the 2023-24 budget
- +£1.0m to replace the drawdown from reserves for specific projects in the 2023-24 budget

Net changes in externally funded reserves £2.5m

- -£1.3m from Public Health reserves including the planned drawdown of £0.3m for one-off investments in the future of Public Health and £1.0m one-off support to safe-guard services under the Live Well Kent Mental Health contract
- +£3.8m removal of drawdowns for Public Health in the 2023-24 budget

Appendices and background documents

List of Appendices

Draft Capital Investment Strategy 2024-25 to 2033-34	A
Draft Capital Investment Strategy by Directorate	B
Potential New Capital Projects	C
High Level 2024-27 Revenue Plan and Financing	D
High Level 2024-25 Revenue Plan by Directorate	E
Budget Dashboard (screenshots)	F
List of individual spending, savings & reserve items	G
Reserves Policy	H
Budget Risks and Adequacy of Reserves	I
Budget Risk Register	J
Core Grants in Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement	K
Economic & Fiscal Context	L
Treasury Management Strategy	M

Background documents

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

KCC's Budget webpage	1
KCC's Corporate Risk Register (item 8)	2
KCC's Risk Management Strategy, Policy and Programme (item 11)	3
KCC's approved 2023-24 Budget	4
2024-25 Budget Consultation (Let's Talk Kent) inc. the Budget Consultation report	5
Revenue and Capital 2023-24 Budget Monitoring Report for October 2023 (item 5)	6
Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy	7
Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Report	8
Initial Draft 2024-25 Budget Report (published on 1 November 2023)	9

APPENDIX A - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Capital Investment Plans:

ROW REF	Directorate		Total Cost £000s	Prior Years Spend £000s	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1 £000s	Year 2 £000s	Year 3 £000s	Year 4 £000s
1	Adult Social Care & Health	ASCH	6,157	3,308	599	250	250	250
2	Children, Young People & Education	CYPE	637,685	237,001	131,048	85,725	32,739	33,922
3	Growth, Environment & Transport	GET	1,471,674	334,767	182,036	142,561	159,160	185,206
4	Chief Executive's Department	CED	3,510	2,069	-255	1,696	0	0
5	Deputy Chief Executive's Department	DCED	127,531	23,522	31,546	25,992	3,421	6,150
6	Total Cash Limit		2,246,557	600,667	344,974	256,224	195,570	225,528

Funded By:

7	Borrowing	474,064	98,170	102,989	48,217	27,269	32,419
8	Property Enterprise Fund (PEF) 2	369	369				
9	Grants	1,326,633	334,235	168,016	129,192	125,164	165,609
10	Developer Contributions	186,924	67,286	38,520	40,654	20,946	9,586
11	Other External Funding e.g. Arts Council, District Contributions etc.	25,390	14,759	5,422	3,846	1,363	
12	Revenue Contributions to Capital	73,272	11,195	6,265	6,002	6,041	6,441
13	Capital Receipts	48,832	16,296	9,324	18,197	558	557
14	Recycled Loan Repayments	111,073	58,357	14,438	10,116	14,229	10,916
16	Total Finance	2,246,557	600,667	344,974	256,224	195,570	225,528

APPENDIX A - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Capital Investment Plans:

ROW REF	Directorate	Cash Limits						
		2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	
		Year 5 £000s	Year 6 £000s	Year 7 £000s	Year 8 £000s	Year 9 £000s	Year 10 £000s	
1	Adult Social Care & Health	ASCH	250	250	250	250	250	250
2	Children, Young People & Education	CYPE	19,750	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500
3	Growth, Environment & Transport	GET	142,886	67,016	65,209	63,348	63,335	66,150
4	Chief Executive's Department	CED	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Deputy Chief Executive's Department	DCED	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150
6	Total Cash Limit		169,036	92,916	91,109	89,248	89,235	92,050

Funded By:

7	Borrowing	25,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000	28,000
8	Property Enterprise Fund (PEF) 2		0				
9	Grants	125,778	56,350	56,251	54,393	54,415	57,230
10	Developer Contributions	8,239	1,693				
11	Other External Funding e.g. Arts Council, District Contributions etc.						
12	Revenue Contributions to Capital	6,352	6,223	6,208	6,205	6,170	6,170
13	Capital Receipts	650	650	650	650	650	650
14	Recycled Loan Repayments	3,017					
16	Total Finance	169,036	92,916	91,109	89,248	89,235	92,050

Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
1	Home Support Fund & Equipment [2]	Provision of equipment and/or alterations to individuals' homes	2,500		250	250	250	250
2	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		2,500		250	250	250	250
Kent Strategy for Services for Learning Disability (LD):								
3	Learning Disability Good Day Programme	To provide dedicated space, accessible equipment and facilities for people with a learning disability within inclusive community settings across the county	3,657	3,308	349	0	0	0
4	Total Individual Projects		3,657	3,308	349	0	0	0
5	Total - Adult Social Care & Health		6,157	3,308	599	250	250	250

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Home Support Fund & Equipment [2]	Provision of equipment and/or alterations to individuals' homes	250	250	250	250	250	250
2	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		250	250	250	250	250	250
Kent Strategy for Services for Learning Disability (LD):								
3	Learning Disability Good Day Programme	To provide dedicated space, accessible equipment and facilities for people with a learning disability within inclusive community settings across the county	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	Total Individual Projects		0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Total - Adult Social Care & Health		250	250	250	250	250	250

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Children, Young People & Education (CYPE)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
					£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Annual Planned Enhancement Programme [2]	Planned and reactive capital projects to keep schools open and operational	87,571		13,871	9,700	8,000	8,000
2	Schools Capital Expenditure funded from Devolved Formula Capital Grants for Individual Schools	Enhancement of schools	45,000		4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
3	Schools Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue	Expenditure on capital projects by individual schools	50,000		5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
4	Schools' Modernisation Programme [2]	Improving and upgrading school buildings including removal of temporary classrooms	31,208		9,956	5,252	2,000	2,000
5	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		213,779		33,327	24,452	19,500	19,500
Basic Need Schemes - to provide additional pupil places:								
6	Basic Need KCP 2017	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	116,518	115,334	1,184	0	0	0
7	Basic Need KCP 2018 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	49,283	41,539	1,666	0	400	5,428
8	Basic Need KCP 2019 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	101,247	51,198	47,164	2,885	0	0
9	Basic Need KCP 2021-25 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	11,225	2,272	500	8,453	0	0
10	Basic Need KCP 2022-26 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	13,833	5,522	8,311	0	0	0
11	Basic Need KCP 2023-27 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	66,945	1,810	15,118	30,704	11,319	7,994
12	Basic Need KCP 2024-28 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	6,894	187	0	6,707	0	0
Other Projects								
13	High Needs Provision 22-24	Specific projects relating to high needs provision	44,168	13,019	20,125	11,024	0	0
14	High Needs Provision 24-25	Specific projects relating to high needs provision	7,166	0	3,146	1,500	1,520	1,000
15	School Roofs	Structural repairs to school roofs	6,627	6,120	507	0	0	0
16	Total Individual Projects		423,906	237,001	97,721	61,273	13,239	14,422
17	Total - Children, Young People & Education		637,685	237,001	131,048	85,725	32,739	33,922

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Children, Young People & Education (CYPE)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
1	Annual Planned Enhancement Programme [2]	Planned and reactive capital projects to keep schools open and operational	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
2	Schools Capital Expenditure funded from Devolved Formula Capital Grants for Individual Schools	Enhancement of schools	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
3	Schools Capital Expenditure funded from Revenue	Expenditure on capital projects by individual schools	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
4	Schools' Modernisation Programme [2]	Improving and upgrading school buildings including removal of temporary classrooms	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
5	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500
Basic Need Schemes - to provide additional pupil places:								
6	Basic Need KCP 2017	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Basic Need KCP 2018 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	250	0	0	0	0	0
8	Basic Need KCP 2019 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Basic Need KCP 2021-25 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Basic Need KCP 2022-26 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Basic Need KCP 2023-27 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Basic Need KCP 2024-28 [1]	Increasing the capacity of Kent's schools	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Projects								
13	High Needs Provision 22-24	Specific projects relating to high needs provision	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	High Needs Provision 24-25	Specific projects relating to high needs provision	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	School Roofs	Structural repairs to school roofs	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Total Individual Projects		250	0	0	0	0	0
17	Total - Children, Young People & Education		19,750	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500	19,500

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Growth & Communities								
1	Country Parks Access and Development	Improvements and adaptations to country parks	700		70	70	70	70
2	Public Rights of Way	Structural improvements of public rights of way	9,487		1,387	900	900	900
3	Public Sports Facilities Improvement	Capital grants for new provision/refurbishment of sports facilities and projects in the community	713		38	75	75	75
4	Village Halls and Community Centres	Capital Grants for improvements and adaptations to village halls and community centres	713		38	75	75	75
Transportation								
5	Highways Asset Management/Annual Maintenance [1] [2]	Maintaining Kent's roads	573,725		69,725	56,000	56,000	56,000
6	Integrated Transport Schemes [1] [2]	Improvements to road safety	45,050		4,550	4,500	4,500	4,500
7	Major Schemes - Preliminary Design Fees	Preliminary design of new roads	23		23	0	0	0
8	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, Land Compensation Act (LCA) Part 1	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, LCA Part 1	72		51	21	0	0
9	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		630,483		75,882	61,641	61,620	61,620
Growth & Communities								
10	Digital Autopsy	To provide a body storage and digital autopsy facility	3,217	371	100	0	2,746	0
11	Essella Road Bridge (PROW)	Urgent works to ensure footbridge remains open	300	190	110	0	0	0
12	Public Mortuary	To consider options for the provision of a public mortuary	3,000	0	0	0	3,000	0
13	Gypsy & Traveller Site Improvements	Improvements to Gypsy and Traveller sites	4,055	1,469	2,586		0	0
14	Innovation Investment Initiative (i3)	Provision of loans to small and medium enterprises with the potential for innovation and growth, helping them to improve their productivity and create jobs	10,375	6,934	600	1,047	1,100	694
15	Javelin Way Development	To provide accomodation for creative industries and the creation of industrial units	12,787	12,787	0	0	0	0
16	Kent & Medway Business Fund	New fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, to enable creation of jobs and support business start ups	42,158	20,401	4,384	4,054	8,912	4,407

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
17	Kent Empty Property Initiative - No Use Empty (NUE)	Bringing long term empty properties including commercial buildings and vacant sites back into use as quality housing accommodation	74,482	54,042	7,454	2,817	1,337	5,815
18	The Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme	Voucher scheme to benefit properties in hard to reach locations	2,862	514	546	1,298	504	0
19	Workspace Programme (Kent Working Spaces)	A scheme that provides loans towards the development of incubator spaces for start ups or growing micro-businesses, demonstrating a net increase in employment in the area	1,500	1,325	175	0	0	0
Environment & Waste								
20	Energy and Water Efficiency Investment Fund - External	Energy Efficiency works	3,215	2,735	151	75	67	53
21	Energy Reduction and Water Efficiency Investment - KCC	Energy Efficiency works	2,439	2,051	257	27	27	25
22	Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Area	Contribution to partnership-funded projects to provide flood defences for the River Medway	2,500	1,428	625	447	0	0
23	Maidstone Heat Network	To install heat pumps in offices in Maidstone	408	332	76	0	0	0
24	New Transfer Station - Folkestone & Hythe [1]	To provide a new waste transfer station in Folkestone & Hythe	10,302	220	3,500	6,582	0	0
25	Surface Water Flood Risk Management	To provide flood risk management and climate adaptation investment in capital infrastructure across Kent, to reduce the significant risks of local flooding and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to be substantial on the county	5,493	265	500	600	628	500
26	Windmill Asset Management & Weatherproofing	Works to ensure Windmills are in a safe and weatherproof condition	1,750	1,136	106	100	186	100
27	Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)	Tree planting programme funded by grant	647	350	127	80	75	15
Transportation								
28	A2 Off Slip Wincheap, Canterbury [1]	To deliver an off-slip in the coastbound direction	4,400	0	1,500	2,199	701	0
29	A226 St Clements Way	Road improvement scheme	6,571	6,557	14	0	0	0
30	A228 and B2160 Junction Improvements with B2017 Badsell Road [1]	Junction improvements	3,695	914	2,721	60	0	0
31	A28 Chart Road, Ashford [1]	Strategic highway improvement	26,247	4,456	2,465	11,380	7,676	190
32	Bath Street, Gravesend	Bus Lane project - Fastrack programme extension	5,520	4,663	44	813	0	0
33	Dartford Town Centre	A package of works to improve economic performance of Dartford Town Centre	12,000	9,895	2,105	0	0	0
34	Dover Bus Rapid Transit	To provide a high quality and reliable public transport service in the Dover area, funded from Housing Infrastructure funding	25,899	25,465	345	89	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
35	Fastrack Full Network - Bean Road Tunnels [1]	Construction of a tunnel linking Bluewater and the Eastern Quarry Development	14,038	2,536	6,365	3,774	1,363	0
36	Faversham Swing Bridge [1]	Restoration of an opening bridge	2,550	735	815	1,000	0	0
37	Green Corridors	Programme of schemes to improve walking and cycling in Ebbsfleet	7,549	3,567	3,982	0	0	0
38	Herne Relief Road [1]	Provision of an alternative route between Herne Bay and Canterbury to avoid Herne village	9,076	8,836	120	120	0	0
39	Housing Infrastructure Fund - Swale Infrastructure Projects	Improvements to A249 Junctions at Grovehurst Road and Keycol Roundabout	39,832	20,435	18,715	682	0	0
40	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 2	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	4,378	3,313	1,065	0	0	0
41	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	1,800	766	1,034	0	0	0
42	Bearsted Road Improvements - formerly Kent Medical Campus (National Productivity Investment Fund - NPIF)	Project to ease congestion in Maidstone	14,312	11,364	2,898	50	0	0
43	Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (Thamesway) [1]	Strategic highway improvement in Dartford & Gravesham	10,687	1,169	9,518	0	0	0
44	LED Conversion	Upgrading street lights to more energy efficient LED lanterns & implementation of Central Monitoring System	40,605	39,410	1,195	0	0	0
45	Maidstone Integrated Transport [1]	Improving transport links with various schemes in Maidstone	10,910	8,161	2,749	0	0	0
46	Market Square Dover	Project to improve access and public realm at Market Square in Dover	3,640	3,625	15	0	0	0
47	Rathmore Road Link	Road improvement scheme	7,808	7,743	65	0	0	0
48	Sturry Link Road, Canterbury [1]	Construction of bypass	41,601	4,153	2,832	25,547	8,214	752
49	Thanet Parkway	Construction of Thanet Parkway Railway Station to enhance rail access in east Kent and act as a catalyst for economic and housing growth	43,225	43,175	50		0	0
50	Urban Traffic Management [1]	Upgrades to the existing urban traffic management system within the Ebbsfleet area.	5,476	5,153	323	0	0	0
51	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 & M20 Interchange Upgrades [1]	Scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide freeflowing interchange wherever possible	202,082	901	7,936	11,084	48,422	81,818
52	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington) [1] and [4]	Creation of a relief road	76,745	2,838	1,973	2,095	11,820	28,111

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
53	Zebra Funding - Electric Buses and infrastructure	Grant funded projects for electric buses and infrastructure	9,525	6,500	3,025	0	0	0
54	Folkestone Brighter Futures	A package of transport and public realm improvements from Folkestone Central Station through to the Town Centre, funded from Levelling Up Fund 2, which KCC are delivering on behalf of Folkestone and Hythe District Council	15,952	1,212	10,165	4,575	0	0
55	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	1,498	675	823	0	0	0
56	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)	Grant funded project to provide electric vehicle infrastructure	12,080	0	0	325	762	1,106
57	Total Individual Projects		841,191	334,767	106,154	80,920	97,540	123,586
58	Total - Growth, Environment & Transport		1,471,674	334,767	182,036	142,561	159,160	185,206

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

[4] Budget is likely to further be refined before awarding a construction contract and the delivery of the project is dependent on the award of external funding

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Growth & Communities								
1	Country Parks Access and Development	Improvements and adaptations to country parks	70	70	70	70	70	70
2	Public Rights of Way	Structural improvements of public rights of way	900	900	900	900	900	900
3	Public Sports Facilities Improvement	Capital grants for new provision/refurbishment of sports facilities and projects in the community	75	75	75	75	75	75
4	Village Halls and Community Centres	Capital Grants for improvements and adaptations to village halls and community centres	75	75	75	75	75	75
Transportation								
5	Highways Asset Management/Annual Maintenance [1] [2]	Maintaining Kent's roads	56,000	56,000	56,000	56,000	56,000	56,000
6	Integrated Transport Schemes [1] [2]	Improvements to road safety	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,500
7	Major Schemes - Preliminary Design Fees	Preliminary design of new roads	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, Land Compensation Act (LCA) Part 1	Old Highways Schemes, Residual Works, LCA Part 1	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		61,620	61,620	61,620	61,620	61,620	61,620
Growth & Communities								
10	Digital Autopsy	To provide a body storage and digital autopsy facility	0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Essella Road Bridge (PROW)	Urgent works to ensure footbridge remains open	0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Public Mortuary	To consider options for the provision of a public mortuary	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Gypsy & Traveller Site Improvements	Improvements to Gypsy and Traveller sites	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	Innovation Investment Initiative (i3)	Provision of loans to small and medium enterprises with the potential for innovation and growth, helping them to improve their productivity and create jobs	0	0	0	0	0	0
15	Javelin Way Development	To provide accomodation for creative industries and the creation of industrial units	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	Kent & Medway Business Fund	New fund using recycled receipts from Regional Growth Fund, TIGER and Escalate, to enable creation of jobs and support business start ups	0	0	0	0	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
17	Kent Empty Property Initiative - No Use Empty (NUE)	Bringing long term empty properties including commercial buildings and vacant sites back into use as quality housing accommodation	3,017	0	0	0	0	0
18	The Kent Broadband Voucher Scheme	Voucher scheme to benefit properties in hard to reach locations	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Workspace Programme (Kent Working Spaces)	A scheme that provides loans towards the development of incubator spaces for start ups or growing micro-businesses, demonstrating a net increase in employment in the area	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environment & Waste								
20	Energy and Water Efficiency Investment Fund - External	Energy Efficiency works	41	36	24	33	0	0
21	Energy Reduction and Water Efficiency Investment - KCC	Energy Efficiency works	19	17	14	2	0	0
22	Leigh (Medway) Flood Storage Area	Contribution to partnership-funded projects to provide flood defences for the River Medway	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	Maidstone Heat Network	To install heat pumps in offices in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
24	New Transfer Station - Folkestone & Hythe [1]	To provide a new waste transfer station in Folkestone & Hythe	0	0	0	0	0	0
25	Surface Water Flood Risk Management	To provide flood risk management and climate adaptation investment in capital infrastructure across Kent, to reduce the significant risks of local flooding and adapt to the impacts of climate change which are predicted to be substantial on the county	500	500	500	500	500	500
26	Windmill Asset Management & Weatherproofing	Works to ensure Windmills are in a safe and weatherproof condition	122	0	0	0	0	0
27	Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)	Tree planting programme funded by grant	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transportation								
28	A2 Off Slip Wincheap, Canterbury [1]	To deliver an off-slip in the coastbound direction	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	A226 St Clements Way	Road improvement scheme	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	A228 and B2160 Junction Improvements with B2017 Badsell Road [1]	Junction improvements	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	A28 Chart Road, Ashford [1]	Strategic highway improvement	80	0	0	0	0	0
32	Bath Street, Gravesend	Bus Lane project - Fastrack programme extension	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	Dartford Town Centre	A package of works to improve economic performance of Dartford Town Centre	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	Dover Bus Rapid Transit	To provide a high quality and reliable public transport service in the Dover area, funded from Housing Infrastructure funding	0	0	0	0	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
35	Fastrack Full Network - Bean Road Tunnels [1]	Construction of a tunnel linking Bluewater and the Eastern Quarry Development	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	Faversham Swing Bridge [1]	Restoration of an opening bridge	0	0	0	0	0	0
37	Green Corridors	Programme of schemes to improve walking and cycling in Ebbsfleet	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	Herne Relief Road [1]	Provision of an alternative route between Herne Bay and Canterbury to avoid Herne village	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	Housing Infrastructure Fund - Swale Infrastructure Projects	Improvements to A249 Junctions at Grovehurst Road and Keycol Roundabout	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 2	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	0	0	0	0	0	0
41	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 3	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	Bearsted Road Improvements - formerly Kent Medical Campus (National Productivity Investment Fund - NPIF)	Project to ease congestion in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	Kent Thameside Strategic Transport Programme (Thamesway) [1]	Strategic highway improvement in Dartford & Gravesham	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	LED Conversion	Upgrading street lights to more energy efficient LED lanterns & implementation of Central Monitoring System	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	Maidstone Integrated Transport [1]	Improving transport links with various schemes in Maidstone	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	Market Square Dover	Project to improve access and public realm at Market Square in Dover	0	0	0	0	0	0
47	Rathmore Road Link	Road improvement scheme	0	0	0	0	0	0
48	Sturry Link Road, Canterbury [1]	Construction of bypass	103	0	0	0	0	0
49	Thanet Parkway	Construction of Thanet Parkway Railway Station to enhance rail access in east Kent and act as a catalyst for economic and housing growth	0	0	0	0	0	0
50	Urban Traffic Management [1]	Upgrades to the existing urban traffic management system within the Ebbsfleet area.	0	0	0	0	0	0
51	A229 Bluebell Hill M2 & M20 Interchange Upgrades [1]	Scheme to upgrade junctions to increase capacity and provide freeflowing interchange wherever possible	48,041	2,000	1,880	0	0	0
52	North Thanet Link (formerly known as A28 Birchington) [1] and [4]	Creation of a relief road	28,215	1,693	0	0	0	0

Growth, Environment & Transport (GET)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
53	Zebra Funding - Electric Buses and infrastructure	Grant funded projects for electric buses and infrastructure	0	0	0	0	0	0
54	Folkestone Brighter Futures	A package of transport and public realm improvements from Folkestone Central Station through to the Town Centre, funded from Levelling Up Fund 2, which KCC are delivering on behalf of Folkestone and Hythe District Council	0	0	0	0	0	0
55	Kent Active Travel Fund Phase 4	Investment in active travel initiatives as an alternative to the travelling public for shorter journeys	0	0	0	0	0	0
56	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)	Grant funded project to provide electric vehicle infrastructure	1,128	1,150	1,171	1,193	1,215	4,030
57	Total Individual Projects		81,266	5,396	3,589	1,728	1,715	4,530
58	Total - Growth, Environment & Transport		142,886	67,016	65,209	63,348	63,335	66,150

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

[4] Budget is likely to further be refined before awarding a construction contract and the delivery of the project is dependent on the award of

Chief Executive's Department (CED)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
1	Feasibility Fund [1]	Forward funding to enable future projects assess feasibility	3,510	2,069	-255	1,696	0	0
2	Total Individual Projects		3,510	2,069	-255	1,696	0	0
3	Total - Chief Executive's Department		3,510	2,069	-255	1,696	0	0

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Chief Executive's Department (CED)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5 £000s	Year 6 £000s	Year 7 £000s	Year 8 £000s	Year 9 £000s	Year 10 £000s
1	Feasibility Fund [1]	Forward funding to enable future projects assess feasibility	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	Total Invidivual Projects		0	0	0	0	0	0
3	Total - Chief Executive's Department		0	0	0	0	0	0

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Deputy Chief Executive's Department (DCED)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme	Prior Years Spend	Cash Limits			
					2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
			£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	
1	Corporate Property Strategic Capital Delivery [1] [2]	Costs associated with delivering the capital programme	25,000		2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
2	Disposal Costs [1]	Costs of disposing of surplus property	6,500		650	650	650	650
3	Modernisation of Assets (MOA) [1]	Maintaining KCC estates	38,944		9,673	8,000	271	3,000
4	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		70,444		12,823	11,150	3,421	6,150
5	Asset Utilisation	Strategic utilisation of assets in order to achieve revenue savings and capital receipts	1,443	943	500	0	0	0
6	Strategic Estate Programme	Options for the council's future strategic estate	20,000	1,493	6,000	12,507	0	0
7	Strategic Reset Programme [1]	Shape our organisation through our people, technology & infrastructure, identifying & connecting priority projects for maximum impact	8,000	65	5,600	2,335	0	0
8	Dover Discovery Centre [1]	Refurbishment to make the building fit for purpose	7,903	1,580	6,323	0	0	0
9	LIVE Margate	Replace empty and poorly managed housing in Margate with high quality and well managed family housing to regenerate the area	10,208	9,908	300	0	0	0
10	Former Royal School for the Deaf		9,533	9,533	0	0	0	0
11	Total Individual Projects		57,087	23,522	18,723	14,842	0	0
12	Total - Deputy Chief Executive's Department		127,531	23,522	31,546	25,992	3,421	6,150

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX B - CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY 2024-25 TO 2033-34

Deputy Chief Executive's Department (DCED)

ROW REF	Project	Description of Project	Cash Limits					
			2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34
			Year 5 £000s	Year 6 £000s	Year 7 £000s	Year 8 £000s	Year 9 £000s	Year 10 £000s
1	Corporate Property Strategic Capital Delivery [1] [2]	Costs associated with delivering the capital programme	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
2	Disposal Costs [1]	Costs of disposing of surplus property	650	650	650	650	650	650
3	Modernisation of Assets (MOA) [1]	Maintaining KCC estates	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
4	Total Rolling Programmes [3]		6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150
5	Asset Utilisation	Strategic utilisation of assets in order to achieve revenue savings and capital receipts	0	0	0	0	0	0
6	Strategic Estate Programme	Options for the council's future strategic estate	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Strategic Reset Programme [1]	Shape our organisation through our people, technology & infrastructure, identifying & connecting priority projects for maximum impact	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Dover Discovery Centre [1]	Refurbishment to make the building fit for purpose	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	LIVE Margate	Replace empty and poorly managed housing in Margate with high quality and well managed family housing to regenerate the area	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Former Royal School for the Deaf		0	0	0	0	0	0
11	Total Individual Projects		0	0	0	0	0	0
12	Total - Deputy Chief Executive's Department		6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150	6,150

[1] These are projects that are relying on significant elements of unsecured funding and will only go ahead if the funding is achieved

[2] Estimated allocations have been included for 2024-25 to 2033-34

[3] Rolling programmes have been included for 10 year capital programme

APPENDIX C - POTENTIAL CAPITAL PROJECTS 2024-25 TO 2033-34 BY YEAR

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

Directorate	Potential Forthcoming Projects	Description of Project	Total Cost of Scheme £000s	Indicative Costs										
				2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	
				Year 1 £000s	Year 2 £000s	Year 3 £000s	Year 4 £000s	Year 5 £000s	Year 6 £000s	Year 7 £000s	Year 8 £000s	Year 9 £000s	Year 10 £000s	
Shortfall on Council's Office and Highways Network to Maintain Backlogs at Steady State														
DCED	Modernisation of Assets	Maintaining KCC's Office Estate	109,656	6,327	100	8,729	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500	13,500
CYPE	Schools Annual Planned Enhancement	Planned and reactive capital projects to keep schools open and operational	74,500	1,500	7,000	7,500	7,500	8,000	8,000	8,500	8,500	9,000	9,000	9,000
CYPE	Schools Modernisation Programme	Improving and upgrading school buildings including removal of temporary classrooms	48,000		4,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
GET	Highways Asset Management, Annual Maintenance and Programme of Significant and Urgent Safety Critical Works	Maintaining Kent's Roads	1,000,320	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032	100,032
GET	Public Rights of Way	Structural improvements of public rights of way	25,130	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513	2,513
GET	Public Rights of Way - Essella Road Footbridge	Essential works to ensure the footbridge remains open - option to upgrade remains £1m unfunded	1,000		1,000									
Potential Forthcoming Projects														
ASCH	Extra Care Facilities	Provision of Extra Care Accommodation	16,800		4,000	4,000	8,800							
CYPE	In-house Residential Children's Facilities	Provision of in-house residential children's facilities	4,500		1,500	1,500	1,500							
GET	Casualty Reduction/Congestion Management Schemes	Casualty reduction/congestion management scheme	7,500		7,500									
GET	Walking/Cycling/Public Transport Improvement Schemes	Walking, cycling and public transport improvement schemes	47,600	7,500	8,200	7,500	6,400	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
GET	Building Adaptations to work towards Net Zero Target	Adaptations required to KCC buildings to move towards Net Zero target e.g. heat pumps, LED lighting, insulation	24,000		4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000				
GET	Transitioning Fleet to EV	Transitioning Fleet to EV	7,500					2,500	5,000					
GET	Kent Scientific Services	Renewal/Modernisation of laboratory facilities	10,000			10,000								
GET	A228 Colts Hill Strategic Link - Road Scheme	Construction of bypass	45,000											45,000
GET	South East Maidstone Strategic Route - Road Scheme	Construction of bypass	80,000											80,000
GET	Programme of Waste site Infrastructure Requirements	Programme of Waste Site Infrastructure Requirements	53,300		5,300	11,000	5,000	16,000	16,000					
GET	Designated Funds	Programme of projects related to the Lower Thames Crossing.	12,642	12,642										
GET	Dover Access Improvements	Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid to improve the efficiency of the port and also reduce congestion on the strategic and local road network	58,470	58,470										
GET	M20 Junction 7 Improvements	Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid for capacity improvements	8,338	1,812	6,526									
GET	Folkestone Town Centre Improvements	Levelling Up Fund Round 2 bid for transport, public realm and regeneration improvements in Folkestone Town Centre	15,848	15,848										
GET	Thanet Way	Structural improvements to the Thanet Way A299	20,000		5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000						
DCED	Future Assets	Asset review to include community services, office estate and specialist assets	53,500		6,500	6,500	6,750	6,750	6,750	6,750	6,750	6,750		
DCED	Renewable Energy Programme	Renewable energy source options to work towards Net Zero target	32,000		8,000	7,500	16,500							
Total Potential Forthcoming Projects			1,755,604	206,644	171,171	180,774	182,495	166,295	163,795	144,295	140,295	140,795	259,045	

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX D: HIGH LEVEL 2024-27 REVENUE PLAN AND FINANCING

2023-24			SUMMARY REVENUE PLAN	2024-25			2025-26			2026-27		
core funded £000s	externally funded £000s	TOTAL £000s		core funded £000s	externally funded £000s	TOTAL £000s	core funded £000s	externally funded £000s	TOTAL £000s	core funded £000s	externally funded £000s	TOTAL £000s
1,191,493.8		1,191,493.8	Revised Base Budget	1,315,610.6		1,315,610.6	1,415,651.6		1,415,651.6	1,478,424.1		1,478,424.1
			Spending									
63,485.7	24.6	63,510.3	Base Budget Changes	22,089.2	0.0	22,089.2	23,855.0	0.0	23,855.0	19,900.0	0.0	19,900.0
1,919.8	1,186.6	3,106.4	Reduction in Grant Income	35.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
14,189.5	664.1	14,853.6	Pay	14,311.9	505.1	14,817.0	7,830.8	0.0	7,830.8	7,845.1	0.0	7,845.1
65,154.4	4,316.2	69,470.6	Prices	49,568.4	967.4	50,535.8	30,545.0	0.0	30,545.0	22,560.5	0.0	22,560.5
33,500.6	501.1	34,001.7	Demand & Cost Drivers	85,349.7	284.7	85,634.4	83,845.6	0.0	83,845.6	82,277.0	0.0	82,277.0
4,232.9	-370.5	3,862.4	Service Strategies & Improvements	11,871.7	-1,538.8	10,332.9	2,597.6	-4,952.0	-2,354.4	3,138.8	0.0	3,138.8
-221.6	30,703.9	30,482.3	Government & Legislative	1,293.1	-23,337.5	-22,044.4	-320.0	-4,520.6	-4,840.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
182,261.3	37,026.0	219,287.3	Total Spending	184,519.0	-23,119.1	161,399.9	148,354.0	-9,472.6	138,881.4	135,721.4	0.0	135,721.4
			Savings, Income & Grants									
0.0	0.0	0.0	Transformation & Efficiency - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	-36,454.8	0.0	-36,454.8	-50,282.8	0.0	-50,282.8	-38,530.7	0.0	-38,530.7
-9,741.1	-1,558.0	-11,299.1	Transformation & Efficiency - Other	-13,814.3	0.0	-13,814.3	-7,261.3	-13.9	-7,275.2	-2,521.0	0.0	-2,521.0
15,556.2	-85.1	-15,641.3	Income	-15,406.6	-281.3	-15,687.9	-3,935.5	0.0	-3,935.5	-5,044.0	0.0	-5,044.0
-3,893.3	0.0	-3,893.3	Financing	-11,279.6	0.0	-11,279.6	8,222.4	0.0	8,222.4	-281.8	0.0	-281.8
23,328.9	-608.4	-23,937.3	Policy	-10,610.2	-9.2	-10,619.4	-39,726.1	0.0	-39,726.1	-5,402.9	0.0	-5,402.9
-52,519.5	-2,251.5	-54,771.0	Total Savings & Income	-87,565.5	-290.5	-87,856.0	-92,983.3	-13.9	-92,997.2	-51,780.4	0.0	-51,780.4
660.0	-35,372.1	-34,712.1	Increases in Grants and Contributions		20,949.1	20,949.1		8,136.0	8,136.0		0.0	0.0
-51,859.5	-37,623.6	-89,483.1	Total Savings & Income & Grant	-87,565.5	20,658.6	-66,906.9	-92,983.3	8,122.1	-84,861.2	-51,780.4	0.0	-51,780.4
			RESERVES									
23,516.3	0.0	23,516.3	Contributions to reserves	36,699.7	0.0	36,699.7	29,910.0	0.0	29,910.0	15,560.0	0.0	15,560.0
-29,458.7	0.0	-29,458.7	Removal of prior year Contributions	-24,739.6	0.0	-24,739.6	-36,699.7	0.0	-36,699.7	-29,910.0	0.0	-29,910.0
-5,318.9	-3,198.1	-8,517.0	Drawdowns from reserves	-14,191.5	-1,350.5	-15,542.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
4,976.3	3,795.7	8,772.0	Removal of prior year Drawdowns	5,318.9	3,811.0	9,129.9	14,191.5	1,350.5	15,542.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
-6,285.0	597.6	-5,687.4	Net impact on MTFP	3,087.5	2,460.5	5,548.0	7,401.8	1,350.5	8,752.3	-14,350.0	0.0	-14,350.0
124,116.8	0.0	124,116.8	NET CHANGE	100,041.0	0.0	100,041.0	62,772.5	0.0	62,772.5	69,591.0	0.0	69,591.0
1,315,610.6	0.0	1,315,610.6	NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	1,415,651.6	0.0	1,415,651.6	1,478,424.1	0.0	1,478,424.1	1,548,015.1	0.0	1,548,015.1
			MEMORANDUM:									
			The net impact on our reserves balances is:									
23,516.3	0.0	23,516.3	Contributions to Reserves	36,699.7	0.0	36,699.7	29,910.0	0.0	29,910.0	15,560.0	0.0	15,560.0
-5,318.9	-3,198.1	-8,517.0	Drawdowns from Reserves	-14,191.5	-1,350.5	-15,542.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
18,197.4	-3,198.1	14,999.3	Net movement in Reserves	22,508.2	-1,350.5	21,157.7	29,910.0	0.0	29,910.0	15,560.0	0.0	15,560.0

APPENDIX D: HIGH LEVEL 2024-27 REVENUE PLAN AND FINANCING

2023-24		2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	FUNDING			
11,072.6	Revenue Support Grant	11,806.0	12,195.6	12,390.8
140,802.3	Business Rate Top-Up Grant	147,382.5	152,092.1	154,308.4
44,241.4	Business Rate Compensation Grant	51,039.4	52,670.4	53,437.8
88,770.7	Social Care Support Grant	104,203.5	104,203.5	104,203.5
14,435.1	Market Sustainability & Improvement Fund	26,969.4	21,703.9	21,703.9
7,012.0	Hospital Discharge Grant	11,686.6	11,686.6	11,686.6
7,599.4	Services Grant	1,195.8	1,195.8	1,195.8
50,014.7	Improved Better Care Fund	50,014.7	50,014.7	50,014.7
2,272.8	New Homes Bonus Grant	2,058.5	0.0	0.0
3,257.7	Other un-ringfenced grants	3,257.7	3,257.7	3,257.7
60,197.7	Local Share of Retained Business Rates	62,839.4	64,751.5	65,651.5
1,067.6	Business Rate Collection Fund	0.0	0.0	0.0
-1,127.6	Business Rate Collection Fund 2020-21 3-Year Deficit Write-off	N/A	N/A	N/A
2,347.5	Drawdown from reserves of S31 grant for compensation for irrecoverable local taxation losses due to Covid-19	N/A	N/A	N/A
761,106.4	Council Tax Income (including increase up to referendum limit but excluding social care levy)	800,774.3	841,243.1	884,201.0
115,672.9	Council Tax Adult Social Care Levy	135,423.8	156,409.2	178,963.4
11,488.7	Council Tax Collection Fund	7,000.0	7,000.0	7,000.0
-4,621.3	Council Tax Collection Fund 2020-21 3-Year Deficit Write-off			
1,315,610.6	Total Funding	1,415,651.6	1,478,424.1	1,548,015.1

APPENDIX E: HIGH LEVEL 2024- 25 REVENUE PLAN BY DIRECTORATE

	TOTAL			ASCH Adult Social Care & Health			PH Public Health	CYPE Children, Young People & Education			GET Growth, Environment & Transport	CED Chief Exec's Dept	DCED Deputy Chief Executive's Department	NAC Non Attributable Costs	CHB Corporately Held Budgets		
	core funded	externally funded	TOTAL	core funded	externally funded	TOTAL	externally funded	core funded	externally funded	TOTAL	core funded	core funded	core funded	core funded	core funded	externally funded	TOTAL
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Revised Base Budget	1,315,610.6		1,315,610.6	530,009.0		530,009.0	0.0	362,041.1		362,041.1	194,699.8	28,455.6	84,641.1	116,062.2	-298.2		-298.2
Spending																	
Base Budget Changes	22,089.2	0.0	22,089.2	16,900.0	0.0	16,900.0	0.0	21,666.0	0.0	21,666.0	-1,535.0	-55.4	-4,276.5	-10,408.1	-201.8	0.0	-201.8
Reduction in Grant Income	35.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pay	14,311.9	505.1	14,817.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	505.1	659.0	0.0	659.0	85.0	0.0	0.0	67.9	13,500.0	0.0	13,500.0
Prices	49,568.4	967.4	50,535.8	28,500.0	0.0	28,500.0	967.4	14,357.0	0.0	14,357.0	5,495.9	0.0	1,170.5	45.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Demand & Cost Drivers	85,349.7	284.7	85,634.4	54,000.0	0.0	54,000.0	284.7	30,181.5	0.0	30,181.5	1,168.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Service Strategies & Improvements	11,871.7	-1,538.8	10,332.9	387.1	0.0	387.1	-1,538.8	2,008.0	0.0	2,008.0	3,640.0	656.6	-320.0	5,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Government & Legislative	1,293.1	-23,337.5	-22,044.4	0.0	59.9	59.9	-489.6	0.0	-777.0	-777.0	1,293.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-22,130.8	-22,130.8
Total Spending	184,519.0	-23,119.1	161,399.9	99,787.1	59.9	99,847.0	-271.2	68,871.5	-777.0	68,094.5	10,182.2	601.2	-3,426.0	-4,795.2	13,298.2	-22,130.8	-8,832.6
Savings, Income & Grants																	
Transformation & Efficiency - Future Cost Increase Avoidance	-36,454.8	0.0	-36,454.8	-30,154.8	0.0	-30,154.8	0.0	-6,300.0	0.0	-6,300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transformation & Efficiency - Other	-13,814.3	0.0	-13,814.3	-9,001.3	0.0	-9,001.3	0.0	-2,966.0	0.0	-2,966.0	-797.0	-255.0	-45.0	0.0	-750.0	0.0	-750.0
Income	-15,406.6	-281.3	-15,687.9	-10,471.7		-10,471.7	-281.3	-420.0		-420.0	-1,514.9	0.0	0.0	-3,500.0	500.0		500.0
Funding	-11,279.6	0.0	-11,279.6	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-11,279.6	0.0		0.0
Policy	-10,610.2	-9.2	-10,619.4	-3,600.0		-3,600.0	-9.2	-2,944.0		-2,944.0	-798.8	-102.5	-864.9	0.0	-2,300.0		-2,300.0
Total Savings & Income	-87,565.5	-290.5	-87,856.0	-53,227.8	0.0	-53,227.8	-290.5	-12,630.0	0.0	-12,630.0	-3,110.7	-357.5	-909.9	-14,779.6	-2,550.0	0.0	-2,550.0
Increases in Grants and Contributions		20,949.1	20,949.1		-59.9	-59.9	-1,898.8		777.0	777.0						22,130.8	22,130.8
Total Savings & Income & Grant	-87,565.5	20,658.6	-66,906.9	-53,227.8	-59.9	-53,287.7	-2,189.3	-12,630.0	777.0	-11,853.0	-3,110.7	-357.5	-909.9	-14,779.6	-2,550.0	22,130.8	19,580.8
RESERVES																	
Contributions to reserves	36,699.7	0.0	36,699.7	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	160.0	36,539.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Removal of prior year Contributions	-24,739.6	0.0	-24,739.6	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	-160.0	-24,579.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drawdowns from reserves	-14,191.5	-1,350.5	-15,542.0	-567.2		-567.2	-1,350.5	0.0		0.0	-475.0	-262.0	0.0	-12,887.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	5,318.9	3,811.0	9,129.9	567.2		567.2	3,811.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	262.0	0.0	4,489.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net impact on MTFP	3,087.5	2,460.5	5,548.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2,460.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	-475.0	0.0	0.0	3,562.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
NET CHANGE	100,041.0	0.0	100,041.0	46,559.3	0.0	46,559.3	0.0	56,241.5	0.0	56,241.5	6,596.5	243.7	-4,335.9	-16,012.3	10,748.2	0.0	10,748.2
NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	1,415,651.6	0.0	1,415,651.6	576,568.3	0.0	576,568.3	0.0	418,282.6	0.0	418,282.6	201,296.3	28,699.3	80,305.2	100,049.9	10,450.0	0.0	10,450.0
MEMORANDUM:																	
The net impact on our reserves balances is:																	
Contributions to Reserves	36,699.7	0.0	36,699.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	160.0	36,539.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Drawdowns from Reserves	-14,191.5	-1,350.5	-15,542.0	-567.2	0.0	-567.2	-1,350.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	-475.0	-262.0	0.0	-12,887.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net movement in Reserves	22,508.2	-1,350.5	21,157.7	-567.2	0.0	-567.2	-1,350.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	-475.0	-262.0	160.0	23,652.4	0.0	0.0	0.0

This page is intentionally left blank

2024-27 PowerBi Report - Mem... | app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/926738e9-73bd-4d81-a453-d0d207983dc8/reports/106d26e4-591e-4947-b294-f80165547782/ReportSection?ctid=3253a20d-c735-4bfe-a8b7-3e6ab37f5f90&experience=power-bi

Kent County Council | 2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

File | Share | Export | Chat in Teams | Explore this data | Get insights | Subscribe to report

Summary 2024-25 Directorate View

Funding type: Core

Cabinet Member: All

2023-24 Approved Budget: **1,315,610.6**

2024-25 £000's

Total Spending Growth: **184,519.0**

Total Savings and Income: **-87,565.5**

Net Reserves Contribution: **3,087.5**

Net of all Templates: **100,041.0**

Net Budget Variance by Directorate - £000's

Directorate	Value (£000's)	Percentage
ASCH	46,559.3	38.7%
CYPE	56,241.5	46.7%
CHB	10,748.2	8.9%
GET	6,596.5	5.5%

- ASCH
- CYPE
- GET
- CED
- DCED
- NAC
- CHB
- Public Health

Spending Templates

MTFP - Category	2024-25 £000's
Base Budget Changes	22,089.2
Reduction in Grant Income	35.0
Pay	14,311.9
Prices	49,568.4
Demand & Cost Drivers	85,349.7
Government & Legislative	1,293.1
Service Strategies & Improvements	11,871.7
Total	184,519.0

Savings Templates

MTFP - Category	2024-25 £000's
Transformation	2,380.7
Transformation - Future Cost	-36,454.8
Increase Avoidance	
Income	-15,406.6
Efficiency - Staffing	-710.0
Efficiency - Infrastructure	-95.0
Efficiency - C&P	-12,071.0
Efficiency - Other	-3,319.0
Financing	-11,279.6
Policy	-10,610.2
Total	-87,565.5

Reserves Templates

MTFP - Category	2024-25 £000's
Contributions to Reserves	36,699.7
Removal of prior year Contributions	-24,739.6
Drawdowns from Reserves	-14,191.5
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	5,318.9
Total	3,087.5

Go back

2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/926738e9-73bd-4d81-a453-d0d207983dc8/reports/106d26e4-591e-4947-b294-f80165547782/ReportSection7d2ce08a323428a2ad5?ctid=3253a20d-c735-4bfe-a8b7-3e6ab371f590&experience=power-bi

Kent County Council | 2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

2024-27 Members Area

2024-27 PowerBi Report - M...

Home

Summary

Directorate

Big 6 Service Area

Cabinet Member

Spending

Savings

Reserves

Go back

Funding type: Core

MTFP Spending Category:

- Base Budget Changes
- Reduction in Grant Income
- Pay
- Prices
- Demand & Cost Drivers
- Government & Legislative
- Service Strategies & Improvements

MTFP Spending category selected: --

Click on the + to see the descriptions of the templates under that Category

Please select a Individual Spending Template

Spending Templates

Directorate	No. of Templates	2024-25 £000's	2025-26 £000's	2026-27 £000's
ASCH	11	99,787.1	72,726.3	63,223.3
CYPE	23	68,871.5	37,877.9	32,042.2
GET	43	10,182.2	5,417.9	7,708.3
CED	3	601.2	121.3	115.5
DCED	11	-3,426.0	820.5	749.3
NAC	11	-4,795.2	4,090.1	93.7
CHB	4	13,298.2	27,300.0	31,789.1
Total	106	184,519.0	148,354.0	135,721.4

80%

2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/926738e9-73bd-4d81-a453-d0d207983dc8/reports/106d26e4-591e-4947-b294-f80165547782/ReportSection9397313318b8d94aab56?ctid=3253a20d-c735-4bfe-a8b7-3e6ab37f5f90&experience=power-bi

Kent County Council | 2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

2024-27 Members Area

2024-27 PowerBi Report - M...

Home

Summary

Directorate

Big 6 Service Area

Cabinet Member

Spending

Savings

Reserves

Go back

Funding type: Core

MTFP Savings Category:

- Transformation
- Transformation - Future Cost Incr...
- Income
- Increases in Grants and Contributi...
- Efficiency - Staffing
- Efficiency - Infrastructure
- Efficiency - C&P
- Efficiency - Other
- Financing
- Policy

MTFP Savings category selected: --

Click on the + to see the descriptions of the templates under that Category

Please select a Individual Savings Template

Savings Templates

Directorate	No. of Templates	2024-25 £000's	2025-26 £000's	2026-27 £000's
<input type="checkbox"/> ASCH	19	-53,227.8	-45,257.9	-33,490.0
<input type="checkbox"/> CYPE	24	-12,630.0	-17,515.0	-13,272.6
<input type="checkbox"/> GET	30	-3,110.7	-3,515.3	-1,135.7
<input type="checkbox"/> CED	5	-357.5	-262.0	0.0
<input type="checkbox"/> DCED	4	-909.9	-1,056.1	-2,100.3
<input type="checkbox"/> NAC	4	-14,779.6	11,222.4	-281.8
<input type="checkbox"/> CHB	7	-2,550.0	-36,599.4	-1,500.0
Total	93	-87,565.5	-92,983.3	-51,780.4

2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

app.powerbi.com/groups/me/apps/926738e9-73bd-4d81-a453-d0d207983dc8/reports/106d26e4-591e-4947-b294-f80165547782/ReportSection394358769dc25a88138b?ctid=3253a20d-c735-4bfe-a8b7-3e6ab37f5f90&experience=power-bi

Kent County Council | 2024-27 PowerBi Report - Members

2024-27 Members Area

2024-27 PowerBi Report - M... ^

- Home
- Summary
- Directorate
- Big 6 Service Area
- Cabinet Member
- Spending
- Savings
- Reserves**

Funding type: Core

MTFP Reserves Category selected: --

MTFP Reserves Category:

- Contributions to Reserves
- Removal of prior year Contributio...
- Drawdowns from Reserves
- Removal of prior year Drawdowns

Click on the + to see the descriptions of the templates under that Category

Please select a Individual Reserves Template

Reserves Templates				
Directorate	No. of Templates	2024-25 £000's	2025-26 £000's	2026-27 £000's
ASCH	2	0.0	567.2	
GET	1	-475.0	475.0	
CED	2	0.0	262.0	
DCED	2	0.0	0.0	0.0
NAC	15	3,562.5	6,097.6	-14,350.0
Total	22	3,087.5	7,401.8	-14,350.0

Go back

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

					177,363.8	161,399.9	-15,963.9	138,881.4	135,721.4		
MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Base Budget Changes	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Realignment of Vulnerable Adults budget to reflect underlying pressure forecast in 2023-24	9,900.0	9,900.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Base Budget Changes	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Realignment of Older People budget to reflect underlying pressure forecast in 2023-24	7,000.0	7,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
Base Budget Changes	CED	Roger Gough	Safeguarding Adults	Removal of Review Manager at the end of the two year fixed term appointment for dealing with the increased number of Adult Safeguarding reviews being undertaken and to free up capacity to undertake development work for the Safeguarding Adults Board	-55.4	-55.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	Adult Social Care staffing	Core
Base Budget Changes	CHB	Peter Oakford	Corporately Held Contingency	Emerging pressures contingency for risk of inability to deliver against approved budget estimates due to unforeseen changes in external factors that arise after the budget is set	14,000.0	0.0	-14,000.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	CHB	Dylan Jeffrey	Pay and Reward	Release of 2023-24 unallocated pay and reward allocation. The costs of the pay award and increase in annual leave entitlement for some staff were less than assumed when the 2023-24 budget was set	-201.8	-201.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	CYPE	Rory Love	Home to school transport	Realignment of the home to school transport budget to reflect the full year effect of the cost and number of children being transported in 2023-24	10,900.0	10,900.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Transport	Core
Base Budget Changes	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Realignment of looked after children's placement budget to reflect the increase in cost of supporting children due to the market and complexity, and the number of children in different placement types in 2023-24	7,950.0	7,950.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Base Budget Changes	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Realignment of children with a disability packages of care to reflect the costs seen in 2023-24 including looked after placement budgets and home support packages of care for children in need.	2,121.0	2,121.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Base Budget Changes	CYPE	Sue Chandler	18-25 placements	Realignment of the 18-25 Adult Learning & Physical Disability Community Services budget to reflect the increase in cost of supporting these clients in 2023-24	695.0	695.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Base Budget Changes	DCED	Peter Oakford	KCC Estate Energy	Reduction in the price of gas and electricity for the KCC estate in 2023-24 compared to the assumptions at the time of setting the budget	-3,000.0	-4,276.5	-1,276.5	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Roger Gough	Waste prices	Realignment of prices for a variety of waste streams within the Materials Recycling Facilities contract	960.0	970.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Roger Gough	Waste haulage costs	Right sizing of budget for waste haulage contracts due to inflation being higher than the increase assumed in the 2023-24 budget	623.9	623.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Roger Gough	Waste Facilities	Right sizing of budget for household waste recycling centre and waste transfer station management fees and rent due to higher inflation than assumed in the 2023-24 budget	257.9	318.7	60.8	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Clair Bell	Coroners	Rightsize budget for post mortems, Coroner's pay, Senior Coroner fees, pathologists fees and funeral director costs due to increasing number and complexity of cases	223.0	223.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Clair Bell	Trading Standards	Delay in achieving income from Trading Standards Checked service due to economic climate which was originally planned for 2021 -22	-40.0	-40.0	0.0	-45.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Neil Baker	Public Transport	Removal of budget for the public transport smartcard following the winding down of the scheme	-48.0	-48.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Transport	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Neil Baker	Supported Public Transport	To not renew Tilbury Ferry contract subsidy at end of agreement period	0.0	-75.0	-75.0	0.0	0.0	Transport	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Roger Gough	Waste income from paper & card	An increase in the price per tonne received for recycled paper and card	-485.8	-485.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Base Budget Changes	GET	Neil Baker	Streetlight Energy - adjustment to reflect 23/24 activity/price levels	Streetlight energy - actual price incurred in 23/24 was lower than budgeted therefore the base budget has been realigned to ensure reflective of current price levels.	-1,959.9	-3,021.8	-1,061.9	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Insurance	Rightsize budget for increase in insurance premiums	564.5	564.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Other Non Attributable costs	Payment to Kent Fire and Rescue Service of 3% share of the Retained Business Rates levy in line with the Kent Business Rates pool agreement	90.0	90.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Environment Agency Levy	Rightsize budget for the Environment Agency Levy as the increase in 2023-24 was lower than anticipated when the budget was set	-8.2	-8.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Non Attributable Costs	Removal of budget for Transferred Services Pensions as these payments have now ceased	-16.0	-16.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Non Attributable Costs	Release of New Burdens funding rolled into Revenue Support Grant in the 2023-24 Local Government Finance Settlement	0.0	-38.4	-38.4	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	NAC	Peter Oakford	Capital Financing Costs	Reduction in debt charges from 2023-24 due to decisions taken by Members to contain the capital programme; significant levels of re-phasing of the capital programme in 2022-23 and 2023-24; changes in interest rates and a review of asset lives in the modelling of debt charges.	-4,000.0	-11,000.0	-7,000.0	4,000.0	0.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	CHB	Peter Oakford	Emerging Pressures	Provision for emerging pressures yet to be identified	0.0	0.0	0.0	20,000.0	20,000.0	Other	Core
Base Budget Changes	DCED	Peter Oakford	Impact of Cap on Capitalisation of Property Disposal costs	Removal of short term funding for impact on the revenue budget of 4% cap on capitalisation of asset disposal costs pending improvement in market conditions and implementation of changes to asset disposal strategy	0.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	-100.0	Other	Core
TOTAL BASE BUDGET CHANGES					45,470.2	22,089.2	-23,381.0	23,855.0	19,900.0		Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for the impact in Vulnerable Adults Adult Social Care for the of the full year effect of all current costs of care during 2023-24 in addition to new financial demands that will placed on adult social care (a) New people requiring a funded package of support (b) Young people transitioning into adulthood from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 (c) Individuals in receipt of a funded package of support on 31st March 2024, and require an increase in funded support following a review or reassessment (d) People no longer eligible for CHC and now require funded support from ASCH from (e) People who have previously funded their own care and support and now require funded support from ASCH - Vulnerable Adults	34,945.3	23,000.0	-11,945.3	23,000.0	23,000.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for the impact in Older People Adult Social Care of the full year effect of all current costs of care during 2023-24 in addition to new financial demands that will placed on adult social care (a) New people requiring a funded package of support (b) Young people transitioning into adulthood from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 (c) Individuals in receipt of a funded package of support on 31st March 2024, and require an increase in funded support following a review or reassessment (d) People no longer eligible for CHC and now require funded support from ASCH from (e) People who have previously funded their own care and support and now require funded support from ASCH (f) Inflationary increases in the cost of care and support through a range of market uplifts	15,656.7	19,056.6	3,399.9	31,000.0	31,000.0	Older People	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision in Older People Adult Social Care for an increase in costs of care resulting from existing and new clients whose needs are becoming more complex and market factors, funded from the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund, which is shown within the general funding of the Council's budget	0.0	7,268.8	7,268.8	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision in Older People Adult Social Care for the impact of new/additional clients being supported following discharge from hospital, funded from the ringfenced Adult Social Care Discharge Fund and shown within the general funding of the Council's budget	0.0	4,674.6	4,674.6	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Rory Love	Home to School transport SEN	Estimated impact of rising pupil population on SEN Home to School and College Transport	15,500.0	16,500.0	1,000.0	14,600.0	13,100.0	Transport	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Estimated impact of an increase in the population of children in Kent, leading to increased demand for children's social work and disabled children's services - number of children & increasing packages of support	6,371.5	6,371.5	0.0	7,640.9	7,769.2	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Adult Social Care	Provision for impact of the full year effect of all current costs of care, further increases in client numbers expected through transition into adulthood from Children's Social Care, additional costs arising for existing clients and for those new clients whose needs are becoming more complex.	3,400.0	3,400.0	0.0	3,400.0	3,400.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Estimated impact of an increase in population of children in Kent, leading to increased demand for support services for children with a disability including complexity of packages.	2,260.0	2,260.0	0.0	2,570.0	2,470.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Rory Love	Home to School transport Mainstream	Estimated impact of rising pupil population on Mainstream Home to School transport	1,400.0	1,400.0	0.0	500.0	500.0	Transport	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Care Leavers	Estimated increase in number of children supported by the care leaver service	250.0	250.0	0.0	125.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Roger Gough	Waste - tonnage changes	Estimated impact of changes in waste tonnage as a result of population and housing growth	936.7	963.7	27.0	1,016.5	1,021.7	Waste	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Clair Bell	Coroners	Increase in budget for toxicology analysis due to increasing number and complexity of cases	60.0	60.0	0.0	3.7	4.1	Other	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Clair Bell	Trading Standards	Increase in legal costs as a result of more Crown Court cases	55.0	55.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Roger Gough	Planning Applications	Costs of the independent examination of the Minerals & Waste Local Plan by the Planning Inspectorate in the summer of 2024	50.0	50.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	Other	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Neil Baker	Streetlight energy & maintenance	Adoption of new streetlights at new housing developments and associated increase in energy costs	27.5	27.5	0.0	27.5	0.0	Highways	Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	GET	Clair Bell	Public Rights of Way	Adoption of new routes	12.0	12.0	0.0	12.0	12.0	Other	Core
TOTAL DEMAND & COST DRIVERS					80,924.7	85,349.7	4,425.0	83,845.6	82,277.0		Core
Government & Legislative	GET	Neil Baker	Highways	Costs of meeting our statutory duties in relation to inspection of bridges and structures and complying with the Tunnels Regulations	960.0	960.0	0.0	-500.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Government & Legislative	GET	Roger Gough	Waste legislative changes	Loss of income from removal of charging for disposal of non DIY waste materials at Household Waste Recycling centres following change in legislation	446.5	333.1	-113.4	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Government & Legislative	GET	Clair Bell	Coroners	Revisions to staffing structure to adhere with Government guidance on caseload and complexity	0.0	0.0	0.0	180.0	0.0	Other	Core
TOTAL GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE					1,406.5	1,293.1	-113.4	-320.0	0.0		Core
Pay	CHB	Dylan Jeffrey	Pay and Reward	Contribution to pay pot and impact on base budget of uplifting pay grades in accordance with single pay reward scheme including the revision of lower Kent Scheme pay scales to further increase the differential between the lowest pay range and the Foundation Living Wage and increasing the annual leave entitlement for some staff. This is the subject of pay bargaining with Trade Unions.	13,500.0	13,500.0	0.0	7,300.0	7,300.0	Other	Core
Pay	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Pay and Reward	Uplift in pay budget in line with general pay pot, for posts which are temporarily covered by agency staff - Integrated Children's Services	332.0	394.0	62.0	248.0	255.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Pay	CYPE	Rory Love	Pay and Reward	Uplift in pay budget in line with general pay pot, for posts which are temporarily covered by agency staff - Special Educational Needs	181.0	205.0	24.0	129.0	133.0	Other	Core
Pay	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Pay and Reward	Uplift in pay budget in line with general pay pot, for posts which are temporarily covered by agency staff - 0-25 Disabled Children's & Young People Services	40.0	60.0	20.0	38.0	39.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Pay	GET	Clair Bell	Public Protection	Increase in staffing costs and consumables within Kent Scientific Services to deliver scientific testing which are offset by increased income	49.0	49.0	0.0	37.0	38.0	Other	Core
Pay	GET	Clair Bell	Coroners	Increase in pay for senior, area and assistant coroners in accordance with the pay award agreed by the national Joint Negotiating Committee for Coroners	36.0	36.0	0.0	36.0	36.0	Other	Core
Pay	NAC	Peter Oakford	Apprenticeship Levy	Increase in the Apprenticeship Levy in line with the pay award	67.9	67.9	0.0	42.8	44.1	Other	Core
TOTAL PAY					14,205.9	14,311.9	106.0	7,830.8	7,845.1		Core
Prices	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for contractual and negotiated price increases across all adult social care packages including nursing, residential, domiciliary, supporting independence and direct payments - Vulnerable Adults	14,317.2	16,000.0	1,682.8	10,500.0	5,100.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Prices	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for contractual and negotiated price increases across all adult social care packages including nursing, residential, domiciliary, supporting independence and direct payments - Older People	10,075.9	12,500.0	2,424.1	8,100.0	4,000.0	Older People	Core
Prices	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for contractual and negotiated price increases across all adult social care packages funded by the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund included in the provisional local government finance settlement - Older People	2,155.1	0.0	-2,155.1	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
Prices	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Provision for contractual and negotiated price increases across all adult social care packages funded by the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund included in the provisional local government finance settlement - Vulnerable Adults	1,934.1	0.0	-1,934.1	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Prices	CHB	Peter Oakford	Corporately Held Contingency	Contingency for price increases	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4,489.1	Other	Core
Prices	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care - Non-disabled Children	Provision for price negotiations with external providers, and uplift to in-house foster carers in line with DFE guidance - Integrated Children's Services	4,513.0	5,349.0	836.0	2,921.0	1,529.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Prices	CYPE	Rory Love	Home to School Transport	Provision for inflation on contracted services and season tickets for mainstream & SEN Home to School and College Transport	4,933.0	4,795.0	-138.0	3,237.0	1,597.0	Transport	Core
Prices	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Adult Social Care	Provision for contractual and negotiated price increases across all adult social care packages including nursing, residential, domiciliary, supporting independence and direct payments - Vulnerable Adults 18-25	2,447.0	2,447.0	0.0	1,581.0	795.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Prices	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care - Disabled Children	Provision for price negotiations with external providers, and uplift to in-house foster carers in line with DFE guidance - lifespan pathway 0-25	937.0	1,205.0	268.0	546.0	308.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Prices	CYPE	Rory Love	Non specific price provision	Non specific provision for CPI inflation on other negotiated contracts without indexation clauses - Children, Young People & Education	180.0	206.0	26.0	110.0	54.0	Other	Core
Prices	CYPE	Rory Love	Facilities Management	Estimated future price uplift to new Facilities Management contracts - schools	91.0	180.0	89.0	102.0	78.0	Other	Core
Prices	CYPE	Rory Love	Kent 16+ Travel Saver	Provision for price inflation related to the Kent Travel Saver and Kent 16+ Travel Saver which is recovered through uplifting the charge for the pass - Kent 16+ Travel Saver	210.0	100.0	-110.0	104.0	0.0	Transport	Core
Prices	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care - Care Leavers	Provision for price negotiations with external providers, and uplift to in-house foster carers in line with DFE guidance - Care Leavers	73.0	75.0	2.0	26.0	15.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Facilities Management	Estimated future price uplift to new Facilities Management contracts - Corporate Landlord	867.7	751.5	-116.2	592.2	346.0	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Corporate Landlord	Provision for price inflation for rates for the office estate	417.4	378.0	-39.4	251.0	171.8	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Cantium Business Solutions (CBS)	Inflationary uplift on the CBS ICT contract	390.3	332.5	-57.8	249.7	125.0	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Corporate Landlord	Provision for price inflation for rent for the office estate	269.6	229.7	-39.9	172.3	86.3	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Technology contracts	Provision for price inflation on Third Party ICT related contracts	272.2	205.0	-67.2	166.3	85.1	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Dylan Jeffrey	Contact Centre	Price inflation on Agilisys contract for provision of Contact Centre	103.9	103.9	0.0	108.1	0.0	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	Kent Commercial Services (KCS)	Inflationary uplift on the KCS HR Connect contract	109.6	93.4	-16.2	70.1	35.1	Other	Core
Prices	DCED	Peter Oakford	KCC Estate Energy	Anticipated price change on energy contracts for the KCC estate as estimated by Commercial Services	-948.6	-923.5	25.1	-689.2	0.0	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Roger Gough	Waste contract related inflation.	Provision for price inflation related to Waste contracts (based on contractual indices) - updated for November OBR forecasts	1,117.6	3,927.0	2,809.4	1,974.0	2,005.0	Waste	Core
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Contract related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to Highways, Waste and other contracted services (based on contractual indices) - Highways contracts	1,170.3	1,062.0	-108.3	717.3	932.5	Highways	Core
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Other Transport Related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to other transport services including subsidised bus services - subsidised bus routes	584.0	584.0	0.0	282.5	299.5	Transport	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Kent Travel Saver	Provision for price inflation related to the Kent Travel Saver and Kent 16+ Travel Saver which is recovered through uplifting the charge for the pass - Kent Travel Saver	463.5	463.5	0.0	479.7	0.0	Transport	Core
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Highways Management	The handing back of the urban grass cutting and rural verge mowing contract by Folkestone & Hythe District Council	100.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Contract related inflation - PROW	Provision for price inflation related to Public Rights of Way contracts	81.7	56.3	-25.4	38.2	38.2	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Contract related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to Highways, Waste and other contracted services (based on contractual indices) - Coroners Funeral Directors contract	37.0	37.0	0.0	38.0	40.0	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Coroners	Provision for inflationary increase in specialist pathologist fees	25.5	25.5	0.0	10.7	11.8	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Contract related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to Highways, Waste and other contracted services (based on contractual indices) - Coroners Post Mortem contract	21.2	21.2	0.0	21.6	21.9	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Contract related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to Highways, Waste and other contracted services (based on contractual indices) - annual uplift to the SLA with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council for the running costs of the Amelia	13.0	13.0	0.0	13.0	13.0	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Clair Bell	Other Transport Related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to other transport services including subsidised bus services - Mobile libraries fuel	5.0	5.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	Other	Core
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Other Transport Related inflation	Provision for price inflation related to other transport services including subsidised bus services - concessionary fares	0.0	0.0	0.0	333.6	333.6	Transport	Core
Prices	GET	Neil Baker	Provision for price inflation for Streetlight Energy	Provision for price changes related to Streetlight energy, as estimated by Commercial Services/LASER.	-777.3	-798.6	-21.3	-1,559.4	0.0	Highways	Core
Prices	NAC	Peter Oakford	Levies	Estimated increase in Environment Agency Levy together with impact of estimated change in taxbase	23.8	23.8	0.0	25.0	26.2	Other	Core
Prices	NAC	Peter Oakford	Non specific price provision	Non specific provision for CPI inflation on other negotiated contracts without indexation clauses - increase in Inshore Sea Fisheries Conservation Area (IFCA) Levy	21.2	21.2	0.0	22.3	23.4	Other	Core
TOTAL PRICES					46,234.9	49,568.4	3,333.5	30,545.0	22,560.5		Core
Reduction in Grant Income	GET	Clair Bell	EU funding	Replace a reduction in EU Funding ensuring sufficient resource is available to continue delivering the Positive Wellbeing Service at current levels	35.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
TOTAL REDUCTION IN GRANT INCOME					35.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Increase in the bad debt provision to reflect the anticipated impact of the high cost of living on our income collection rates from client contributions - Older People	256.3	325.3	69.0	111.8	116.6	Older People	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Increase in the bad debt provision to reflect the anticipated impact of the high cost of living on our income collection rates from client contributions - Vulnerable Adults	81.8	103.8	22.0	14.5	6.7	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Safeguarding	Removal of two year pilot to combat Serious and Organised Crime	-42.0	-42.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Adult Social Care staffing	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	CED	Peter Oakford	Partnership Arrangements with District Councils	Incentive payments for Kent District Councils to remove the remaining empty property discounts to maximise council tax, and reimburse Kent District Councils for temporary discretionary council tax discounts provided for properties affected by fire or flooding	541.1	541.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	CED	Peter Oakford	Member Allowances	Uplift to Member Allowances	115.5	115.5	0.0	121.3	115.5	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	CYPE	Rory Love	Special Educational Needs	Increase in staff numbers in SEN service to support improved quality of Education Health & Care Plans	2,000.0	2,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Adult Social Care	Increase in the bad debt provision to reflect the anticipated impact of the high cost of living on our income collection rates from client contributions - Vulnerable Adults 18-25	8.0	8.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Service Strategies & Improvements	DCED	Peter Oakford	Oakwood House Development	Removal of holding costs and loss of income in the short term once Oakwood House is no longer operational, offset by savings in the longer term following change of use	-320.0	-320.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Neil Baker	Highways	Increased highway spend in line with additional Outcome allocation for 2024/24. Activity focused on supporting the front line operational activities across the highway network as follows:	5,000.0	2,800.0	-2,200.0	2,200.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Neil Baker	Highways - Streetlighting	Upgrade of the Streetlighting Control Management System from 3G connectivity due to the shutting down of the 3G network	0.0	475.0	475.0	-475.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Neil Baker	Mobilisation costs for new HTMC contract	Mobilisation and commissioning costs associated with the new Highways Term Maintenance contract (April 2026)	0.0	300.0	300.0	300.0	2,400.0	Highways	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Clair Bell	Country Parks	Change the funding of improvements and adaptations to country parks from capital to revenue	70.0	70.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Clair Bell	Sports Facilities	Change the funding of refurbishment and provision of sports facilities and community projects from capital to revenue	37.5	37.5	0.0	37.5	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Clair Bell	Village Halls & Community Centres	Change the funding of grants for improvements and adaptations to village halls and community centres from capital to revenue	37.5	37.5	0.0	37.5	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Roger Gough	Waste - infrastructure	Operating costs of a new waste transfer facility in the Folkestone & Hythe area which is required as existing facility approaches capacity	0.0	0.0	0.0	300.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Roger Gough	Asset Management	Revenue contributions to capital required to maintain and deliver asset management for Kent's Windmills and Surface Water Flood Risk Management	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	GET	Derek Murphy	Economic Development Recovery Plan	Removal of time limited funding for re-design of the service and additional staffing and consultancy capacity to draft and deliver the Economic Recovery Plan/Economic Strategy following the Covid pandemic	-80.0	-80.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	NAC	Peter Oakford	Project Prime	Loss of income from a review of contract with Commercial Services Group, specifically due to the removal of buy back of services	3,000.0	3,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Service Strategies & Improvements	NAC	Peter Oakford	Capital Programme	The impact on debt charges of the review of the 2021-24 capital programme.	2,500.0	2,500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
TOTAL SERVICE STRATEGIES & IMPROVEMENTS					13,205.7	11,871.7	-1,334.0	2,597.6	3,138.8		Core
Demand & Cost Drivers	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health	Estimated increase in internal recharges for support services	375.1	345.1	-30.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Demand & Cost Drivers	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	Removal of additional temporary funding for reducing waiting lists for Postural Stability	-60.4	-60.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL DEMAND & COST DRIVERS					314.7	284.7	-30.0	0.0	0.0		External
Government & Legislative	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Domestic Abuse New Burdens	Costs of undertaking domestic abuse support in safe accommodation duties funded by specific grant	59.9	59.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Government & Legislative	CHB	Roger Gough	Household Support Fund	Removal of the extension of the Government funded Household Support Fund into 2023-24 as announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 17th November 2022	-22,130.8	-22,130.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Government & Legislative	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Family Hubs	Estimated reduction in our share of the DfE/DHSC Family Hubs and Start for Life grant	-777.0	-777.0	0.0	-3,332.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	External
Government & Legislative	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Targeted housing support interventions for people in drug and alcohol treatment funded by Drug Strategy Housing Support Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	23.1	23.1	0.0	-932.1	0.0	Other	External
Government & Legislative	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Investment in substance misuse services funded by Individual Placement and Support in Community Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	7.5	7.5	0.0	-256.5	0.0	Other	External
Government & Legislative	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Removal of wraparound and engagement and community treatment funded by one-off Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities in 2023-24	-520.2	-520.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL GOVERNMENT & LEGISLATIVE					-23,337.5	-23,337.5	0.0	-4,520.6	0.0		External

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SPENDING PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of spending increase	Brief description of spending increase	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Spending Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core funded?
Pay	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Pay	Estimated net impact of KCC pay award and other adjustments for KCC Public Health staff	505.1	505.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL PAY					505.1	505.1	0.0	0.0	0.0		External
Prices	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health contracts	Estimated increase in public health contract values linked to the NHS Agenda for change pay increases	614.2	614.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Prices	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Sexual Health	Contractual increases in other services including Sexual Health and Health Improvement	353.2	353.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL PRICES					967.4	967.4	0.0	0.0	0.0		External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Investment in Substance Misuse services funded by Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	1,412.9	1,412.9	0.0	-3,615.4	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Additional one-off funding for Live Well Kent Mental Health contract	Additional one-off funding for Live Well Kent Mental Health contract	0.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Removal of additional one-off investment in Recovery Housing (new contract) in 24/25	Removal of additional one-off investment in Recovery Housing (new contract) in 24/25	0.0	30.0	30.0	-30.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Removal of one-off investment in Cohort Modelling in 23/24 & 24/25	Removal of one-off investment in Cohort Modelling in 23/24 & 24/25	0.0	0.0	0.0	-21.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Removal of temporary investment in research capacity in 23/24 & 24/25	Removal of temporary investment in research capacity in 23/24 & 24/25	0.0	0.0	0.0	-85.6	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Removal of additional temporary investment in Public Health Consultants in 23/24 and 24/25	Removal of additional temporary investment in Public Health Consultants in 23/24 and 24/25	0.0	0.0	0.0	-200.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Other	Removal of additional temporary investment in other minor service improvements	-20.0	-20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	Removal of temporary investment in Public Health services to promote and support health visiting	-118.4	-118.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	Removal of additional temporary investment in Public Health services to promote and support Healthy Lifestyles	-195.4	-195.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Sexual Health	Removal of additional temporary investment in Public Health Sexual Health Services	-212.9	-212.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Healthy Lifestyles	Removal of temporary public health contribution towards the voluntary sector in 2023-24	-350.0	-350.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Children's Programme	Removal of additional temporary investment in counselling services for children	-1,085.0	-1,085.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Service Strategies & Improvements	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Mental Health	Removal of one-off public health investment in Live Well Kent in 2023-24	-2,000.0	-2,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL SERVICE STRATEGIES & IMPROVEMENTS					-2,568.8	-1,538.8	1,030.0	-4,952.0	0.0		External

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

					-48,638.0	-66,906.9	-24,423.7	-84,861.2	-51,780.4		
MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care Charging	Review of the Adults Charging Policy, in line with Care Act legislation and the statutory guidance	-1,250.0	-2,600.0	-1,350.0	-800.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Mental Health	One-off contribution from Public Health for Mental Health Live Well Kent contract	0.0	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	1,000.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Policy	CED	Peter Oakford	Partnership arrangements with District Councils	Cease Early Intervention Payments to District Councils	-82.5	-82.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	CED	Peter Oakford	Member Services	End Select Committees and Short Focused Inquiries	-20.0	-20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	CHB	Peter Oakford	Corporately Held saving (to be allocated before County Council in February)	Part year impact of further discretionary policy decisions and deep dive into contract renewals with consideration of reducing service specifications	0.0	-2,300.0	-2,300.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love	Services to Schools	Review our offer to schools in light of the latest DFE funding changes and guidance including exploring alternative funding arrangements and engaging in efficiency measure to reduce costs	-1,200.0	-1,200.0	0.0	-250.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Youth Services	Review of youth services offer: cease commissioned youth services contracts	0.0	-913.0	-913.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love	SEN Transport	Introduction of charging for post 16 SEN transport and reductions to the Post 19 transport offer	-781.0	-781.0	0.0	-541.0	-300.0	Transport	Core
Policy	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Review of Open Access - Youth Services & Children's Centres	Review of open access services in light of implementing the Family Hub model	-1,500.0	-400.0	1,100.0	-1,600.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Policy	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Residential Care	Development of in-house residential units to provide an alternative to independent sector residential care placements (invest to save)	100.0	100.0	0.0	200.0	-600.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love	Kent 16+ Travel Saver	Removal of undeliverable 2023-24 saving and review the Kent 16+ Travel Saver scheme	250.0	250.0	0.0	0.0	-478.6	Transport	Core
Policy	DCED	Peter Oakford	Corporate Landlord	Review of Office Assets	-763.9	-763.9	0.0	-310.6	-1,238.0	Other	Core
Policy	DCED	Peter Oakford	Corporate Landlord	Review of Community Delivery including Assets	-101.0	-101.0	0.0	-604.5	-576.3	Other	Core
Policy	GET	Clair Bell	Review of Community Wardens	Review of Community Warden Service to deliver a £1m saving which is likely to result in an overall reduction in wardens	-500.0	-433.0	67.0	-67.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	GET	Neil Baker	Road Safety activity	Review of level of campaigns and related activity within Road Safety	0.0	-200.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Policy	GET	Clair Bell	Trading Standards staffing	Review of staffing levels within Trading Standards service. Mix of one-off and permanent savings.	0.0	-60.8	-60.8	48.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	GET	Clair Bell	Reduction of Trading Standards Budget	Adjustment of Trading Standards legal costs as Courts recover post-Covid	-55.0	-55.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	GET	Roger Gough	Planning Applications	Savings from delayed recruitment	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	GET	Roger Gough	Waste - Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	Review of the number and operation of HWRC sites	-616.0	0.0	616.0	-988.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Community Based Preventative Services	Further review of contracts and grants for discretionary services including investment from other strategic partners - Older People	0.0	0.0	0.0	-7,413.5	0.0	Older People	Core
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Community Based Preventative Services	Further review of contracts and grants for discretionary services including investment from other strategic partners - Vulnerable Adults	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,086.5	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Review of in-house services	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	Older People	Core
Policy	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Community Based Preventative Services	Explore alternative sources of funding for the Kent Support & Assistance Service	0.0	0.0	0.0	-567.2	0.0	Other	Core
Policy	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Looked After Children	Review contract with Health for fast tracking mental health assessments for Looked After Children	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love/ Neil Baker	SEN Home to School Transport (HTST)	Implementation of new statutory guidance for Home to School Transport (published June 23) including making use of a new system for transport planning to explore route optimisation and the use of standard pick up points, where appropriate.	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.0	-1,000.0	Transport	Core
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love	Post 19 Transport	Review of ongoing discretionary offer for post 19 education transport	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-2,000.0	Transport	Core

Page 2

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Policy	CYPE	Rory Love/ Neil Baker/ Sue Chandler	Kent Travel Saver	Review of Kent Travel Saver Scheme, including a review of the ongoing discretionary offer for free transport for Looked After Children, Care Leavers and Young Carers	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,890.0	Transport	Core
Policy	GET	Roger Gough	Waste Savings - impact of new Govt legislation	Savings from reduced incentivisation payments to districts following the introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation and where DEFRA will incentivise districts directly.	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,300.0	-1,000.0	Waste	Core
Policy	GET	Neil Baker	Review of on-street parking	Review of on-street parking, which may involve insourcing and the need to invoke a 24 month notice period, or current arrangement to be reviewed to see if synergies may exist and cost savings to be shared by KCC and its partners	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-100.0	Highways	Core
Policy	CHB	Peter Oakford	Unidentified	Further policy savings to be developed to replace the one-off solutions for closing the 2024-25 budget gap. This will need to include further savings over and above those already included in the MTFP including but not solely from the following examples: - Libraries, Registration and Archives - Kent Travel Saver - Supported Buses - Household Waste Recycling Centres - 16+ Home to School Transport - Waste Collection Partnerships - Regeneration & Economic Development - Services for Schools - Schools maintenance - Other Community Services	0.0	0.0	0.0	-23,945.8	0.0	Other	Core
TOTAL POLICY SAVINGS					-6,569.4	-10,610.2	-4,040.8	-39,726.1	-5,402.9		Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Annual uplift in line with benefits and income uplift for social care client contributions	Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - Older People	-4,773.1	-6,400.0	-1,626.9	-2,900.0	-2,100.0	Older People	Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Annual uplift in line with benefits and income uplift for social care client contributions	Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - Vulnerable Adults	-1,529.1	-1,600.0	-70.9	-800.0	-400.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Older People	-2,188.0	-2,188.0	0.0	-2,311.8	-2,442.6	Older People	Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Vulnerable Adults	-179.5	-179.5	0.0	-189.7	-200.4	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Adult Social Care Staffing	-99.8	-99.8	0.0	-105.4	-111.4	Adult Social Care staffing	Core
Income	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care	Estimated annual inflationary increase in Better Care Fund - Integrated Community Equipment Service and Assistive Technology	-4.4	-4.4	0.0	-4.6	-4.9	Other	Core
Income	CHB	Peter Oakford	Review of fees & charges	Removal of corporately held saving from a review of all fees and charges as these savings are reflected within the individual directorate proposals	500.0	500.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Income	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Adoption Service	Adoption Service	-200.0	-200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Income	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Annual uplift in line with benefits and income uplift for social care client contributions	Uplift in social care client contributions in line with estimated benefit and other personal income uplifts, together with inflationary increases and a review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams - 0-25	-123.7	-120.0	3.7	-60.0	-30.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Income	CYPE	Rory Love	Kent 16+ Travel Saver	Kent 16+ Travel Saver price realignment to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	-94.0	-100.0	-6.0	-104.0	0.0	Transport	Core
Income	GET	Neil Baker	Kent Travel Saver	Kent Travel Saver price realignment to offset bus operator inflationary fare increases	-463.5	-463.5	0.0	-479.7	0.0	Transport	Core
Income	GET	Neil Baker	Highways income	Review of Highways income based on current/projected activity levels	-100.0	-400.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Income	GET	Clair Bell	Review of Charges for Service Users - existing service income streams & inflationary increases	A review of fees and charges across all KCC services, in relation to existing service income streams	-50.0	-200.0	-150.0	-50.0	0.0	Other	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?	
Income	GET	Neil Baker	Highways	Income from traffic management penalties including contravening traffic restrictions, box junctions and bus lanes	-100.0	-100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core	
Income	GET	Neil Baker	Public transport grant funding	Use of grant funding to support project & scheme costs	0.0	-100.0	-100.0	100.0	0.0	Transport	Core	
Income	GET	Clair Bell	Public Protection	Increased income within Kent Scientific Services for toxicology analysis for the Coroners Service	-60.0	-56.0	4.0	-3.7	-4.1	Other	Core	
Income	GET	Neil Baker	funding	Grant funding to support Electric Vehicle Strategy	0.0	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core	
Income	GET	Derek Murphy	Increased income from Regeneration projects	One-off increase in profit share from East Kent Opportunities LLP	0.0	-50.0	-50.0	50.0	300.0	Other	Core	
Income	GET	Clair Bell	Review of Charges for Service Users - existing service income streams & inflationary increases	Increased contribution from Medway Council under SLA relating to increasing costs for provision of Coroner service in Medway	-49.0	-49.0	0.0	-42.7	-16.0	Other	Core	
Income	GET	Clair Bell	Public Protection	Inflationary increase in income levels and pricing policy for Kent Scientific Services	-45.0	-45.0	0.0	-33.3	-33.9	Other	Core	
Income	GET	Clair Bell	Trading Standards	Inflationary increase in fees and charges	-1.4	-1.4	0.0	-0.6	-0.7	Other	Core	
Income	NAC	Peter Oakford	Income return from our companies	Estimated increase in the income contribution from our limited companies, including a one-off increase in 2024-25.	-500.0	-3,500.0	-3,000.0	3,000.0	0.0	Other	Core	
TOTAL INCOME					-10,060.5	-15,406.6	-5,346.1	-3,935.5	-5,044.0		Core	
P C O P O S I T I O N	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care service redesign	Review and reshape ASCH as set out in the sustainability plan to deliver new models of social care, which will address increases in demand and costs associated with care and support. This will include increasing take-up of direct payments for use on micro-enterprises and personal assistants, greater use of technology enabled living, and further development of digital self service. This will also include the use of self assessment, financial assessment tools, and regular reviews of both new and existing care packages to ensure that the best outcomes are being achieved. Older People.	-12,292.8	-17,436.1	-8,579.4	-17,042.1	-16,460.7	Older People	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care service redesign	Review and reshape ASCH as set out in the sustainability plan to deliver new models of social care, which will address increases in demand and costs associated with care and support. This will include increasing take-up of direct payments for use on micro-enterprises and personal assistants, greater use of technology enabled living, and further development of digital self service. This will also include the use of self assessment, financial assessment tools, and regular reviews of both new and existing care packages to ensure that the best outcomes are being achieved. Vulnerable Adults.	-18,464.0	-12,718.7	3,026.6	-12,037.1	-11,770.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Older People's Residential & Nursing Care	Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of residential care	-8,000.0	-8,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Care & Support in the Home	Efficiency Savings in relation to the purchasing of care and support in the home	-3,400.0	-3,400.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care Equipment contract	Efficiencies from new contract for the supply of equipment for adult social care clients	-900.0	-900.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care service redesign	Rephasing of 2023-24 service redesign saving - Older People.	1,356.6	1,356.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	Older People	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Adult Social Care service redesign	Rephasing of 2023-24 service redesign saving - Vulnerable Adults	1,942.1	1,942.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	CED	Peter Oakford	Historic Pension Costs	Reduction in the number of Historic Pension Arrangements within CED Directorate	-250.0	-250.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	CHB	Peter Oakford	Reduced spend on agency staff	The reduction of the volume and duration of agency staff.	0.0	-750.0	-750.0	-250.0	0.0	Other	Core
	Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Rory Love	Home to School transport - SEN	Estimated reduction to the impact of rising pupil population on SEN Home to School and College Transport	-6,300.0	-6,300.0	0.0	-10,600.0	-10,300.0	Transport	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Looked After Children	Implement strategies to reduce the cost of packages for looked after children, including working with Health	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core	

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Adult Social Care	Review of 18-25 community-based services: ensuring strict adherence to policy, review of packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	-650.0	-650.0	0.0	-650.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Early Help & Preventative Services	Expanding the reach of caseholding Early Help services	-560.0	-560.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Disabled Children's Placement and Support	Review of children with disability packages ensuring strict adherence to policy, review packages with high levels of support and enhanced contributions from health	-550.0	-550.0	0.0	-550.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Explore strategies, including statutory guidance, to reduce dependency on social work agency staff	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Rory Love	Initiatives to increase use of Personal Transport Budgets	Initiatives to increase use of Personal Transport Budgets to reduce demand for Hired Transport	-300.0	-300.0	0.0	-400.0	-400.0	Transport	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Rory Love	Historic Pension Costs	Reduction in the number of Historic Pension Arrangements - CYPE Directorate	-180.0	-206.0	-26.0	-110.0	-54.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Open Access - Youth & Children's Centres	Removal of one-off saving in 2023-24 from vacancy management and avoiding all non-essential spend across open access	600.0	600.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	DCED	Peter Oakford	Corporate Landlord	Property savings from a review of specialist assets	-45.0	-45.0	0.0	-68.5	-68.5	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Review of green/organic waste contracts	Re-tender of green waste contract, with market analysis indicating a reduction in gate fee	0.0	-621.0	-621.0	-444.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Derek Murphy	Review of the level of spend/service with the 3 Brand Kent commissions (Visit Kent, Locate in Kent, Produced in Kent)	Review of the services and as aspiration for all three to be amalgamated to ensure synergies achieved in systems/back office functions and to limit any reduction in service levels	0.0	-150.0	-150.0	-42.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Waste - Household Waste & Recycling Centres (HWRCs)	Increased waste material segregation, increased re-use, black-bag splitting and trade waste recycling with a view to generating income or reducing cost	-105.0	-105.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Waste	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Neil Baker	Highways	Review of all Highways & Transportation fees and charges, that are to be increased annually in line with inflation	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	-50.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Windmills	Temporary reduction in spend on weatherproofing windmills	-50.0	-50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Clair Bell	Kent Sport	Withdraw the remaining contribution to the KCC hosted Active Kent and Medway.	-28.0	-28.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Clair Bell	Reduction in grant fund	Reduction to the Arts Investment Fund, which provides grants to Kent-based arts organisations	0.0	-25.0	-25.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Environment	Removal of one-off saving in 2023-24 from planned delay in recruiting to the new structure in the Environment Team Closing the gap adjustment - deferred to 25/26.	300.0	0.0	-300.0	300.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Clair Bell	Libraries, Registration & Archives (LRA)	Removal of one-off reduction in 2023-24 in the Libraries Materials Fund and one year contribution holiday for the Mobile Libraries renewals reserve	-1.0	0.0	1.0	207.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Improved Food Waste Recycling Rates through collaboration with Districts	Work with Kent District Councils to deliver savings from improving kerbside food waste recycling rates	-160.0	232.0	392.0	-388.3	0.0	Waste	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CED	Peter Oakford	Efficiencies within Member support administration	Efficiencies within the Member support administration	0.0	-5.0	-5.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CED	Roger Gough	Strategic Commissioning	Explore alternative sources of funding for the administration of the Kent Support & Assistance Service	0.0	0.0	0.0	-262.0	0.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CHB	Peter Oakford	Review of embedded staff	Review of embedded teams in Directorates, to establish opportunities for consolidation and/or centralisation of practice	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,300.0	0.0	Other	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Transformation & Efficiency	CHB	Peter Oakford	Spans and layers	Review of structures across the Council to ensure adherence to the Council's organisation design policy	0.0	0.0	0.0	-500.0	-1,500.0	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Looked After Children	Reduce the recent increase in the number of Looked After Children placements through practice reviews & improved court proceedings	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,500.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Children's Social Care	Review of Legal Services Spend through cost efficiencies by Invicta Law and review of the use of legal services by social workers	0.0	0.0	0.0	-850.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	DCED	Dylan Jeffrey	Contact Centre	Review of service levels when the contract for the provision of the Contact Centre is renewed	0.0	0.0	0.0	-72.5	-217.5	Other	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	GET	Roger Gough	Increased food waste recycling due to new legislation	Reduced cost of food waste disposal following Govt legislation regarding consistent collections.	0.0	0.0	0.0	-331.0	-331.0	Waste	Core
Transformation & Efficiency	CHB	Peter Oakford	Corporately Held saving (to be allocated before County Council in February)	Further actions from Securing Kent's Future to reduce costs including from: - Cost drivers in demand led services, largely in Adult Social Care, Children in Care and Home to School Transport - Contract Reviews including their scope - Scope of Council ambitions - Transforming the operating model of The Council	0.0	0.0	0.0	-10,603.6	0.0	Other	Core
TOTAL TRANSFORMATION & EFFICIENCY SAVINGS					-49,387.1	-50,269.1	-7,036.8	-57,544.1	-41,051.7		Core
Financing	NAC	Peter Oakford	Flexible Use of Capital Receipts	One-off use of capital receipts under the Governments flexible use of capital receipts policy, which allows authorities to use the proceeds from asset sales to fund the revenue costs of projects that will reduce costs, increase revenue or support a more efficient provision of services	0.0	-8,000.0	-8,000.0	8,000.0	0.0	Other	Core
Financing	NAC	Peter Oakford	Investment Income	Increase in investment income largely due to the increase in base rate	-2,279.6	-2,279.6	0.0	1,222.4	718.2	Other	Core
Financing	NAC	Peter Oakford	Debt repayment	Review amounts set aside for debt repayment (MRP) based on review of asset life	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	Other	Core
TOTAL FINANCING SAVINGS					-3,279.6	-11,279.6	-8,000.0	8,222.4	-281.8		Core
Policy	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health	Review of Public Health Services principally related to Healthy Lifestyles to ensure spending is contained within ringfenced grant	-9.2	-9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL POLICY SAVINGS					-9.2	-9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0		External
Income	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Additional income linked to HIV prevention	Additional income from NHSE to fund increased costs linked to HIV prevention	-275.2	-275.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Income	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health	Estimated additional income for externally funded posts	-6.1	-6.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL INCOME					-281.3	-281.3	0.0	0.0	0.0		External
Transformation & Efficiency	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Reduction in expenditure relating to one-off drawdown from reserve to support 24/25 budget	Reduction in expenditure relating to one-off drawdown from reserve to support 24/25 budget	0.0	0.0	0.0	-13.9	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL TRANSFORMATION & EFFICIENCY SAVINGS					0.0	0.0	0.0	-13.9	0.0		External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Domestic Abuse	Increase in Domestic Abuse Duty grant to fund new burdens in providing domestic abuse support in safe accommodation	-59.9	-59.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	CHB	Roger Gough	Household Support Fund	Removal of the extension of the Government funded Household Support Fund into 2023-24 as announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement on 17th November 2022	22,130.8	22,130.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	CYPE	Sue Chandler	Family Hubs	Estimated reduction in our share of the DfE/DHSC Family Hubs and Start for Life grant	777.0	777.0	0.0	3,332.0	0.0	Integrated Children's Services	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Supplemental Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	-1,412.9	-1,412.9	0.0	3,615.4	0.0	Other	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Grant	Estimated increase in Public Health Grant pending announcement from Department of Health and Social Care	-975.5	-975.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Drug Strategy Housing Support Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	-23.1	-23.1	0.0	932.1	0.0	Other	External
Increases in Grants and Contributions	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Individual Placement and Support in Community Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	-7.5	-7.5	0.0	256.5	0.0	Other	External

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - SAVINGS PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of saving/income	Brief description of saving/income	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area (Big 6) does the Saving/ Income Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Increases in Grants and Contributions	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health - Substance Misuse	Remove one-off Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant from Office for Health Improvement & Disparities	520.2	520.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL INCREASES IN GRANTS & CONTRIBUTIONS					20,949.1	20,949.1	0.0	8,136.0	0.0		External

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - RESERVES PROPOSALS

					19,910.3	5,548.0	-14,362.3	8,752.3	-14,350.0		
MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of reserve template	Brief description of reserve template	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area does the Reserve Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Contributions to reserves	DCED	Peter Oakford	Facilities Management	Contribution to reserves to smooth the impact of the mobilisation costs of the Facilities Management contracts over the life of the contracts (2022-23 to 2026-27)	160.0	160.0	0.0	160.0	160.0	Other	Core
Contributions to reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Deficit - Safety Valve	KCC Contribution towards funding the DSG deficit as agreed with DfE as part of the Safety Valve agreement	15,100.0	15,100.0	0.0	14,600.0	11,100.0	Other	Core
Contributions to reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	General Reserves repayment	Repay the General Reserve over two years (2024-25 & 2025-26) for the drawdown required in 2022-23 to fund the overspend	11,050.0	11,050.0	0.0	11,050.0	0.0	Other	Core
Contributions to reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	General Reserves	Contribution to reserves in order to maintain general reserve at 5% of net revenue budget	5,100.0	5,100.0	0.0	3,100.0	3,300.0	Other	Core
Contributions to reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	Corporate Reserves	Contribution to reserves to repay the drawdown required to balance the budget in 2023-24 in order to maintain financial resilience	4,289.7	4,289.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Contributions to reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	Emergency capital events reserve	Annual contribution to a new reserve for emergency capital works and revenue costs related to capital spend such as temporary accommodation, and condition surveys which don't result in capital works	1,000.0	1,000.0	0.0	1,000.0	1,000.0	Other	Core
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESERVES					36,699.7	36,699.7	0.0	29,910.0	15,560.0		Core
Drawdowns from reserves	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Drawdown corporate reserves	Fund the Kent Support and Assistance Service from Corporate Reserves for two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 - ASCH Directorate	-567.2	-567.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Drawdowns from reserves	CED	Roger Gough	Drawdown corporate reserves	Fund the Kent Support and Assistance Service from Corporate Reserves for two years 2023-24 and 2024-25 - CED Directorate	-262.0	-262.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Drawdowns from reserves	GET	Neil Baker	ICT Reserve	Drawdown of ICT reserve to fund the upgrade of the streetlighting Control Management System from 3G connectivity (subject to approval of a business case via Strategic Technology Board)	0.0	-475.0	-475.0	0.0	0.0	Highways	Core
Drawdowns from reserves	NAC	Peter Oakford	Drawdown Corporate Reserves	One-off use of corporate reserves in 2024-25 - yet to be decided which reserves this will come from or whether it is from a mix of drawdowns and/or reduced contributions to reserves.	0.0	-12,887.3	-12,887.3	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
TOTAL DRAWDOWNS FROM RESERVES					-829.2	-14,191.5	-13,362.3	0.0	0.0		Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	DCED	Peter Oakford	Facilities Management	Removal of prior year contribution to reserves to smooth the impact of the mobilisation costs of the Facilities Management contracts over the life of the contracts (2022-23 to 2026-27)	-160.0	-160.0	0.0	-160.0	-160.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Risk Reserve	Removal of prior year one-off contribution to risk reserve (2023-24 increase in annual contribution)	-7,000.0	-7,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	General Reserves	Removal of prior year one-off contribution to general reserve	-5,800.0	-5,800.0	0.0	-5,100.0	-3,100.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Risk Reserve	Removal of prior year one-off contribution to risk reserve (original contribution)	-5,000.0	-5,000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Local Taxation Equalisation - Council Tax Collection Fund	Removal of prior year contribution to Local Taxation Equalisation smoothing reserve of Council Tax Collection Fund surplus above £7m assumed	-4,488.7	-4,488.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Removal of contribution related to repayment of previous "borrowing" from reserves	Reduction & full removal of the annual repayment of the "borrowing" from reserves to support the budget in 2011-12, reflecting when the reserves will be fully repaid	-1,223.3	-1,223.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Local Taxation Equalisation - Business Rates Collection Fund	Removal of prior year contribution to the Local Taxation Equalisation smoothing reserve of the Business Rates Collection Fund surplus	-1,067.6	-1,067.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Deficit - Safety Valve	Removal of prior year contribution to the DSG deficit in accordance with the Safety Valve Agreement with DfE	0.0	0.0	0.0	-15,100.0	-14,600.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	General Reserves repayment	Removal of prior year repayment of General Reserve for the drawdown in 2022-23 to fund the overspend	0.0	0.0	0.0	-11,050.0	-11,050.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Corporate Reserves	Removal of one-off repayment of reserves in 2024-25	0.0	0.0	0.0	-4,289.7	0.0	Other	Core

APPENDIX G: 2024-27 DRAFT BUDGET - RESERVES PROPOSALS

MTFP Category	Directorate	Cabinet Member	Headline description of reserve template	Brief description of reserve template	Initial Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	Revised Draft Budget 2024-25 Amount £000's	2024-25 Change in value £000's	2025-26 Amount £000's	2026-27 Amount £000's	What priority service area does the Reserve Template relate to?	Is this Externally or Core Funded?
Removal of prior year Contributions	NAC	Peter Oakford	Emergency capital events reserve	Removal of prior year contribution to the emergency capital events reserve	0.0	0.0	0.0	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	Other	Core
TOTAL REMOVAL OF PRIOR YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS					-24,739.6	-24,739.6	0.0	-36,699.7	-29,910.0		Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	ASCH	Dan Watkins	Drawdown corporate reserves	Removal of use of corporate reserves in prior year to fund the Kent Support and Assistance Service - ASCH Directorate	567.2	567.2	0.0	567.2		Other	Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	CED	Roger Gough	Remove prior year drawdown from Covid reserve	Removal of use of corporate reserves in prior year to fund the Kent Support and Assistance Service - CED Directorate	262.0	262.0	0.0	262.0		Other	Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	GET	Neil Baker	ICT Reserve	Removal of the drawdown in 2024-25 from the ICT reserve to fund the one-off cost of the streetlighting Control Management System upgrade from 3G connectivity	0.0	0.0	0.0	475.0		Highways	Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	NAC	Peter Oakford	Drawdown corporate reserves	Removal of one-off use of reserves in 2023-24	4,289.7	4,289.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	NAC	Peter Oakford	Drawdown corporate reserves	Removal of one-off drawdown from No Use Empty reserve in 2023-24	200.0	200.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	Core
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	NAC	Peter Oakford	Drawdown Corporate Reserves	Removal of one-off use of corporate reserves in 2024-25	0.0	0.0	0.0	12,887.3		Other	Core
TOTAL REMOVAL OF PRIOR YEAR DRAWDOWNS					5,318.9	5,318.9	0.0	14,191.5	0.0		Core
Drawdowns from reserves	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	One-off funding for Live Well Kent Mental Health contract	0.0	-1,000.0	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	External
Drawdowns from reserves	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Use of Public Health reserves to fund one-off costs and invest to save initiatives in 2024-25	-336.6	-336.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Drawdowns from reserves	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Use of Public Health reserves to balance 2024-25 budget plans	-13.9	-13.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
TOTAL DRAWDOWNS FROM RESERVES					-350.5	-1,350.5	-1,000.0	0.0	0.0		External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Removal of use of Public Health reserves to fund one-off costs in previous year	2,440.3	2,440.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Removal of use of Public Health (Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust) reserves to fund one-off costs in previous year	1,313.9	1,313.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Removal of use of Public Health (Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust) reserves to fund one-off costs in previous year	56.8	56.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	Other	External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Replace one-off drawdown from Public Health Reserve 24/25	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.9	0.0	Other	External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Replace 24/25 drawdown of Public Health Reserves	0.0	0.0	0.0	336.6	0.0	Other	External
Removal of prior year Drawdowns	Public Health	Dan Watkins	Public Health Reserves	Removal of one-off funding for Live Well Kent Mental Health contract	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,000.0	0.0	Vulnerable Adults	External
TOTAL REMOVAL OF PRIOR YEAR DRAWDOWNS					3,811.0	3,811.0	0.0	1,350.5	0.0		External

Key

ASCH	Adult Social Care & Health
CED	Chief Executive's Department
CHB	Corporately Held Budgets
CYPE	Children, Young People & Education
DCED	Deputy Chief Executive's Department
GET	Growth, Environment & Transport
NAC	Non Attributable Costs

This page is intentionally left blank

Reserves Policy

1. Background and Context

- 1.1 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require councils to consider the level of reserves when setting a budget requirement. Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) to report formally on the adequacy of proposed reserves when setting a budget requirement. The accounting treatment for reserves is set out in the Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting.
- 1.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) issued Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin No.99, Guidance Note on Local Authority Reserves and Balances in July 2014, which updated previous Bulletins to reflect the new requirements of the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Code of Practice. In addition, during the period of financial austerity for the public sector, the LAAP considered it necessary to update the guidance on local authority reserves and balances. Compliance with the guidance is recommended in CIPFA's Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government. In response to the above requirements, this policy sets out the Council's approach for compliance with the statutory regime and relevant non-statutory guidance for the Council's cash backed usable reserves.
- 1.3 All reserves are categorised as per the LAAP guidance, into the following groups:
- **Smoothing** – These are reserves which are used to manage large fluctuations in spend or income across years e.g., Private Finance Initiative (PFI) equalisation reserves. These reserves recognise the differences over time between the unitary charge and PFI credits received.
 - **Trading** – this reserve relates to the non-company trading entities of Laser and Commercial Services to cover potential trading losses and investment in business development.
 - **Renewals for Vehicles Plant & Equipment** – these reserves should be supported by an asset management plan, showing projected replacement profile and cost. These reserves help to reduce fluctuations in spend.
 - **Major projects** – set aside for future spending on projects.
 - **Insurance** - To fund the potential cost of insurance claims in excess of the amount provided for in the Insurance Fund provision, (potential or contingent liabilities)
 - **Unspent grant/external funding** – these are for unspent grants which the Council is not required to repay, but which have restrictions on what they may be used for e.g., the Public Health grant must be used on public health services. This category also consists of time limited projects funded from ringfenced external sources.
 - **Special Funds** – these are mainly held for economic development, tourism and regeneration initiatives.
 - **Partnerships** – these are reserves resulting from Council partnerships and are usually ringfenced for the benefit of the partnership or are held for investing in shared priorities.
 - **Departmental underspends** – these reserves relate to re-phasing of projects/initiatives and bids for use of year end underspending which are requested to roll forward into the following year.
- 1.4 Within the Statement of Accounts, reserves are summarised by the headings above. By categorising the reserves into the headings above, this is limited to the nine groups, plus Public

Health, Schools and General. Operationally, each will be divided into the relevant sub reserves to ensure that ownership and effective management is maintained.

- 1.5 Reserves are an important part of the Council's financial strategy and are held to create long term budgetary stability. They enable the Council to manage change without undue impact on the Council Tax and are a key element of ensuring the Council's strong financial standing and resilience. The Council's key sources of funding face an uncertain future and the Council therefore holds earmarked reserves and a working balance in order to mitigate future financial risks.
- 1.6 Earmarked reserves are reviewed regularly as part of the monitoring process and annually as part of the budget process, to determine whether the original purpose for the creation of the reserve still exists and whether or not the reserves should be released in full or in part or require topping up based on known/expected calls upon them. Particular attention is paid in the annual review to those reserves whose balances have not moved over a three-year period.

2. Overview

- 2.1 The Council's overall approach to reserves will be defined by the system of internal control.
- 2.2 The system of internal control is set out, and its effectiveness reviewed, in the Annual Governance Statement (AGS). Key elements of the internal control environment are objective setting and monitoring, policy and decision-making, compliance with statute and procedure rules, risk management, achieving value for money, financial management and performance management. The AGS includes an overview of the general financial climate which the Council is operating within and significant funding risks.
- 2.3 The Council will maintain:
 - a general reserve; and
 - a number of earmarked reserves.
- 2.4 The level of the general reserve is a matter for the Council to determine having had regard to the advice of the S151 Officer. The level of the reserve will be a matter of judgement which will take account of the specific risks identified through the various corporate processes. It will also take account of the extent to which specific risks are supported through earmarked reserves. The level will be expressed as a cash sum over the period of the general fund medium-term financial strategy. The level will also be expressed as a percentage of the general funding requirement (to provide an indication of financial context). The Council's aim is to hold general reserves of 5% of the net revenue budget to recognise the heightened financial risk the Council is facing.

3. Strategic context

- 3.1. The Council continues to face a shortfall in funding compared to spending demands and must annually review its priorities in order to address the shortfall.
- 3.2 The Council also relies on interest earned through investments of our cash balances to support its general spending plans.

3.3 Reserves are one-off money. The Council aims to avoid using reserves to meet ongoing financial commitments other than as part of a sustainable budget plan and one of the Council's financial principles is to stop the use of one-off funding to support the base budget. The Council has to balance the opportunity cost of holding reserves in terms of Council Tax against the importance of interest earning and long-term future planning.

4. Management and governance

4.1 Each reserve must be supported by a protocol. All protocols should have an end date and at that point any balance should be transferred to the general reserve. If there is a genuine reason for slippage then the protocol will need to be updated.

A questionnaire is completed by the relevant budget holder and reviewed by Finance to ensure all reserves comply with legislative and accounting requirements. A de-minimis limit has been set to avoid small funds being set up which could be managed within existing budgets or declared as an overspend and then managed collectively. This has been set at £250k.

4.2 Reserves protocols and questionnaires must be sent to the Chief Accountant's Team within Finance for review and will be approved by the Corporate Director of Finance, Corporate Management Team and then by the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services. Protocols should clearly identify contributions to and drawdowns from reserves, and these will be built into the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and monitored on a quarterly basis.

Accessing reserves will only be for significant unusual spend, more minor fluctuations will be managed or declared as budget variances. In-year drawdowns from reserves will be subject to the governance process set out in the revised financial regulations. Ongoing recurring costs should not be funded from reserves. Any request contrary to this will only be considered during the budget setting process. The short term use of reserves may be agreed to provide time to plan for a sustainable funding solution in the following financial year.

Decisions on the use of reserves may be delayed until financial year end and will be dependent on the overall financial position of the council rather than the position of just one budget area.

The current Financial Regulations state:

Maintenance of reserves & provisions

A.24 The Corporate Director of Finance is responsible for:

- i. proposing the Council's Reserves Policy.
- ii. advising the Leader and the Council on prudent levels of reserves for the Authority when the annual budget is being considered having regard to assessment of the financial risks facing the Authority.
- iii. ensuring that reserves are not only adequate but also necessary.
- iv. ensuring that there are clear protocols for the establishment and use of each earmarked reserve. Reserves should not be held without a clear purpose or without a planned profile of spend and contributions, procedures for the reserves managements and control, and a process and timescale for review of the reserve to ensure continuing relevance and adequacy.

- v. ensuring that all renewals reserves are supported by a plan of budgeted contributions, based on an asset renewal plan that links to the fixed asset register.
- vi. ensuring that no money is transferred into reserves each financial year without prior agreement with him/herself.
- vii. ensuring compliance with the reserves policy and governance procedures relating to requests from the strategic priority and general corporate reserves.

4.3 All reserves are reviewed as part of the monitoring process, the budget preparation, financial management and closing of accounts processes. Cabinet is presented with the monitoring of reserves on a regular basis and in the outturn report and the Council will consider a report from the S151 Officer on the adequacy of the level of reserves in the annual budget setting process. The report will contain estimates of reserves where necessary. The Governance and Audit Committee will consider actual reserves when approving the statement of accounts each year.

4.4 The following rules apply:

- Any in year use of the General Reserve will need to be approved by Cabinet and any planned use will be part of the budget setting process.
- In considering the use of reserves, there will be no or minimal impairment to the Council's financial resilience unless there is no alternative.

4.5 The Council will review the Reserves Policy on an annual basis.

Budget Risks and Adequacy of Reserves

The assessment of budget risks and the adequacy of reserves is even more important for the 2024-25 revised draft budget and the medium-term financial plan due to the priority to restore the council's financial resilience as set out in "Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy" and the announcement of the Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) for 2024-25. The administration's revised draft budget for 2024-25 includes a package of £23.9m of one-off measures to balance the budget together with the expectation that these will be replaced by recurring savings in 2025-26/2026-27. As well as these one-off measures, the balanced position includes completely removing the 1% risk contingency, a one-off increased dividend from the trading companies, and reduced debt charges as a result of capital programme rephasing and lower levels of borrowing. The remainder of the gap has been closed through sustainable measures on spending growth and further savings and income. The PLGFS includes an unexpected reduction in Services Grant which has increased the budget saving requirement by £5.4m. Putting all this together means the revised draft is only marginally less risky than the initial draft and still requires the Council to agree and deliver significant savings both in 2024-25 and over the medium term. The package of one-off measures includes the following:

- £2.1m for the announcement of a further one-year payment of New Homes Bonus Grant
- £8.0m flexible use of capital receipts
- £13.8m use of corporate and public health reserves

The 2023-24 budget monitoring shows a significant forecast overspend largely on adult social care and children's services. Management action (the majority of which is one-off) has been identified and is expected to balance the position by year end. If this management action does not bring 2023-24 into balance by year end the only option would be a greater drawdown from reserves further weakening financial resilience going into 2024-25.

This section includes a new and separate assessment of the current position of the council against the key symptoms of financial stress identified by CIPFA in its report entitled "Building Financial Resilience".

There are a number of significant risks that could affect either the cost of providing key services and/or the level of service demand or its main sources of funding. In addition, there are general economic factors, such as the level of inflation and interest rates that can impact on the net cost of services going forward. Pressures from the main cost drivers and in some cases from service demand are evident in children's and adults social care, waste volumes, and home to school and special educational needs transport.

The main risks are summarised below.

Risks

Cost of Living

- Extraordinary increases in the costs of goods and services procured by the Council
- Market instability due to workforce capacity as a result of recruitment and retention difficulties leading to exit of suppliers, increased costs, and supply chain shortages
- Increased demand for Council Services over and above demographic demands, including crisis and welfare support
- Reductions in income from fees and charges
- Under collection of local taxation leading to collection losses and reductions in tax base
- Increased Claimant eligible for of Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme discounts

International Factors

- Impact of war in Ukraine and other conflicts
- Impact of the decision to leave the European Union
- Legacy impact of Covid-19
- Ongoing supply chain disruption including energy supplies
- Breakdown of hosting arrangements under Homes for Ukraine scheme

Regulatory Risk

- **High Court ruling on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking (UAS) Children** – the judgement that the council is responsible for supporting all UAS children arriving in the county until they are transferred under the National Transfer Scheme impacts on the availability and therefore cost of carers for local children as well as risks of shortfalls in funding refugee schemes (see below)
- **Replacement Legislation and Regulation following Brexit** – including additional council responsibilities, impact on businesses and supply chains, and economic instability
- **Statutory overrides** – currently there are a number of statutory overrides in place which reduce short term risks e.g., high needs deficit, investment losses, etc. These are time limited and require a long-term solution
- **Funding settlements** - adequacy of the overall settlement and reliance on council tax over the medium term, and uncertainty over future settlements (especially beyond 2024-25)
- **Delayed Reforms to Social Care Charging** - uncertainty over future plans and funding, and providers' fee expectations
- **Other delayed legislative reforms** – impact on council costs and ability to deliver savings/spending reductions e.g. Extended Producer Responsibilities
- **Departmental Specific Grants** - Unanticipated changes in specific departmental grants and the ability to adjust spending in line with changes

- **Asylum and Refugee Support** – increase in numbers of refugees (adults and families) accommodated within the community impacting on council services. Inadequate medium-term government funding for asylum and refugee schemes
- **New Burdens** – Adequacy of funding commensurate with new or additional responsibilities
- **Further delay of the Local Government Funding Review** - The government has committed to updating and reforming the way local authority funding is distributed to individual authorities. However, this has now been even further delayed until 2025-26 at the earliest. The Fair Funding Review of the distribution methodology for the core grants was first announced as part of the final local government settlement for 2016-17. The majority of data used to assess funding distributions has not been updated for over 10 years, dating from 2013-14 to a large degree, and even as far back as 2000.

General Economic & Fiscal Factors

- Levels of national debt and borrowing
- Inflation continues to be well above the government target for a sustained period with consequential impacts on contracted services (see below) and household incomes (including incomes of KCC staff)
- Poor economic growth
- Rise in unemployment
- A general reduction in debt recovery levels
- Reductions in grant and third-party funding
- Increase in fraud

Increases in Service Costs and Demand

- Long term impact of Covid-19 pandemic on clients and suppliers
- Higher cost for new clients coming into care than existing clients especially but not exclusively older persons' residential and nursing care and children in care
- Adult Social Care cost and demand increases from increased complexity
- Children's Social Care including sufficiency of Foster Carers and numbers of UAS children or those with no recourse to public funds
- Significantly higher than the national average Education and Health Care Plans with consequential impact on both Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs placements/services and General Fund services for assessment and home to school transport
- Waste tonnage
- High demand for mandated Public Health services
- General demographic trends (including a rising and ageing population and growth in the number of vulnerable persons)

Contractual Price Increases

- Index linked contracts rise above budgeted amounts
- Containing locally negotiated contracts within the amounts provided in the budget
- Financial sustainability of contracted providers

Efficiencies and Savings Programme

- Slippage in the expected delivery of the savings programme
- Non-delivery of planned savings
- Shortfalls in income from fees and charges

The main opportunities are summarised below.

Opportunities

- Growth in local taxbase for both housing and businesses
- Service transformation and redesign including digital services
- Invest to save approach to reduce revenue costs
- Service remodelling
- Extension of the power to use capital receipts to fund revenue spending on transformation activity and other spending that reduce future costs until March 2030
- Further flexibilities due to be announced in January over the use of ring-fenced grants

Adequacy of Reserves

Reviewing the level of reserves the Council holds is an important part of the budget setting process. The review must be balanced and reasonable, factoring in the current financial standing of the Council, the funding outlook into the medium term and beyond, and most importantly, the financial risk environment the Council is operating in. The assessment of reserves is based on factors recommended by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) as set out below together with an indication of the direction of travel (up arrow represents an improved position i.e., the risk is less than it was last year).

Assumptions for inflation



The direction of travel for this indicator was showing as deteriorating in last year's budget due to the historically high levels of inflation that arose during 2022. The annual rate of inflation (using CPIH) peaked at 9.6% in October 2022 and has been on a downward trajectory in the subsequent months (CPI peaked at 11.1% and RPI at 14.2% in October 2022).

The November 2023 Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts are for the rate of inflation to peak in quarter 4 of 2022 (CPI 10.7% in quarter 4 2022), before the rate of prices growth falls back as follows:

- 10.2% in quarter 1 2023
- 8.4% quarter 2
- 6.7% quarter 3
- 4.8% quarter 4
- 4.6% in quarter 1 2024
- 3.7% quarter 2
- 3.3% quarter 3
- 2.8% quarter 4
- 2.3% in quarter 1 2025

Thereafter inflation is forecast to be below the 2% target.

The latest inflation release for November 2023 showed the annual rate of increases in CPI at 3.9% (compared to 4.6% in October). CPIH was 4.2% in November 2023 (compared to 4.7% in October). If these trends continue then the rate of inflation would be reducing compared to forecasts on which the revised draft budget is based although it is too early to confirm this at this stage.

The higher than forecast inflation is the reason why this measure is still showing as constant for 2024-25 and not improving. Inflation is still volatile and subject to external shocks such as a return to higher oil prices.

Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts



The Council uses receipts as part of the funding for the capital programme. The Administration's revised draft budget for 2024-25 assumes £8m of receipts will be used to fund revenue spending using the direction powers under the Local Government Act 2003. This flexibility has now been extended to March 2030. Delivery of receipts against the target has continued to fall behind in recent years necessitating additional short-term borrowing/use of reserves. However performance is forecast to be above target in 2023-24, which together with the previous unapplied balance allows scope to use the flexibility powers.

Performance in the current year has been mixed with the rise in interest rates dampening large new-build housing developments. Although there is a reasonable pipeline of assets for disposal, the risk profile for potential delays remains high therefore leading to a continued deterioration in this measure.

Capacity to manage in-year budget pressures and strategy for dealing with demand and service delivery in the longer term



2022-23 ended with a revenue budget overspend for the first time in 23 years. The net overspend in 2022-23 was £47.1m after roll forwards (3.9% of net revenue). Overspends before roll forwards were reported in Adult Social Care & Health (ASCH) of £24.4m, Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) of £32.7m, Growth Environment and Transport (GET) of £0.9m, Deputy Chief Executive Department (DCED) of £1.6m. These were partly offset by underspends in Chief Executive Department (CED) of £3.5m and Non-Attributable Costs and Corporately held budgets (NAC) of £11.8m

The most significant overspends were:

- £30.5m older persons' residential and nursing care in ASCH
- £16.1m home to school transport in CYPE
- £9.9m children in care in CYPE

The most recent 2023-24 revenue budget monitoring reported to Cabinet on 4th January 2024 shows a forecast overspend of £35.6m before management action. This is a slight reduction on previous months following the introduction of spending controls. The latest monitoring report identifies the management action that needs to be delivered to bring the 2023-24 outturn into balance by the year end. More stringent spending controls are being considered to ensure sufficient progress is made in the remaining months of the year. The overspend is largely driven by higher spending growth than the £182.3m (excluding spending on externally funded activities) provided for in the

budget. The largest overspends are in the same main areas as 2022-23 (adult social care, children in care and home to school transport). This is despite including additional spending in the budget for the full year effect of recurring spend from 2022-23 and forecasts for future price uplifts, increases in demand and cost increases unrelated to price uplifts.

Cabinet on 5th October 2023 and County Council on 16th November 2023 agreed “Securing Kent’s Future – Budget Recovery Strategy” setting out the broad strategic approach to providing reassurance on the necessary action to bring the 2023-24 budget back into balance and the opportunity areas for further savings and avoidance of future cost increases over the medium term 2024-27.

However, until this strategic plan has been converted into detailed plans and these have been delivered, managing in-year spending and spending growth over the medium term presents the most significant risk to the Council’s financial resilience and sustainability and therefore the highest rating of deterioration.

Strength of financial reporting and ability to activate contingency plans if planned savings cannot be achieved



There continues to be a reasonable degree of confidence in the validity of financial reporting despite the uncertainties and volatility as a result of overspends. However, the ability to activate contingency plans if planned savings cannot be achieved has to date been severely restricted as a result of these overspends. although every effort is being made to reduce the forecast overspend in 2023-24.

Reporting has been enhanced to include separate analysis of delivery of savings plans, treasury management and council tax collection. Further improvements have been made in terms of the timeliness of financial monitoring and reporting to ensure corrective action is taken as early as possible.

Some areas of spending can still be changed at short notice if required as a contingency response if planned savings cannot be achieved (or there are unexpected changes in spending). A significant plank of the 2023-24 recovery strategy is to reduce non committed spending for the remainder of the year. At this stage it is expected that managers across the whole organisation will exercise this restraint to reduce forecast spending for the remainder of the year. However, if this does not result in sufficient reductions

to bring in-year spending back into balance, further more stringent spending controls will need to be introduced for the remainder of the year. These spending reductions are largely anticipated to be one-off and will not flow through into 2024-25 or later years unless the spending controls remain in place into 2024-25.

The increased focus on savings monitoring and delivery has had some impact and the majority of the overspend in 2023-24 and forecast for 2024-25 is due to unbudgeted spend rather than savings delivery, although savings delivery is still a contributory factor and remains a risk, this is no greater a risk than in previous years, hence this measure has not been rated as deteriorating.

However, if the further savings necessary to bring 2023-24 back into balance are not expected to be achieved this measure would need to be reassessed.

Risks inherent in any new partnerships, major outsourcing arrangements, and major capital developments



Partnership working with NHS and districts has improved. However, further sustained improvements are still needed to change the direction of travel.

Trading conditions for Council owned companies continue to be challenging although a higher one-off dividend is included in the administration's revised draft budget 2024-25.

A number of outsourced contracts are due for retender and the Council is still vulnerable to price changes due to market conditions.

The ability to sustain the capital programme remains a significant challenge. It is essential that capital programmes do not rely on unsustainable levels of borrowing and additional borrowing should only be considered where absolutely essential to meet statutory obligations. This will impact on the condition of non-essential assets possibly resulting in the closure of facilities although the planned spending to limit modernisation programmes to essential measures to ensure buildings are safe warm and dry has proved to be inadequate and the draft capital programme includes additional spending in 2024-25 and 2025-26 to reflect a more realistic level of spend on the assets the Council needs to sustain necessary functions. Despite the action taken to limit additional borrowing, just under ¼ of the draft capital programme (£376m) is still funded by borrowing. Slippage within individual projects remains

an issue leading to lower than planned spending in the short-term but potentially higher medium to long term costs due to inflation. This slippage defers borrowing rather than reducing it.

The quarter 2 capital monitoring report showed a forecast net underspend of £106.4m, comprising £5.7m real overspend on projects and programmes, and £112.2m reduction due to slippage. £4.3m of the real variance is due to spending on grant and externally funded projects where funding was announced after the capital programme was approved.

Financial standing of the Authority (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, use of reserves, etc.)



The financial standing of the Council has weakened significantly as a result of the overspend in 2022-23 that was balanced by the drawdown of £47.1m from general and risk reserves (39% of general reserve and all of the £25m risk reserve). Usable reserves were also reduced through the transfer of £17m from earmarked reserves to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve as part of the Council's contribution to the Safety Valve agreement with the Department for Education (DfE) in March 2023 (with a further transfer of £14.4m planned for 2023-24). Overall, the council's usable revenue reserves have reduced from £408.1m at 31/03/22 (40% of net revenue) to £355.1m at 31/03/23 (29.8% of net revenue) with a further reduction to £316.3m (24% of net revenue) forecast for 31/03/24. This forecast assumes the 2023-24 revenue spend is brought back to a balanced budget position by year end with no further draw down from reserves.

The reduction in usable reserves has significantly reduced the Council's ability to withstand unexpected circumstances and costs and reduced the scope to smooth timing differences between spending and savings plans. The levels of reserves now pose a more significant risk to the Council's financial resilience than levels of debt. Levels of reserves are now considered to be the second most significant financial risk after capacity to deal with in-year budget pressures. Reserves will need to be replenished at the earliest opportunity and will need to be factored into future revenue budget plans.

The Council has an ongoing borrowing requirement of £1.1bn arising from its historic and ongoing capital expenditure which is expected to remain broadly stable over the medium term. Most of this requirement is covered by existing external debt, which is forecast to decline gradually over the medium term (from around

72% in 2023-24 to 66% in 2026-27. The remaining portion is met via internal borrowing (namely the temporary use of internal cash balances in lieu of investing those balances with external counterparties).

Although the Council has been protected to a significant extent from the material increase in interest rates over the past two years (given that most of its borrowing requirement is already met by fixed rate debt) the higher rate environment has increased the expected cost of internal borrowing as well as costs associated with any new external borrowing over the near and medium term.

A small portion of the borrowing requirement (8.4% in 2023-24) is met via “LOBO” (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans. These instruments provide lower cost financing in exchange for giving the lender the periodic opportunity to reset the loan’s interest rate. The Council manages the risks around these loans being “called” by restricting their use to only a minor portion of the borrowing portfolio and by avoiding any concentration in the loans’ associated option dates.

In managing the structure of its borrowing (the balance between internal and external borrowing, and the portion of the latter that is made up of fixed-rate as opposed to variable-rate loans), the Council is chiefly concerned with risks arising from uncertainty around interest rates as well as ensuring it has adequate liquidity over the medium term. The Council reviews its borrowing strategy formally on an annual basis to ensure it remains appropriate. The revised draft budget report includes an updated Treasury Management Strategy.

The Authority’s record of budget and financial management including robustness of medium-term plans



The direction of travel for this factor was shown as deteriorating in the final budget presented to County Council on 9th February 2023 due to the quarter 3 monitoring for 2022-23 showing a significant £53.7m forecast revenue overspend. The overspend reduced a little by year-end to £44.4m before roll forwards (£47.1m after roll forwards). However, this was not sufficient to change the direction of travel bearing in mind the scale of the forecast overspends for 2023-24.

The most significant cause of the overspends is higher than budgeted spending growth despite significant increases already factored into the budget. The need to include the full year effect of current year overspends as a variance to the published medium-term plan

means that the capacity to manage in-year budget pressures (highest rated risk assessment) is the most significant factor in MTFP variances rather than the robustness of MTFP forecasts. This is the only reason that this particular assessment has not been shown as a significant deterioration with a double arrow. Nonetheless, the robustness of forecasts included in the MTFP does need improvement (hence this assessment is still showing a deterioration until these are improved).

The revised draft budget for 2024-25 and MTFP for 2024-27 is balanced albeit through a significant amount of one-offs for 2024-25 which are shown as being replaced in the balanced position for 2025-26 and 2026-27. However, this replacement does increase the savings requirement for these years. As yet details of these savings have not been confirmed and will only be confirmed over the coming months. Consequently, until these savings have been confirmed and are delivered, this measure is still showing as deteriorating.

Virement and year-end procedures in relation to under and overspends



The direction of travel for this factor was shown as deteriorating in last year's budget due to the 2022-23 forecast overspend and ongoing issues with Whole Government Accounts. The forecast for 2023-24 is a further forecast overspend and issues remain with Whole of Government Accounts meaning there has not been sufficient progress to date to change the direction of travel on this assessment.

The Council continues to adhere to its virement and year end procedures as set out in its financial regulations. The Council's ability to close the year-end accounts early or even on time is becoming increasingly difficult. The audit certificate for 2020-21 was issued on 4th September 2023, following confirmation that no further work was required on the Whole Government Accounts. The audit certificate for 2021-22 has not been issued due to the audit of the 2021-22 Whole of Government Accounts being outstanding as the external auditors have prioritised the audit of the 2022-23 accounts.

The draft outturn for 2022-23 was reported to Cabinet on 29th June 2023 outlining the main overspends and underspends together with roll-forward requests. This was presented alongside an update of the medium-term financial outlook. The net overspend of £47.1m was reported after roll forwards of £2.7m. The overspend was funded from a drawdown from earmarked and general reserves. The draft accounts

for 2022-23 were published on 1st July 2023 and are due to be signed off following the February Governance and Audit Committee.

The availability of reserves and government grants/other funds to deal with major unforeseen events



As identified in the assessment of the financial standing of the Council, the levels of usable reserves have reduced at the end of 2022-23 and are forecast to reduce further by the end of 2023-34. A number of significant risks remain unresolved (including at this stage balancing the 2023-24 revenue budget) which could impact on reserves and the assessment of their adequacy if the management action to reduce spending in the current year does not result in a balanced outturn.

The most significant risk to reserves in previous years has been identified from the accumulated and growing deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) reserve largely from the overspending high needs support within the DSG. This has now been addressed over a number of years through the Safety Valve agreement with the Department for Education (DfE). However, at this stage the Safety Valve agreement is a recovery plan that will be delivered over a number of years with spending on high needs support gradually brought back into balance with the available grant funding and the historic accumulated deficit cleared with contributions from the DfE and the Council. However, this does not fully mitigate the risk as should the plan not be fully delivered there is a risk that the DfE could withhold contributions and a residue deficit would remain.

The reserves forecast includes the transfer to the DSG reserve of the Council's contribution for 2022-23 and a further forecast transfer for the Council's contribution in 2023-24. Provision is included in the 2024-25 revised draft budget and 2024-27 MTFP for the remaining Council contributions. The DSG reserve forecast also includes the DfE contributions for 2022-23 to 2027-28. These contributions together with the recovery plan to reduce the in-year deficit on high needs spending would see the accumulated deficit cleared by 2027-28. However, resolving this aspect of risk to reserves results in £82.3m over the term of the agreement of the Council's resources which would otherwise have been available to mitigate other risks.

Although this DSG risk has been addressed the risk of the requirement for further drawdowns if the 2023-24 current year spend and the one-offs including use of reserves in 2024-25 revised draft budget and 2024-27 MTFP and the overall forecast level of reserves means

the assessment of this risk cannot yet show an improvement and could be a further deterioration.

A new risk has arisen during 2023-24 following the high court judgment that the Council must take all possible steps to care for all Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking (UAS) children arriving in the county under the Children Act 1989, unless and until they are transferred to other local authorities under the National Transfer Scheme. The council is currently in negotiations with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Home Office and Department for Education (DfE) to ensure the Council's costs are fully covered by Government to enable compliance with the judgment. Whilst circa £9m has been offered by the Home Office for revenue costs in 2023-24, negotiations continue on an updated offer for 2023-24, 2024-25 and on-going basis as this is insufficient to cover the actual and estimated one-off and recurring costs. A capital grant has been agreed with DfE for £10.39m to cover capital costs to upgrade existing property assets to provide compliant facilities and additional capacity, and negotiations are ongoing with the Home Office for sufficient capital grant to upgrade existing facilities and to secure further additional properties. Until negotiations are complete and the Council has been made whole for all costs to support UAS children arriving in the county until they are transferred to other local authorities under National Transfer Scheme this remains a major threat to the Council's financial sustainability.

A register of the most significant risks is published as part of the revised draft 2024-25 revenue budget, 2024-27 medium term plan, 2024-34 capital programme and Treasury Management Strategy.

The general financial climate including future expected levels of funding



The Autumn Statement 2022 included departmental spending plans up to 2024-25 and high-level spending plans up to 2027-28. The plans for 2023-24 and 2024-25 included additional support for local government including additional grants and increased assumptions for council tax. These plans were updated in the 2023 Autumn budget on 22nd November 2023 but are still only high-level overall forecasts beyond 2024-25 with no individual departmental details.

The Autumn Budget 2023 identified that while day to day spending on public services will continue to grow above inflation in future years (1% in real terms), public spending will continue to face many pressures and the

government remains committed to boost public sector productivity and focus spending on government priorities. This combination is likely to impact on the distribution of spending between departments and priorities. Forecasts suggest that unprotected areas of spending, including local government, could be facing a real terms reduction in funding of around 1.8% implied by the overall plans for 2024-25 to 2028-29. If these forecasts are correct this could result in another sustained period of flat cash settlements for local government.

The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement (PLGFS) only included individual grant allocations and core spending power calculations for 2024-25. The settlement did not include indicative council tax referendum levels beyond 2024-25. Other departmental specific grants are not included in the settlement.

The planned reforms to social care charging have been delayed until 2025 at the earliest. It is this delay that has enabled Government to redirect the funding allocated for social care reform as a short term increase in funding for current pressures in adult social care. A further tranche of funding for the Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund for workforce reform for 2023-24 and 2024-25 was announced in July 2023 and included in the PLGFS.

However, the inadequacy of medium to long term sustainable funding for adult social care remains, and the lack of certainty that the additional funding available in 2023-24 and 2024-25 will be baselined for subsequent years.

The lack of detailed government departmental plans beyond 2024-25, the unexpected reduction in Service Grant for 2024-25 and the forecast that the planned growth in public spending is unlikely to be distributed evenly means that the assessment of this risk has deteriorated from the initial draft budget and is now assessed as deteriorating over the medium term.

The long-awaited update and reform to the funding arrangements for local government have also been delayed again until 2025 at the earliest.

Despite increased certainty of funding for 2023-24 and 2024-25, medium term financial planning remains uncertain, particularly future spending and income forecasts. The plans for 2025-26 include a higher level

of uncertainty. Plans can only be prepared based on prudent assumptions and forecasts for later years remain highly speculative.

The adequacy of insurance arrangements



The Council's insurance policies were reviewed for January 2022. A hardening market along with changing levels of risk has resulted in a rise in premiums, with some deductibles being increased to mitigate this. The implications of limiting capital borrowing to absolutely essential statutory services increases the risk of insurance claims where assets have not been adequately maintained. A fund audit confirms the levels of insurance reserve are adequate, however as the corporate contribution to the fund is remaining unchanged, more reliance will be placed on the reserve to balance insurance claims.

Of the eleven factors used to assess risk and the adequacy of reserves, only one has improved since the initial draft in November (prospects for inflation) and one has deteriorated (expected levels of funding). The strength of financial reporting and ability to activate contingency plans remains the only other factor not deteriorating, and even this is conditional on delivering the plans to bring 2023-24 spending back into balance. The capacity to manage in-year budget pressures and strategy for dealing with demand and service delivery in the longer term, and financial standing of the Council (level of borrowing, debt outstanding, use of reserves, etc.) continue to be assessed as the most significant deterioration and therefore the biggest risks to the Council's financial sustainability and remain a cause for serious concern. There are aspects of these deteriorations as well as a number of the others that are largely due to external factors but these still need to be managed and mitigated as much as possible. No weighting has been applied to the individual factors, but the general financial risk to the Council should now be regarded as substantially and severely increased compared with a year ago, which in turn, was increased from the year before and has hardly improved since the initial draft budget.

The amounts and purposes for existing reserves have been reviewed to ensure the Council achieves compliance with Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin 99. This bulletin sets out the recommendations on the purposes for holding reserves. Reserves are split between general reserves (working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cashflows/avoiding unnecessary temporary borrowing and contingency to cushion the impact of unexpected events/emergencies) and earmarked reserves to build up funds for known/predicted specific events.

The administration's updated draft 2024-25 budget includes a £3.1m net increase from changes in contributions and draw down from reserves in 2024-25. This includes additional contributions to replenish the draw down from general reserves in 2022-23 over two years 2024-25 and 2025-26 and provision for the Council's contribution to the DSG reserve under the safety valve agreement, as well as a further £13.8m of drawdowns from/reduced contribution to corporate reserves and use of public health reserves as part of the one-off measures to balancing 2024-25 budget. A full

reconciliation of all the changes to contributions and draw down from reserves for 2024-25 is available through the detailed dashboard of budget variations.

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
Significant Risks (over £10m)						
CYPE	High Needs Spending	The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block does not meet the cost of demand for placements in schools, academies, colleges and independent providers.	The Safety Valve programme does not deliver the reduction to the in-year deficit on spending to support children with high needs as planned leading to a higher deficit	The Department for Education withholds its contribution towards the accumulated deficit and/or the increased overspend leaves a residue deficit. The government requires that the total deficit on the schools budget to be carried forward and does not allow authorities to offset from general funds anything above the amounts included in the Safety Valve agreement without express approval from Secretary of State. This approach does not resolve how the deficit will be eliminated and therefore still poses a significant risk to the council	4	150.0
Page 101	Non delivery of Savings and income and inability to replace one-off measures	Changes in circumstances, resulting in delays in the delivery of agreed savings or income and inability to replace one-off measures with sustainable permanent alternatives	Inability to progress with plans to generate savings or additional income as planned, due to changing circumstances	Overspend on the revenue budget, requiring alternative compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	111.5
CYPE	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking (UAS) Children	The High Court has ruled that the Council is responsible for the care of all Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children arriving in the county until such time as they are transferred to other councils under National Transfer Scheme	Failure to reach agreement with government departments (Home Office and Department for Education) to cover all costs incurred by the council in supporting UAS children	Overspend on the revenue and or capital budgets, requiring alternative compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	60.0
GET	Waste capital infrastructure life expired and insufficient to cope with increased housing and population levels	A number of KCC's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) are life expired (35-40 years old) and require significant repair or replacement/reconfiguration. In addition to this, District Local Plan targets mean additional houses, and increasing population, presents a capacity issue for the service. Council Tax allows price inflation, additional tonnes (demography) and legislative changes to be taken into account, but does not allow for renewing or adding new infrastructure. The service started securing s106 from 2023 onwards, but unless other (Government) funding can be secured, the Council will need to invest in both of these areas	Unless grant or other funding (s106, CIL) can be secured, the Council will need to fund replacing and reconfiguring (due to Government legislative unfunded changes) the existing sites, as well as building new sites. Outside of the capital programme, which includes building one new WTS, there is up to £40m investment required and noted in the 10-year capital programme. Funding has not been identified for these schemes, which include two new WTS and renewing existing sites, but is an indication of the level of investment required over the medium to long term and for which there is no currently identified funding source (one WTS/HWRC could be partner funded).	The consequence is that the Council has to put forward match funding, or the entirety of funding, for the new sites and/or reconfigured sites which means additional borrowing and the financing/borrowing costs that go along with this. £40m is the maximum financial impact figure, or accept the consequential reduction in capacity.	4	40.0

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
ALL	2023-24 potential overspend impact on reserves	Under delivery of recovery plan to bring 2023-24 revenue budget into a balanced position by 31-3-24.	Overspend against the revenue budget in 2023-24 required to be met from reserves leading to a reduction in our financial resilience	Insufficient reserves available to manage risks in 2023-24 and future years	3	36.0
GET/DCED	Changing Government focus on funding to support the Net Zero/Carbon Reduction green agenda (capital spend)	Government has previously provided 100% funding for certain Net Zero/green projects e.g. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Funding towards the Bowerhouse and Kings Hill Solar Farms (£20m in total on community/HQ buildings, and £2m on schools), as well as LED installation, heat network or heat source pumps (gas, water). The PSDS grant is now moving focus from LED/Solar - despite the Council requiring 2 more Solar Parks as part of its Net Zero ambitions - and towards Heat Networks. Not only this, but whereas some projects were previously match funded, Government is now looking at >50% match funding requirements. The latest PSDS funding secured only funded 18% of the project. The cost of one large and one small Solar Park is in the region of £22.5m, plus a need for gas boilers on the corporate and schools estate to be replaced by heat source pumps (and/or hydrogen in the future).	The risk is that the Council has to find much higher match funding for future Net Zero projects, or review its expectations with regards to Net Zero 2030 and 2050 ambitions.	The consequence is that the Council has to put forward match funding for capital projects which can only come from borrowing or reserves. Borrowing then has a revenue implication and adds to the financing cost budget which is currently unaffordable, or accept that we will have to meet the target in other ways.	4	30.0
ALL	Full year effect of current overspends	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Increases in forecast current year overspends on recurring activities resulting in higher full year impact on following year's budget (converse would apply to underspends)	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	20.0

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
ASCH / CYPE	Market Sustainability	The long term impact of Covid-19 is still impacting on the social care market, and there continue to be concerns about the sustainability of the sector. At the moment all areas of the social care sector are under pressure in particular around workforce capacity including both recruitment and retention of staff especially for providers of services in the community, meaning that sourcing appropriate packages for all those who need it is becoming difficult. This is likely to worsen over the next few months with the pressures of winter, and increased activity in hospitals. Throughout this year we have continued to see increases in the costs of care packages and placements far greater than what would be expected and budgeted for, due to a combination of pressures in the market but also due to the increased needs and complexities of people requiring social care support.	If staffing levels remain low, vacancies unfilled and retention poor, then repeated pressure to increase pay of care staff employed in the voluntary/private sector in order to be able to compete in recruitment market. At the moment vacancy level said to be 1 in 10. The increases to the National Minimum and National Living Wage will create more challenges for the market to recruit and retain when other sectors may be paying more, so it may be that they will need to increase their wages accordingly.	Care Homes closures are not an infrequent occurrence and whilst some homes that close are either too small or poor quality others are making informed business decisions to exit the market. The more homes that exit in this unplanned manner further depletes choice and volume of beds which can create pressures in the system regarding throughput and discharge from hospital thus potentially increasing price.	4	20.0
ALL	Capital - Developer Contributions	Developer contributions built into funding assumptions for capital projects are not all banked.	Developer contributions are delayed or insufficient to fund projects at the assumed budget level.	Additional unbudgeted forward funding requirement and potential unfunded gaps in the capital programme	4	15.0
ALL	Revenue Inflation	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Price pressures rise above the current MTFP assumptions and we are unsuccessful at suppressing these increases. Each 1% is estimated to cost £14m.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	14.0
CYPE	Market Sustainability	Availability of suitable placements for looked after children. Availability in the market for home to school transport, due to reducing supplier base and increasing demand.	Continued use of more expensive and unregulated placements, where it is difficult to find suitable regulated placements as no suitable alternative is available. The cost of transport contracts continues to increase above inflation.	Unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves.	4	10.0
ALL	Demand & Cost Drivers	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust estimates for spending pressures.	Non inflationary cost increases (cost drivers) continue on recent upward trends particularly but not exclusively in adult social care, children in care and home to school transport above the current MTFP assumptions and the Council is not able to suppress these	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	10.0

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
Other Risks (under £10m - individual amounts not included)						70.0
GET	Capital – asset management and rolling programmes including: Highways, Country Parks, PROW	The asset management/rolling programmes for KCC Highways are annual budgets and are not increased for inflation each year, meaning that the purchasing power reduces year on year as inflation is compounded yet the budget remains fixed.	Inflation pressures are incurred annually on these budget areas but the funding sources (Council borrowing, DfT grant) remain fixed and therefore this contributes to the ‘managed decline’ notion in that these budgets do not even maintain steady state as often the level of investment is significantly below (risk accepted by the Executive) the required level of spend - steady state asset management principles recommend £150m pa is spent. Plus year-on-year inflation is not budgeted for so the level of works commissioned reduces year-on-year also, which was exacerbated in 2023 with BCIS reaching 29% and RPIX 12%+.	A funding gap exists annually, so steady state cannot be achieved, so unless budget provision is made, the level of capital/asset management preventative works commissioned each year will reduce. This will present a revenue pressure, as more reactive works are likely to be required, plus the respective backlogs for Highways Asset Management (c£700m) will increase exponentially. The risk represents the level of annual inflation required to mitigate this risk or accept that the asset will deteriorate.	4	
GET Page 104	Capital - highways grant allocation	DfT capital grant funding has reduced by £9m resulting in insufficient capital funding available to continue at previous budgeted and approved service/investment levels, leading to an accelerated managed decline in the state of our highways network. Kent Highways invest c£70m of capital each year (£25m Council, £40-£45m pa DfT) and this is less than half of what is recommended under best practice asset management principles.	The requirement to manage safety concerns may lead to increased unbudgeted revenue spend on reactive works or an increase in the level of Category 1 & 2 works required on key strategic routes. The Council was already operating a managed decline in the state of the network due to increasing traffic volumes, increasing inflation without compensating increases in funding etc so this will further exacerbate that position.	An overspend on the capital/revenue budget, requiring alternative offsetting savings or temporary funding from reserves/other sources. A re-prioritisation of the Council's capital programme would be required or service levels would need to be reduced. Asset management backlog (currently in excess of £700m) would continue to grow at an even quicker rate.	4	
ALL	Capital	Capital project costs are subject to higher than budgeted inflation.	Increase in building inflation above that built into business cases.	Capital projects cost more than budgeted, resulting in an overspend on the capital programme, or having to re-prioritise projects to keep within the overall budget. For rolling programmes (on which there is no annual inflationary increase), the level of asset management preventative works will reduce, leading to increased revenue pressures and maintenance backlogs.	4	
ALL	Contract retender	Contracts coming up for retender are more expensive due to prevailing market conditions and recruitment difficulties	This risk could result in a shortage of potential suppliers and/or increases in tender prices over and above inflation	Higher than budgeted capital/revenue costs resulting in overspends unless that can be offset by specification changes	4	

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

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

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
CYPE	Recruitment, retention & cover for social workers	Higher use of agency staff to meet demand and ensure caseloads remain at a safe level in children's social work. The Service has relied on recruitment of newly qualified staff however this is being expanded to include a more focused campaign on attracting experienced social workers. There are higher levels of sickness and maternity leave across children's social work	Inability to recruit and retain sufficient newly qualified and experienced social workers resulting in continued reliance on agency staff, at additional cost. Higher levels of sickness and maternity leave resulting in need for further use of agency staff.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	4	
DCED	Cyber Security	Malicious attacks on KCC systems.	Confidentiality, integrity and availability of data or systems is negatively impacted or compromised leading to loss of service, data breaches and other significant business interruptions.	Financial loss from damages and potential capital/revenue costs as a result of lost/damaged data and need to restore systems	3	
DCED	Strategic Headquarters	Sub optimal solution for the Council's strategic headquarters following the decision to market Sessions House as an entire site (with options on individual blocks)	Capital programme includes a capped £20m allocation for strategic assets project that limits the available options	Inability to address all backlog issues increases the risk of cost overruns and potential need for higher future maintenance, running and holding costs	3	
ALL	IFRS9	Removal of statutory override that allows unrealised gains/losses resulting from changes in the fair value of pooled investment funds to be transferred to an unusable reserve until the gain/loss is realised once the financial asset has matured.	Any unrealised gain or loss as a result of stock market performance will impact on the General Fund.	A significant loss would reduce our General Fund and the council's financial resilience. There are two uncertainties: (1) the Statutory Override could be extended, and (2) the ultimate value of any impact	3	
ALL	Capital - Capital Receipts	Capital receipts not yet banked are built into the budget to fund projects.	Capital receipts are not achieved as expected in terms of timing and/or quantum.	Funding gap on capital projects requiring additional forward funding.	3	
ALL	BREXIT and EU Transition	The Council requires full reimbursement from Central Government for the additional ongoing costs of BREXIT and transition.	Full cost reimbursement not received from government. The grants received to date have not been sufficient to cover the Council's additional spending on BREXIT and transition costs.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves	3	
ALL	Income	The Council must ensure that the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) includes robust income estimates.	Income is less than that assumed in the MTFP.	Loss of income or reduced collection of income that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
GET	Waste income, tonnage and gate fee prices	The current market has seen a considerable volatility in the income received for certain waste streams (potentially due to other supply shortages), as well as increased gate fees due to the double digit inflation seen in 2023 (majority of Waste contracts are RPI which was 12% during the year). The budget for 2024-25 includes not only significant price pressures for contract inflation, gate fees and HWRC management costs, but also realignment of budgets from 2023-24 where the actual inflation levels at the point the contracts are uplifted being higher than budgeted. Inflation is reducing, but November OBR showed a slowing rate of reduction than March OBR.	Projected levels of income fall, or gate fees/contractual price uplifts are above budgeted levels which leave an unfunded pressure.	This will result in an unfunded pressure that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	
GET	English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) and Kent Travel Saver (KTS) journey levels	ENCTS journeys have reduced over time, more so during the pandemic, so a £3.4m reduction was reflected in 2022-23 budget with a further £1.9m reduction in the 2023-24 budget. Should custom/patronage return to pre-covid levels, this would lead to a £5.3m budget shortfall. This is a national scheme and the Council has to reimburse the operators for running this on the Council's behalf. There was initially a ringfenced grant for this service, it then became part of the Revenue Support Grant and now no specific grant exists so the taxpayers of Kent fund this scheme and would need to fund any update.	Activity levels return to a level of journeys in excess of the revised budget, therefore causing a financial pressure.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years if current activity levels are not indicative of the new normal.	3	
Non Attributable Costs	Insecure funding	The 2024-25 core budget includes £14.6m from insecure funding (company dividends, business rate pool and new homes bonus).	Previously it was recognised that core spending should not be funded from insecure/volatile sources and such funding should be held in reserve and used for one-off purposes	Funding is not secured at the planned level resulting in overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
Non Attributable Costs	Volatility on Investment Income	Income returns have increased in 2023-24 in line with rising interest rates. The 2023-24 budget included an assumed £2.9m additional income on financial investments under the Treasury Management Strategy and the latest budget monitoring assumes this will be overachieved. The 2024-25 budget assumes a further £2.3m of investment income.	Performance of our investments falls below predicted levels as a result of volatility in the economy	Reduction in investment income leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	3	
CYPE	Home to School Transport	Lack of suitable local education placements for children with Special Education Needs	Parents seek alternative placements outside of their locality requiring additional transport support	Additional transport costs incurred resulting in an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves and potential recurring budget pressure for future years; or seek to demonstrate that the available local placements are suitable for the child's needs	3	
CYPE Page 108	Changes to OFSTED regulation for 16 & 17 year olds	The Department of Education has introduced quality standards, registration and inspection requirements for providers of supported accommodation for 16 & 17 year olds looked after children. Local Authorities are no longer permitted to place or arrange accommodation in unregulated accommodation for any child under 18 from October 2023. Future commissioning must reflect the new OFSTED regulations.	The cost of regulated accommodation is more expensive and could add a further pressure on placement costs in future. Additional Government funding may not be sufficient to fully compensate.	Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years. Further discussions with Home Office if the additional costs relating to UAS Children cannot be managed within existing grant rates.	3	
CYPE / DCED	Reduction in DFE grants for central services for schools and review of school services provided by the Local Authority	The government has reaffirmed its intention for all schools to become part of a multi-academy Trust. Local Authority grant funding to support schools continues to be reduced, equating to a cumulative total reduction of nearly £4m for the Council since 2019-20. Consequently the Council needs to review its relationship with schools and the services it provides free of charge.	Long term solutions cannot be implemented within timescales and may require schools agreement (which may not be achieved). There is also a risk that passing greater responsibilities to schools could have a possible negative impact on other areas of Local Authority responsibility if schools do not comply (for example: school maintenance). There is also the risk of further cuts to the Local Authority Central Services for School Grants in the future.	If this remains unresolved there is a risk that this will also have to either be met from reserves in future years or result in an overspend until a longer term solution is identified	3	
ASCH (PH)	Uplift in Public Health Grant	The anticipated 'real' increase in the Public Health grant is insufficient to meet additional costs due to i) price increases and/or increased demand; and/or ii) costs of new responsibilities.	The increase in the Public Health grant is less than the increases in costs to Public Health.	(i) Additional unfunded cost that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. (ii) Public Health Reserves could be exhausted	3	

Appendix J: Budget Risks Register 2024-25

TOTAL £m	586.5
-----------------	--------------

Directorate	Risk Title	Source/Cause of Risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Current Likelihood (1-5)	Estimated Maximum Financial Exposure £m
DCED	Highways unadopted land	Maintenance costs for residual pieces of land bought by Highways for schemes and subsequently tiny pieces not required or adopted.	Work becomes necessary on these pieces of land and neither Highways or Corporate Landlord have budget to pay for it.	Work needs to be completed whilst estates work to return the land to the original landowner	2	
DCED	Enterprise Business Capabilities (EBC)	Cost and/or timescale overruns on implementation phase for Oracle replacement	Unforeseen or higher than budgeted costs	Additional unfunded costs over and above the reserve set aside for the project	2	
DCED	Capital Investment in Modernisation of Assets	Unless the Council estate asset base is reduced sufficiently, there is risk of insufficient funding to adequately address the backlog maintenance of the Corporate Landlord estate and address statutory responsibilities such as Health & Safety requirements	Condition of the Corporate Landlord estate suffering from under-investment. Recent conditions surveys estimate an annual spend requirement of £12.7m per annum required for each of the next 10 years. Statutory Health & Safety responsibilities not met.	The estate will continue to deteriorate; buildings may have to close due to becoming unsafe; the future value of any capital receipts will be diminished. Potential for increased revenue costs for patch up repairs. Risk of legal challenge.	2	
Page 109	VAT Partial Exemption	The Council VAT Partial Exemption Limit is almost exceeded.	Additional capital schemes which are hosted by the Council result in partial exemption limit being exceeded.	Loss of ability to recovery VAT that leads to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	2	
ALL	Capital - Climate Change	Additional costs are incurred to comply with climate change policy	Project costs increase beyond budget	Overspend on the capital programme resulting in additional borrowing	2	
CYPE	Capital - Basic Need Allocations	Estimates of future basic need allocations are included in the capital programme.	Basic need allocations are less than expected.	Funding gap for basic need projects which will need to be funded either by reprioritising the capital programme or by descoping.	2	
DCED	Backlog of maintenance for properties transferring to Corporate Landlord	Maintenance backlog historically funded by services from reserves or time limited resources which have been exhausted. Properties that have been transferred to the corporate landlord require investment.	Urgent repairs required which cannot be met from the Modernisation of Assets planned programme within the capital budget	Unavoidable urgent works that lead to an overspend on the revenue budget, requiring compensating in year savings or temporary unbudgeted funding from reserves. Potential recurring budget pressure for future years.	2	

Likelihood Rating

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

The estimated maximum financial exposure shown in the table relates to 2024-25 for the revenue risks and for the rolling programmes within capital, whereas the capital risks for specific schemes reflect the financial exposure over the life of the project

This page is intentionally left blank

Details of Core Grants within the 2024-25 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement

The Council is in receipt of a mix of general un-ringfenced grants which can be used in any way the Council decides to discharge its functions (core grants) and specific grants which must be spent according to government priorities. Given the uncertainty of future settlements beyond 2024-25 assumptions will have to be included in the Medium Term Financial Plan for future years. There are risks associated with this approach as the government may decide to change its priorities and reduce or cease funding through a grant or reallocate service specific grants into more general funding with a changed distribution.

A) Revenue Support Grant

Revenue Support Grant (RSG) is a central government grant given to local authorities from the centrally retained share of business rates which can be used to finance revenue expenditure on any service. The amount of Revenue Support Grant to be provided to authorities is established through the Local Government Finance Settlement using the relevant funding formulae; the revision of these formulae (along with the redistribution of the locally retained share of business rates) is the focus of the (deferred) Fair Funding review process.

The Council's RSG has decreased from circa £161m in 2015-16 to circa £9.6m in 2020-21 with only small inflationary uplifts since then. The inflationary uplift for 2024-25 is based on September 2023 CPI (6.62%). For planning purposes we have assumed that a similar CPI inflationary uplift will be applied in subsequent years (based on OBR forecast) although there has been no confirmation of this beyond 2024-25.

B) New Homes Bonus

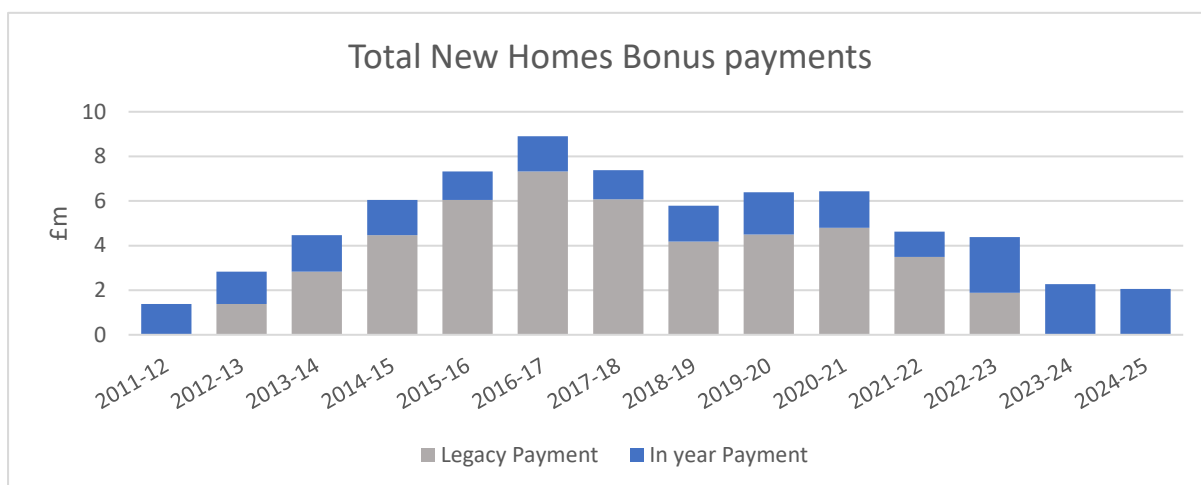
The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme was introduced in 2011-12 to help tackle the national housing shortage. The scheme was designed to reward those authorities that increased their housing stock either through new build or by bringing empty properties back into use. The grant is un-ringfenced.

Initially the NHB grant increased each year as the grant provided an incentive for six years by adding an additional in year growth to the previous year's legacy amount. This saw the grant peak in value in 2016-17. From 2017-18 the grant was reformed with the incentive reduced to four years in stages over two years by removing the earliest two year's legacy payments and adding in year additional growth.

A further reform was introduced in 2020-21 which saw the additional in year growth added as a one-off (i.e. not included in the subsequent year's legacy) with oldest year's legacy removed. This meant three years' worth of legacy payments in that year and one in year's growth. The same system was used in 2021-22 with one-off allocation

of in year growth and two years' worth of legacy payment. In 2022-23 the grant included the one year's remaining legacy and one further year of additional in year growth. For 2023-24 the legacy payment has expired, and the grant represented one year of growth. The provisional local government finance settlement for 2024-25 has confirmed the continuation of NHB payments for one final year, and like 2023-24 these will not attract legacy payments. The provisional settlement for 2024-25 is based on the same methodology as 2023-24 using updated data from Council Tax Base (CTB) returns and DLUHC data on affordable housing supply. Councils can make representations about the data on which allocations are based by 15th January 2024.

The graph below depicts the legacy and growth elements over the lifetime of NHB.



C) Improved Better Care Fund

The Better Care Fund (BCF) was introduced in the 2013-14 spending review. The fund is a pooled budget, bringing together local authority and NHS funding to create a national pot designed to integrate care and health services.

In addition to this, an Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF) was announced in the 2016-17 budget to support local authorities to deal with the growing health and social care pressures during the period 2017-20. The grant is allocated according to relative needs formula for social care with an equalisation adjustment to reflect the adult social care council tax precept. The allocations increased each year between 2017-18 to 2020-21. The subsequent spending reviews and local government settlements have seen the grant rolled forward at the same value in cash terms as 2020-21 (£48.5m). The grant for 2022-23 included a 3% inflationary uplift as part of the additional resources for adult social care within the settlement. The grant for 2024-25 is the same value in cash terms as 2023-24 and 2022-23 (£50m). For planning purposes we have assumed that this grant will continue at the same value in cash terms for the medium term in subsequent years although there has been no confirmation of this.

D) Social Care Grant

The social care support grant was first introduced in 2019-20 following the announcement in the Chancellor's 2019-20 budget of an additional £410m for adult and children's social services. The Council's allocation for 2019-20 was £10.5m based on a formula using the Adult Social Care (ASC) Relative Needs Formula (RNF) with an equalisation adjustment to reflect the adult social care council tax precept.

An additional £1bn was added to the 2020-21 settlement taking the total for social care grant to £1.41bn. The same formula as 2019-20 was used based on using the ASC RNF with an equalisation adjustment to reflect the adult social care council tax precept. The Council's allocation was £34.4m. The government believes there is not a single bespoke needs formula that can be used to model relative needs for both adult and children's social care, therefore the existing ASC RNF was used to distribute this Social Care Grant funding.

The 2021-22 settlement included a further £300m taking the total social care grant to £1.71bn. The same formula was used again providing the Council with an additional £4.7m, increasing the total grant value for 2021-22 to £ 39.1m.

The 2022-23 settlement included an additional £636.4m, £556.4m of this was allocated via the existing ASC RNF and the remaining £80m was allocated to reflect the 1% adult social care council tax precept. This took the total grant to £2.346bn. Combined with the rollover from 2021-22, the Council's total social care grant for 2022-23 was £54.5m, an increase of £15.4m on 2021-22.

The 2023-24 settlement included an additional £1.345bn from the additional funding for adult social care announced in Autumn Budget 2022 which was added to the £2.346bn rolled forward from 2022-23. £160m of this increase was allocated to reflect the 2% adult social care council tax precept, with the remaining £1.185bn allocated using the existing ASC RNF. In addition, the Independent Living Fund (ILF) was rolled into the Social Care Grant (accounting for £161m of the total grant figure) and will no longer be received as a separate specific grant. This took the total Social Care grant to £3.852bn in 2023-24. The Council's total Social Care Grant for 2023-24 was £88.771m including £1.920m from rolled in ILF.

The provisional settlement proposes increasing allocations of the Social Care Grant by £0.692bn, of which £0.612bn was previously announced (and expected) as part of the additional funding for social care announced in Autumn Budget 2022, and £80m was unexpectedly transferred from Services Grant. These increases have been added to the rolled forward grant from 2023-24 of £3.852bn taking the total grant for 2024-25 to £4.544bn. £0.532bn of the increase was allocated according to ASC RNF (as we had been expecting) and £160m of the increase allocated to reflect the 2% adult social care council tax precept (we had been expecting £80m via ASC council tax before the transfer of the further £80m from Services Grant). The Council's total Social Care Grant in the provisional settlement for 2024-25 is £104.2m, an increase of £15.4m on 2023-24.

The Social Care Grant is ringfenced for adults' and children's social care.

E) Services Grant

This was a new one-off, un-ringfenced grant for 2022-23. The Services Grant was £822m in 2022-23. This grant was distributed through the existing formula for assessed relative need across the sector, using 2013-14 shares of Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA). The new grant was to provide funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services, including social care, delivered at every level of local government. It also included funding for local government costs for the increase in employer National Insurance Contributions. The Council's share of this grant for 2022-23 was £13.0m.

The Services grant reduced to £483m in the 2023-24 settlement, £188m of this reduction was related to the cancellation of the increase in employer's National Insurance Contributions. The 2023-24 settlement confirmed the Council's allocation had reduced to £7.6m.

The provisional settlement for 2024-25 proposes a further significant reduction in the Services Grant to £77m, a reduction of £406m. This was an unexpected reduction although £266m has been recycled into increases in other grants (RSG, 3% funding guarantee and £80m into Social Care Grant). It is not clear at this stage what the remaining £140m balance will be used for. The Council's share reduced by £6.4m to £1.2m (an 84% reduction) which equates to net unexpected reduction in the overall provisional settlement of £5.4m after taking into the additional social care grant.

For planning purposes we have assumed that Services Grant will continue at the same value in cash terms for the medium term although there has been no confirmation of this.

F) Market Sustainability and Fair Cost of Care Fund

This was a new grant for 2022-23. In total £162m out of the £3.6bn over 3 years was made available in 2022-23. The grant was allocated using the existing the Adults RNF. The Council's share of this grant was £4.2m. The charging reforms have now been delayed so the 2023-24 allocations of this grant have now been used to fund the increases to the social care grant as explained in paragraph section D of this appendix. The £162m from 2022-23 has now been rolled into the Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Funding as explained in Section G below.

G) Adult Social Care Market Sustainability and Improvement Funding (MSIF)

The 2023-24 settlement maintained the current levels of Fair Cost of Care funding for local authorities for 2023-24 at £162 million.

The Autumn Budget 2022 announced that there will be an additional £400m for adult social care to increase MSIF to £562m for 2023-24. This additional funding was

intended to make tangible improvements to adult social care and, in particular, to address discharge delays, social care waiting times, low fee rates, workforce pressures, and to promote technological innovation in the sector. The additional grant was allocated on the same basis as 2022/23 using the ASC RNF. The Council's allocation of the additional £400m was £10.3m taking the total grant for 2023-24 to £14.4m. The grant was included in the Council's 2023-24 budget plans.

A further £600m funding for adult social care over 2023-24 and 2024-25 was announced on 28th July 2023. £570m was added to MSIF (£365m in 2023-24 and £205m in 2024-25). This additional funding was intended to fund workforce improvements.

The provisional local government finance settlement for 2024-25 has provided confirmation of an Autumn Statement 2022 announcement that this grant has increased nationally by £283m in 2024-25 and by a further £205m for the 2024-25 increase in the workforce element. The additional funding is allocated by the same mechanism as 2023-24 (ASC RNF). The Council's total allocation for 2024-25 is £26.969m, an increase of £12.5m (as expected). For planning purposes we have assumed that the grant will continue at the same value in cash terms for 2025-26 although there has been no confirmation of this.

H) Adult Social Care Discharge Fund

The Autumn Statement 2022 announced £600m of new grant funding for 2023-24 to ensure those people who need to draw on social care when they are discharged from hospital can leave as soon as possible, freeing up hospital beds for those who most need them. Local authorities received £300m of this funding. This funding is required to be pooled as part of the Better Care Fund (BCF). 50% is to be made available to local authorities in the local government finance settlement and the remaining 50% held by Health within the BCF.

In 2023-24 this grant has been distributed using the existing Improved Better Fund allocations, the Council's share was £7.0m. There are conditions attached to this grant.

The 2024-25 provisional local government finance settlement has confirmed the previous announcement in Autumn Budget 2022 that the local authority 50% share of the ASC Discharge Fund increases to £500m in 2024-25. The Council's allocation of £11.7m was confirmed in the provisional local government finance settlement for 2024-25 (as expected). For planning purposes we have assumed that this grant will continue at the same value in cash terms in 2025-26 although there has been no confirmation of this.

This page is intentionally left blank

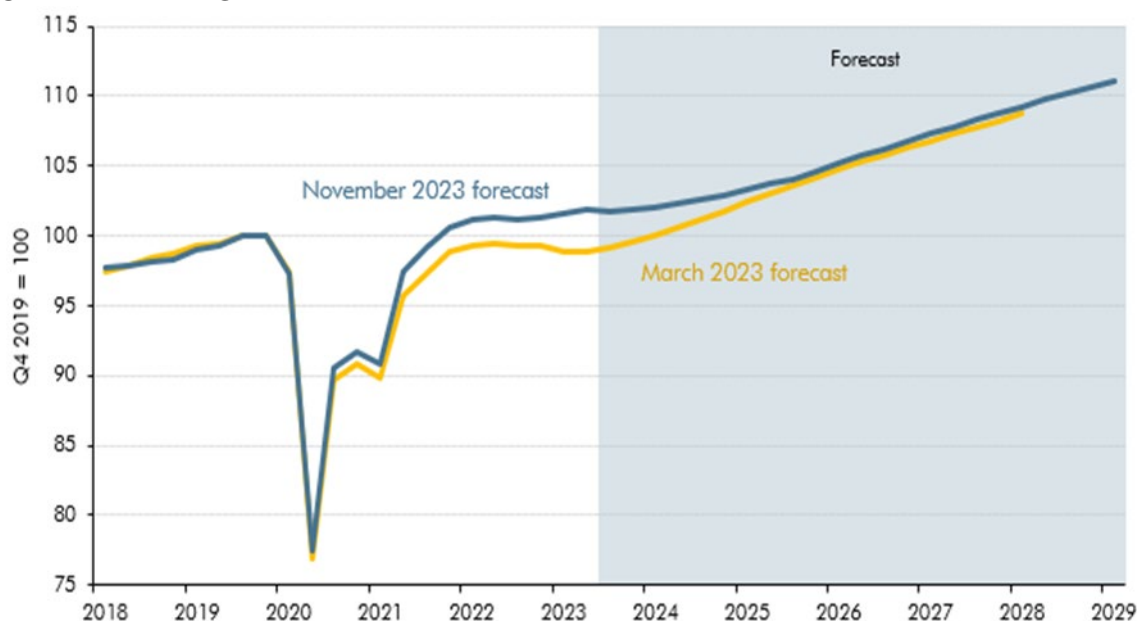
Economic & Fiscal Context

The national fiscal and economic context is an important consideration for the Council in setting the budget. This context not only determines the amount received through central government grants, but it also sets out how local government spending fits in within the totality of public spending and the wider economy. The Autumn Statement and Local Government Finance Settlement LGFS set the government's expectations of how much local authorities can raise through local taxation as well as departmental spending from which central government grants to local government are funded. The Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) produces an Economic and Fiscal Outlook (EFO) report to provide the Chancellor of the Exchequer with an independent and up to date fiscal and economic forecast including impact of government policy decisions. This section of the report highlights the key elements for economic growth, inflation, and public sector spending/borrowing.

Economic Outlook - Growth

The November OBR report identified that the overall economy has recovered more fully from the Covid-19 pandemic and weathered the energy price shock better than previously anticipated. Gross domestic product (GDP) recovered to its pre-pandemic level by the end of 2021 and was 1.8% above it by mid 2023. This compares to the March 2023 forecast that GDP would be 1.1% below pre-pandemic levels at the same point in time. The EFO report indicates that survey data suggests that much of the improved economic strength can be attributed to a modest degree of excess demand. However, although GDP is starting nearly 3% higher than previous forecast, future growth is forecast to be more sluggish and GDP is only to be 0.6% higher by 2027 than the previous forecast as GDP growth is squeezed in the short-term forecasts by a combination of real wages, higher interest rates and unwinding of temporary government support. The comparison between previous and latest forecast for GDP is shown in the following chart 1 from the EFO report.

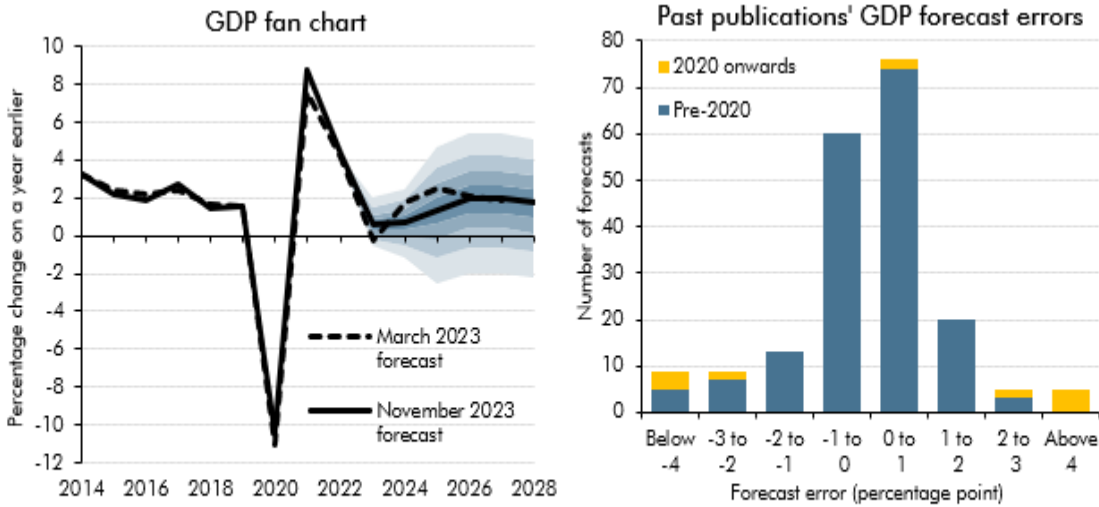
Chart 1 – Real GDP



Source: ONS, OBR

The OBR recognises there is significant uncertainty around GDP growth forecast. This is illustrated through a fan graph showing the central case (as per chart 1 above) and other potential scenarios (shaded according to probability) and the scale of errors in previous forecasts. These comparisons are shown in the following chart 2 from the EFO report.

Chart 2 – GDP Growth Fan Chart and Past GDP Forecast Errors

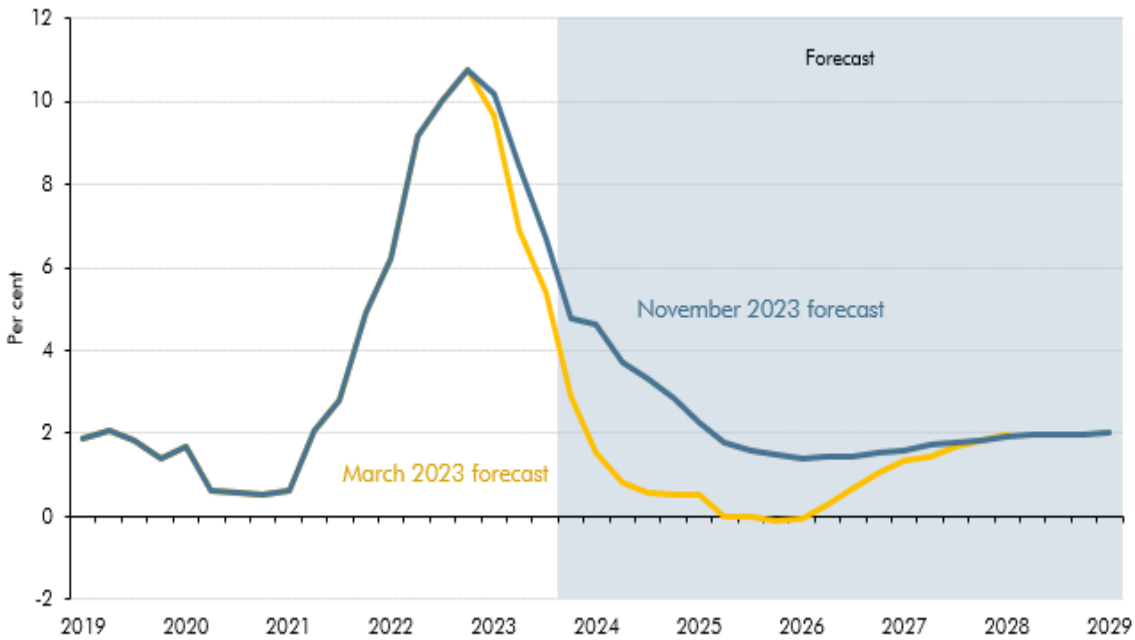


Note: On the left-hand chart, successive pairs of lighter-shaded areas around our forecast represent 20 per cent probability bands. The right-hand chart shows the distribution of forecast errors for every Autumn forecast since 1987. Source: ONS, OBR

Economic Outlook - Inflation

The OBR is forecasting that inflation will remain higher for longer, taking until the second quarter of 2025 to return to around the 2% target, this is more than a year later than in the March 2023 forecast. The OBR has concluded that this slower decline in the rate growth in inflation from previous forecast is due to domestic factors including the higher demand (and subsequent gap between demand and supply within the economy) and stronger wage growth more than offsetting the faster than expected decline in gas prices. From a peak of 10.7% in the last quarter of 2022, CPI is forecast to fall to 4.8% in the final quarter of 2023 (noting that since the OBR forecast was published CPI rate of inflation in the year to November 2023 fell to 3.9% compared to 4.6% for the year to October, and if this trend continues the quarter 4 2023 forecast would be overestimated). The OBR forecasts that as rate of GDP slows and a modest amount of spare capacity opens up and gas prices fall further that inflation is forecast dip slightly below the 2% target between 2025 to 2027, before returning to the target level in the longer-range forecast. The comparison between previous and current inflation is shown in the following chart 3 from EFO report.

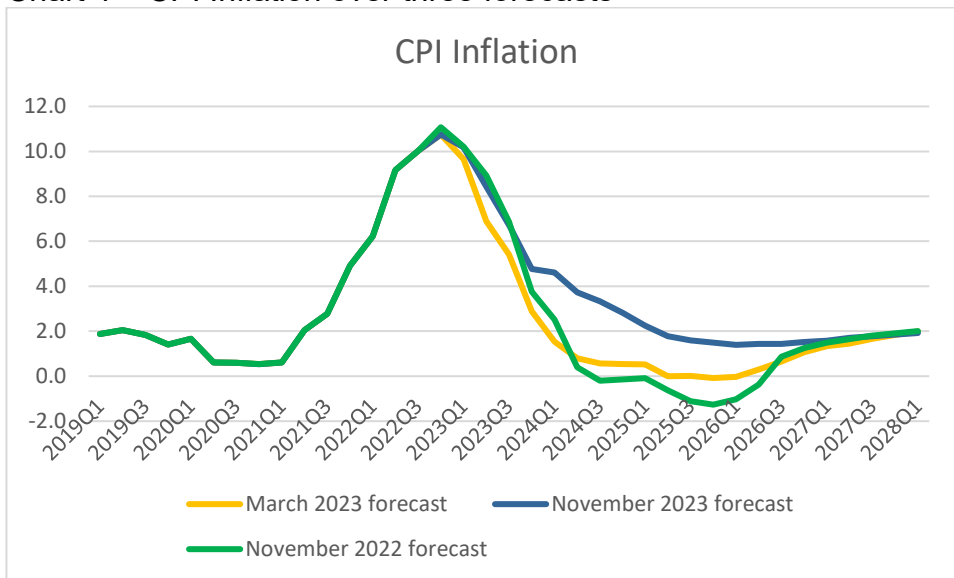
Chart 3 – CPI Inflation



Source: ONS, OBR

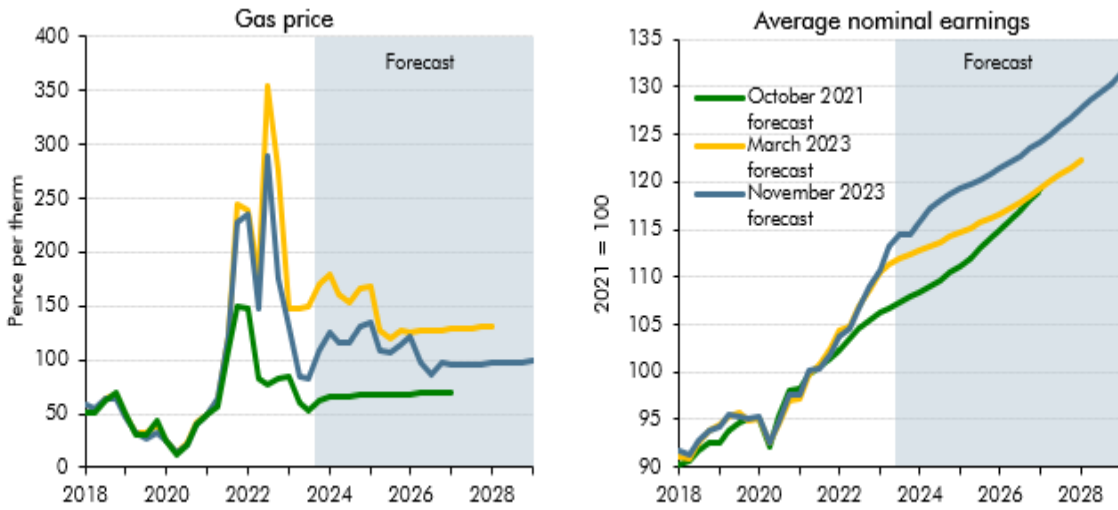
We have also compiled a comparison with previous November 2022 forecast where at one stage inflation was forecast to be negative in Chart 4 below.

Chart 4 – CPI Inflation over three forecasts



The impact of gas prices and wages on inflation were demonstrated in the EFO report as per chart 5 below.

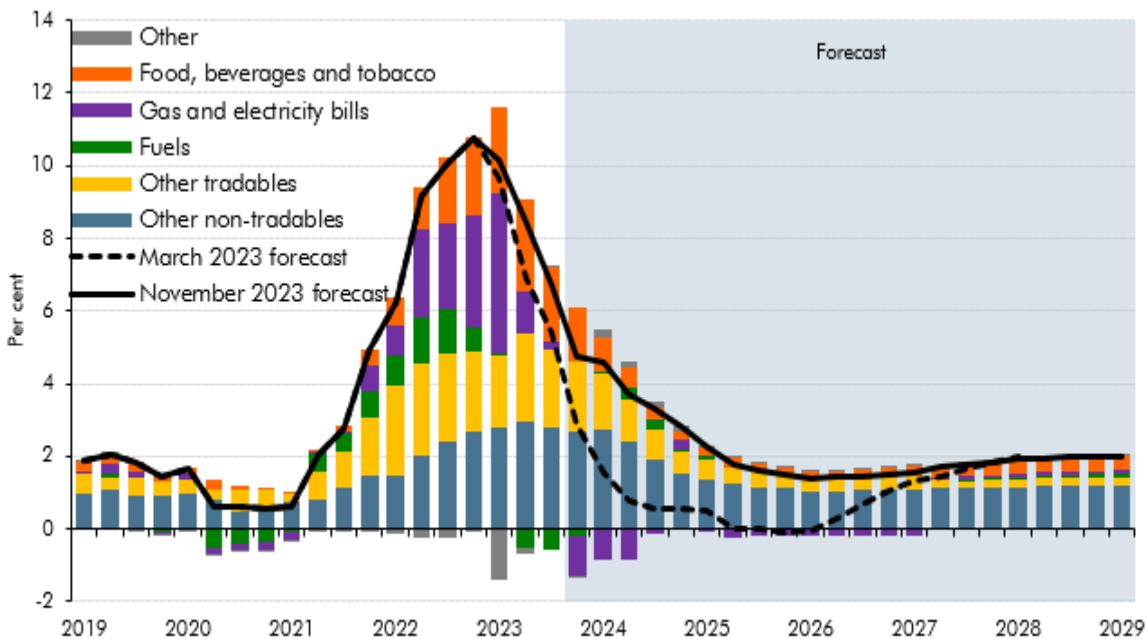
Chart 5 – Impact of Gas Prices and Average Earnings



Source: Datastream, ONS, OFGEM, Eikon, OBR

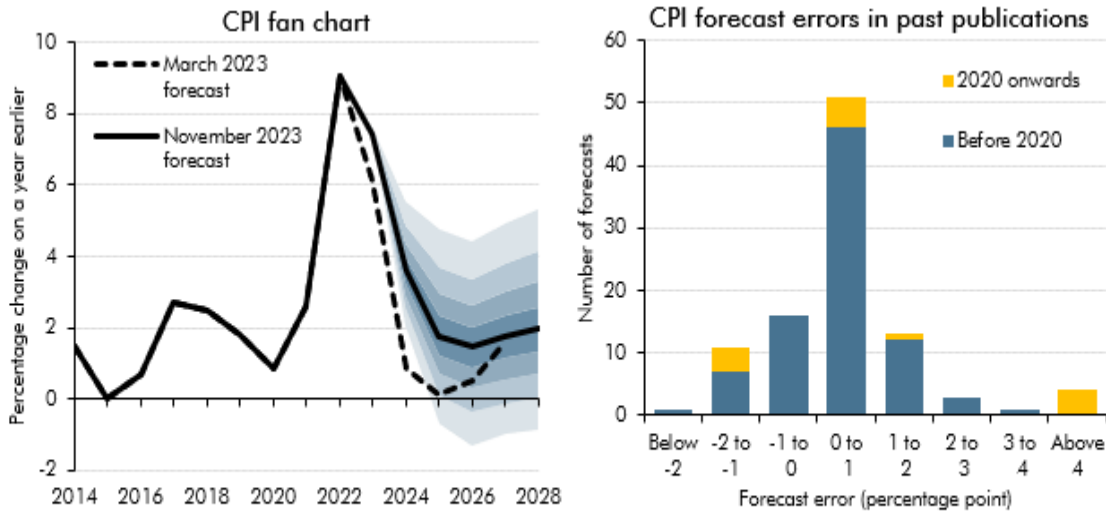
The EFO report confirms that the risks around inflation outlook remain high given both domestic and international uncertainty. The EFO report includes an analysis of the main contributors to inflation (chart 6) as well as an analysis of the more significant variations in inflation forecasts since 2020 (chart 7) similar to chart 2 for GDP uncertainty.

Chart 6 – Contributions to CPI Inflation



Source: ONS, OBR

Chart 7 – CPI Inflation Fan Chart and Forecast Errors in Previous Publications

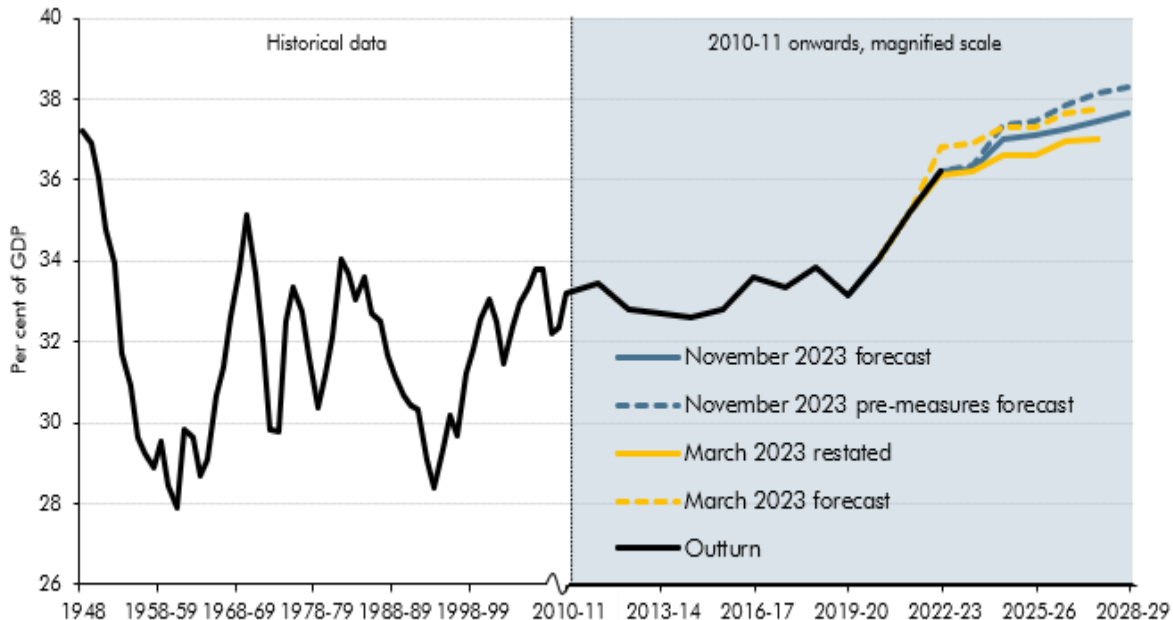


Note: On the left-hand chart, successive pairs of lighter-shaded areas around our forecast represent 20 per cent probability bands. The right-hand chart shows the distribution of forecast errors for every Autumn forecast since 2003. Source: ONS, OBR

Fiscal Outlook – Public Sector Receipts

Total public sector receipts in 2022-23 as a share of GDP reached 40.1%, a 3.2% increase on pre pandemic level of 36.8% in 2019-20. Public sector receipts are forecast to continue grow faster than GDP reaching 41.6% by 2028-29. National account taxes¹ equate to 36.2% of GDP in 2022-23 (an increase of 1% on 2021-22), and marginally higher than the restated forecast for 2022-23 in March 2023. The share of national account taxes is forecast to reach a post-war high of 37.7% of GDP in 2028-29, 4.5% above the pre pandemic level in 2019-20 of 33.1%. The share of national account taxes as % of GDP is shown in the following chart 8 from EFO report.

Chart 8 – National Account Taxes as a share of GDP



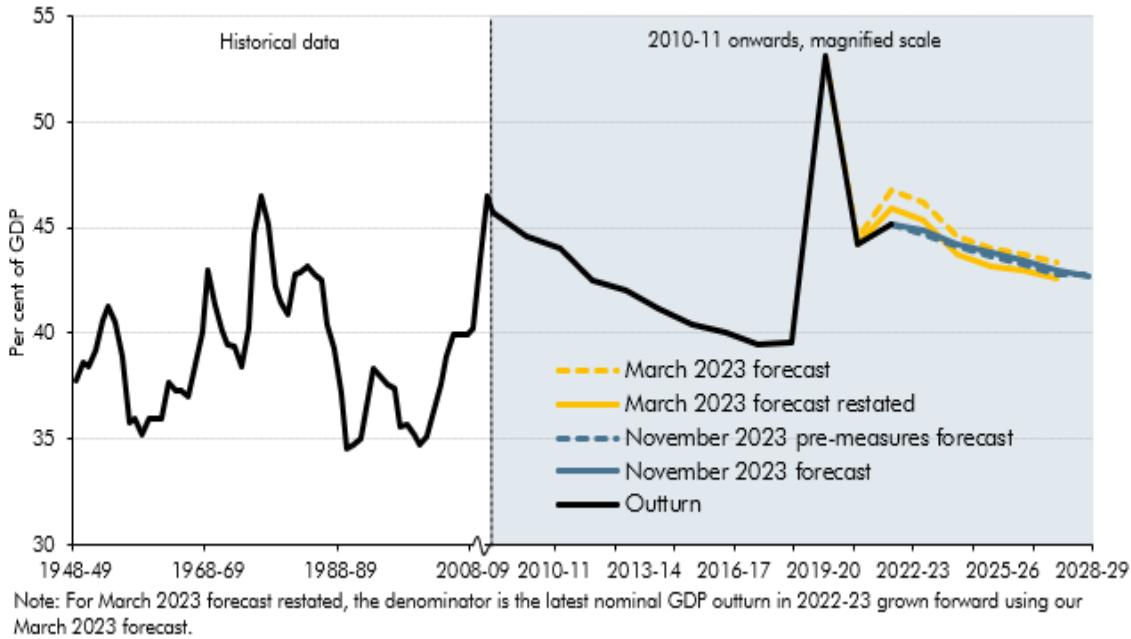
Note: For March 2023 forecast restated, the denominator is the latest nominal GDP outturn in 2022-23 grown forward using our March 2023 forecast. Source: ONS, OBR

¹ National account taxes are a slightly narrower measure of public sector receipts and are more comparable over longer historical periods as they exclude public sector gross operation surplus, interest and dividend receipts and other non-tax receipts.

Fiscal Outlook – Public Sector Expenditure

Total public spending in 2022-23 as share of GDP reached 45.1%, an increase of 0.9% on 2021-22, and 0.8% lower than the restated forecast for 2022-23 in March 2023. Total public sector spending is forecast to fall marginally to 44.8% of GDP in 2023-24 as the unwinding of energy support measures is largely offset by higher welfare costs. Public sector spending as a share of GDP is forecast to fall further each year over the forecast period as a share of GDP from 44.2% in 2024-25 to 42.7% in 2028-29. The share of public sector spending as % of GDP is shown in following chart 9 from the EFO report.

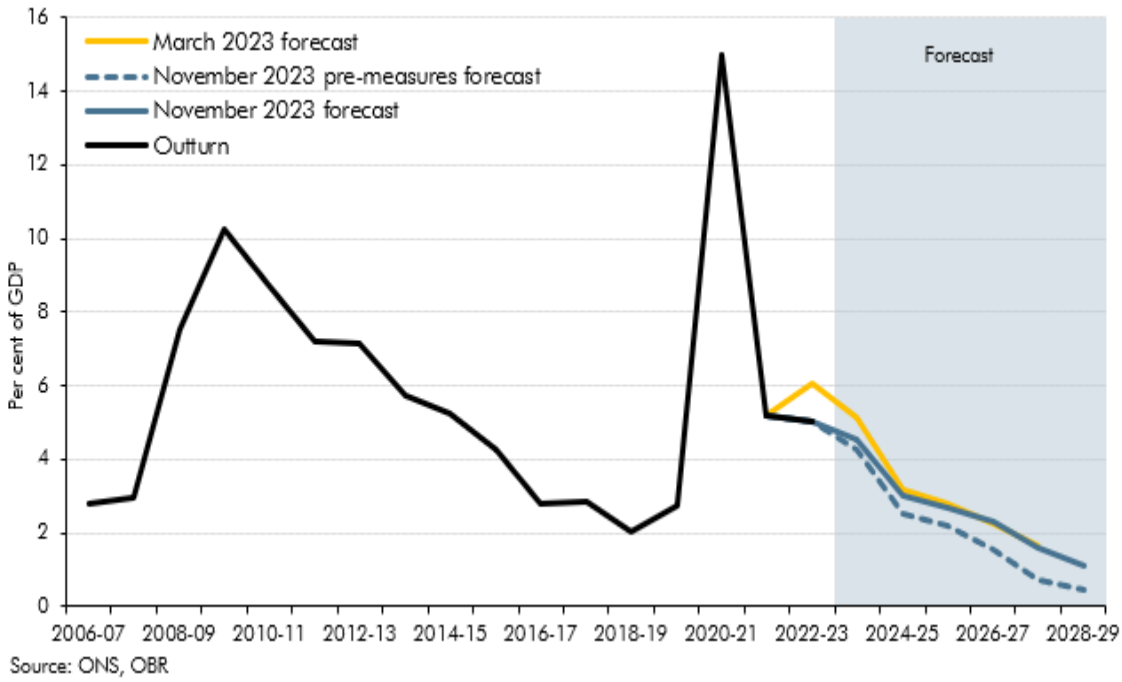
Chart 9 – Public Sector Expenditure as share of GDP



Fiscal Context – Public Sector Borrowing and Total Debt

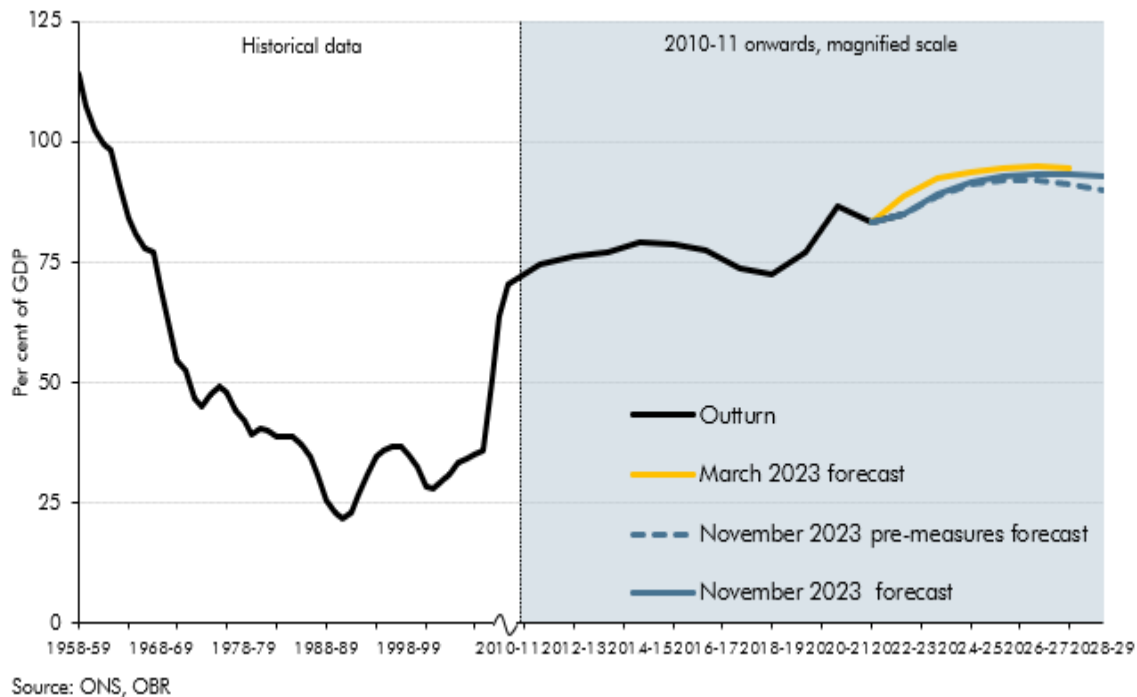
Public sector net borrowing in 2022-23 was £128.3bn (5.0% of GDP), this is a reduction from 5.2% in 2021-22. Net borrowing is forecast to fall to £123.9bn in 2023-24 (4.5% of GDP), this is 0.6% lower than the March 2023 forecast for 2023-24 of 5.1%. Net borrowing is forecast to fall further over the forecast period to £35bn by 2028-29 (1.1% of GDP). Public sector borrowing as % of GDP is shown in following chart 10 from the EFO report.

Chart 10 – Public Sector Net Borrowing



Public sector net accumulated debt was £2,251bn in 2022-23 (84.9% of GDP), an increase from 83.2% in 2021-22 but less than the March 2023 forecast for 2022-23 of 88.9%. Total debt is forecast to increase through the period to £2,458bn in 2023-24 (89.0% of GDP) to £2,845bn in 2026-27 (93.2% of GDP) and to £3,039bn by 2029-29 (92.8% of GDP). The improvement in 2023-24 is due to higher than forecast GDP and compared to the March 2023 forecast total debt as % of GDP is forecast lower in every year. Public sector net debt (excluding Bank of England) as a % of GDP is shown in the following chart 11 from the EFO report.

Chart 11 – Public Sector Net Debt (excluding Bank of England)



This page is intentionally left blank

Treasury Management Strategy

Introduction

1. Treasury management is the management of the Council's cash flows, borrowing and investments, and the associated risks. The Council has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are therefore central to the Council's prudent financial management.
2. Treasury risk management at the Council is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Council's legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to the CIPFA Code.
3. Investments held for service purposes or for commercial profit are considered in the separate Appendix O - Investment Strategy.

External Context

Economic background

4. The following economic commentary is provided by the Council's treasury advisors, Link Group.
5. *The first half of 2023/24 saw:*
 - *Interest rates rise by a further 100bps, taking Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.25% and, possibly, the peak in the tightening cycle.*
 - *Short, medium and long-dated gilts remain elevated as inflation continually surprised to the upside.*
 - *CPI inflation falling from 8.7% in April to 6.7% in September, its lowest rate since February 2022, but still the highest in the G7.*
 - *Core CPI inflation declining to 6.1% in September from 7.1% in April and May, a then 31 years high.*
 - *A cooling in labour market conditions, but no evidence yet that it has led to an easing in wage growth (as the 3myy growth of average earnings rose by 7.8% for the period June to August, excluding bonuses).*
6. *The registering of 0% GDP for Q3 suggests that underlying growth has lost momentum since earlier in the year. Some of the weakness in July was due to there being almost twice as many working days lost to strikes in July (281,000) than in June (160,000). But with output falling in 10 out of the 17 sectors, there is an air of underlying weakness.*

7. *The fall in the composite Purchasing Managers Index from 48.6 in August to 46.7 in September left it at its lowest level since COVID-19 lockdowns reduced activity in January 2021. At face value, it is consistent with the 0% q/q rise in real GDP in the period July to September, being followed by a contraction in the next couple of quarters.*
8. *The 0.4% m/m rebound in retail sales volumes in August is not as good as it looks as it partly reflected a pickup in sales after the unusually wet weather in July. Sales volumes in August were 0.2% below their level in May, suggesting much of the resilience in retail activity in the first half of the year has faded.*
9. *As the growing drag from higher interest rates intensifies over the next six months, we think the economy will continue to lose momentum and soon fall into a mild recession. Strong labour demand, fast wage growth and government handouts have all supported household incomes over the past year. And with CPI inflation past its peak and expected to decline further, the economy has got through the cost-of-living crisis without recession. But even though the worst of the falls in real household disposable incomes are behind us, the phasing out of financial support packages provided by the government during the energy crisis means real incomes are unlikely to grow strongly. Higher interest rates will soon bite harder too. We expect the Bank of England to keep interest rates at the probable peak of 5.25% until the second half of 2024. Mortgage rates are likely to stay above 5.0% for around a year.*
10. *The tightness of the labour market continued to ease, with employment in the three months to July falling by 207,000. The further decline in the number of job vacancies from 1.017m in July to 0.989m in August suggests that the labour market has loosened a bit further since July. That is the first time it has fallen below 1m since July 2021. At 3.0% in July, and likely to have fallen to 2.9% in August, the job vacancy rate is getting closer to 2.5%, which would be consistent with slower wage growth. Meanwhile, the 48,000 decline in the supply of workers in the three months to July offset some of the loosening in the tightness of the labour market. That was due to a 63,000 increase in inactivity in the three months to July as more people left the labour market due to long term sickness or to enter education. The supply of labour is still 0.3% below its pre-pandemic February 2020 level.*
11. *But the cooling in labour market conditions still has not fed through to an easing in wage growth. The headline 3myy rate rose 7.8% for the period June to August, which meant UK wage growth remains much faster than in the US and in the Euro-zone. Moreover, while the Bank of England's closely watched measure of regular annual average total pay growth for the private sector was 7.1% in June to August 2023, for the public sector this was 12.5% and is the highest total pay annual growth rate since comparable records began in 2001. However, this is affected by the NHS and civil service one-off non-consolidated payments made in June, July and August 2023. The Bank of England's prediction was for private sector wage growth to fall to 6.9% in September.*
12. *CPI inflation declined from 6.8% in July to 6.7% in August and September, the lowest rate since February 2022. The biggest positive surprise was the drop in core CPI inflation, which declined from 6.9% to 6.1%. That reverses all the rise since March.*
13. *In its latest monetary policy meeting on 02 November, the Bank of England left interest rates unchanged at 5.25%. The vote to keep rates on hold was a split vote, 6-3. It is clear that some members of the MPC are still concerned about the stickiness of inflation.*

14. Like the US Fed, the Bank of England wants the markets to believe in the higher for longer narrative. In terms of messaging, the Bank once again said that “further tightening in monetary policy would be required if there were evidence of more persistent inflationary pressures”, citing the rise in global bond yields and the upside risks to inflation from “energy prices given events in the Middle East”. So, like the Fed, the Bank is keeping the door open to the possibility of further rate hikes. However, it also repeated the phrase that policy will be “sufficiently restrictive for sufficiently long” and that the “MPC’s projections indicate that monetary policy is likely to need to be restrictive for an extended period of time”. Indeed, Governor Bailey was at pains in his press conference to drum home to markets that the Bank means business in squeezing inflation out of the economy.
15. This narrative makes sense as the Bank of England does not want the markets to decide that a peak in rates will be soon followed by rate cuts, which would loosen financial conditions and undermine its attempts to quash inflation. The language also gives the Bank of England the flexibility to respond to new developments. A rebound in services inflation, another surge in wage growth and/or a further leap in oil prices could conceivably force it to raise rates in the future.
16. Currently, the Fed has pushed up US rates to a range of 5.25% to 5.5%, whilst the MPC followed by raising Bank Rate to 5.25%. EZ rates have also increased to 4% with further tightening a possibility.
17. Ultimately, however, from a UK perspective it will not only be inflation data but also employment data that will mostly impact the decision-making process, although any softening in the interest rate outlook in the US may also have an effect (just as, conversely, greater tightening may also).

Interest rate forecast

18. The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the formulation of a view on interest rates. Link provided the following forecasts on 07 November 2023. These are forecasts for Bank Rate and PWLB certainty rates (gilt yields plus 80 bps).

Link Group Interest Rate View 07.11.23	Dec -23	Mar -24	Jun -24	Sep -24	Dec -24	Mar -25	Jun -25	Sep -25	Dec -25	Mar -26	Jun -26	Sep -26	Dec -26
Bank Rate	5.25	5.25	5.25	5.00	4.50	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
5yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50
10yr PWLB	5.10	5.00	4.80	4.70	4.40	4.20	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50
25yr PWLB	5.50	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.00	4.00	4.00
50yr PWLB	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.80

19. Link forecast that the MPC will keep Bank Rate at 5.25% for the remainder of 2023 and the first half of 2024 to combat on-going inflationary and wage pressures. Link Group do not think that the MPC will increase Bank Rate above 5.25%, but it is possible.
20. The overall longer-run trend is for gilt yields and PWLB rates to fall back over the timeline of Link Group forecasts, as inflation starts to fall through the remainder of 2023 and into 2024.

21. These interest rate forecasts are a central estimate, not a prediction, and there are upside and downside risks, which could alter the eventual path of interest rates.

Local Context

22. The following table summarises the Council's balance sheet for the current (2023/24) and previous financial year and provides a forecast for the medium term.

Balance sheet summary and forecast

	31.3.23	31.3.24	31.3.25	31.3.26	31.3.27
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total CFR	1,292.4	1,271.6	1,314.6	1,300.4	1,264.0
Other long-term liabilities and adjustments	-164.6	-157.3	-149.2	-140.0	-130.8
Loans CFR	1,127.8	1,114.3	1,165.4	1,160.4	1,133.2
External borrowing	-802.4	-771.9	-742.6	-710.3	-685.1
Internal borrowing	325.4	342.4	422.8	450.1	448.1
Less balance sheet resources	-821.6	-769.8	-777.6	-792.8	-824.0
Treasury investments	496.2	427.4	354.8	342.7	376.0

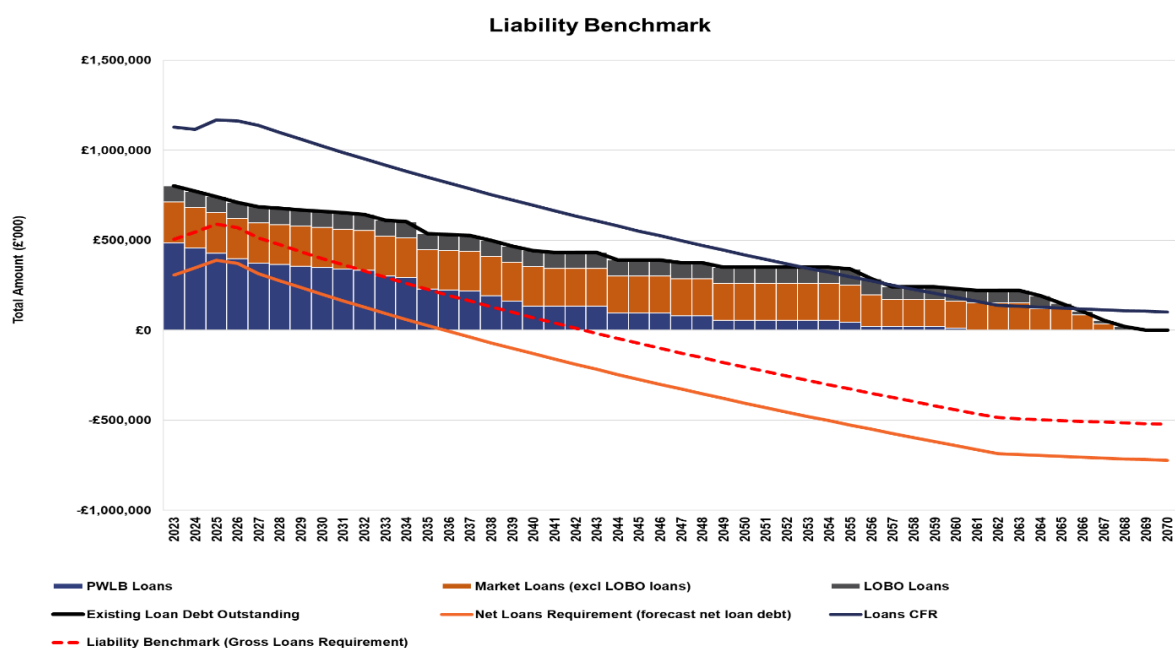
23. The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity and the starting point for the treasury management strategy is the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's indebtedness and so its underlying borrowing need. Any capital expenditure, which has not immediately been paid for through a revenue or capital resource, will increase the CFR. The Council's current capital expenditure and financing plans are set out in the Capital Strategy at appendix M.
24. The CFR does not increase indefinitely, due the requirement to make a minimum revenue provision, a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each asset's life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used. The MRP charge is not shown separately here but is factored into the CFR.
25. The Total CFR includes any other long-term liabilities (e.g., PFI schemes, finance leases). Whilst these increase the CFR, and therefore the Authority's borrowing requirement, these types of schemes include a borrowing facility by the PFI, PPP lease provider and so the Authority is not required to separately borrow for these schemes. For the purposes of determining the treasury management strategy, other long-term liabilities are removed to arrive at the Loans CFR.
26. The Council has externally borrowed £802.4m (as at 31 March 2023) to meet most of the borrowing requirement implied by the Loans CFR, and this figure will decline gradually over the medium term as external loans mature and are repaid (assuming no additional external borrowing is undertaken).

27. The balance of the Loans CFR borrowing requirement is met through internal borrowing, namely the temporary use of the Council's balance sheet resources on lieu of investment. The Council's internal borrowing is forecast to rise over the medium term, compensating for the change in external borrowing noted above.
28. Balance sheet resources represent the Council's underlying capacity for investment (mostly reserves, provisions and working capital). Balance sheet resources exceed internal borrowing and therefore the Council is forecast to continue to have positive external investment balances for the foreseeable future.
29. The current borrowing and investment balances, as at 30 November 2023, when the Council held £776.0m of external borrowing and £508.5m of treasury investments, are set out in further detail in Annex A.

Liability benchmark

30. To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as table 1 above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £200m at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity but minimise credit risk.
31. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the minimum cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.
32. The liability benchmark is shown in the below chart. The chart illustrates the maturity profile of the Council's existing borrowing and assumes no new capital expenditure funded by borrowing beyond 2026/27.

Figure 1: Liability Benchmark Chart



33. The chart shows the overall borrowing requirement (the Loans CFR), which is projected to increase moderately over the medium term in line with the authority's plans, before declining over the long term as the annual minimum revenue provision (MRP) charge gradually reduces the Council's borrowing requirement. The borrowing requirement is currently met by a combination of fixed rate loans, LOBO loans and internal borrowing.
34. The Council could theoretically reduce its investment balances to zero and maximise the use of internal borrowing before acquiring any external borrowing. The net loans requirement (orange solid line) represents the minimum amount of external borrowing required under this strategy. However, such an approach would naturally involve an intolerable level of liquidity risk, and therefore a minimum liquidity requirement (assessed at £200m) is added to the net loans requirement to arrive at the liability benchmark itself. In effect, the liability benchmark represents the minimum amount of debt that the Council requires to meet its borrowing requirement and to provide sufficient liquidity for day-to-day cash flow.
35. The chart demonstrates that the Council's existing stock of external debt, exceeds the minimum amount required based on current financial plans, and therefore the authority does not have a need to enter into new external borrowing. The liability benchmark is forecast to rise over the medium term due to a combined increase in capital expenditure and reduction in available balance sheet resources (usable reserves, mainly) before declining over the long term. At the same time external debt is forecast to decline as individual loans expire.
36. Although not shown in figure 1, both the Loans CFR and the liability benchmark are likely to increase in later years as new capital expenditure cycles are approved.

Borrowing Strategy

37. On 30 November 2023, the Council had £776.0m external debt, including £28.1m attributable to Medway Council, as part of its strategy for funding previous years' capital programmes. This represents a decrease of £26.5m on 31 March 2023 and reflects the Council's strategy of maintaining borrowing below the underlying levels.
38. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Council does not expect to need to undertake additional borrowing in 2024-25. The Council may borrow to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing set out in the Capital Strategy (Appendix M).

Objective

39. The Council's chief objective when borrowing money is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. The flexibility to renegotiate loans should the Council's long-term plans change is a secondary objective.

Strategy

40. Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Council's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio.
41. The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the underlying borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy is prudent as medium and longer dated borrowing rates are expected to fall from their current levels once prevailing inflation concerns are addressed by tighter near-term monetary policy. That is, Bank Rate remains elevated through to the second half of 2024.
42. By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs and reduce investment counterparty exposure. Internal borrowing is not cost free as it is at the expense of investment returns foregone and neither does it remove the need for Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) to be made.
43. Given borrowing rates are forecast to decline over the medium term, consideration will also be given to short term rather than long term external borrowing should liquidity considerations necessitate any additional external borrowing (although it is not the Council's central expectation that borrowing will be required for liquidity reasons).
44. Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2024/25 treasury operations. The benefits of internal and short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years. The Corporate Director of Finance will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:
- *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in borrowing rates, then borrowing will be postponed.*
 - *if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in borrowing rates than that currently forecast, fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates are lower than they are projected to be in the next few years.*
45. The Council also retains the option to arrange forward starting loans, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.
46. Any decisions will be reported to the Treasury Management Group and the Governance and Audit Committee at the next available opportunity.

Sources of borrowing

47. The Council has previously raised the majority of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB and is likely to continue with this practice but will consider long-term loans from other sources including banks, pension funds and local authorities, and will investigate the

possibility of issuing bonds and similar instruments, in order to lower interest costs and reduce over-reliance on one source of funding in line with the CIPFA Code.

48. The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- HM Treasury's PWLB lending facility (formerly the Public Works Loan Board)
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- any other UK public sector body
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except the Kent Pension Fund)
- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local Council bond issues
- UK Infrastructure Bank

49. PWLB lending arrangements have changed, and loans are no longer available to local authorities planning to buy investment assets primarily for yield. The Council does not intend to borrow to invest primarily for financial return and will retain its access to PWLB loans.

Other sources of debt finance

50. In addition, capital finance may be raised by the following methods that are not borrowing, but may be classed as other debt liabilities:

- leasing
- hire-purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

LOBO (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans

51. The Council holds £90m of LOBO loans (Lender's Option Borrower's Option) loans where the lender has the option to propose an increase in the interest rate at set dates, following which the Council has the option to either accept the new rate or to repay the loan at no additional cost. LOBOs totalling £40m have option dates during 2024/25, and with interest rates having risen recently, there is a reasonable chance that lenders will exercise their options. If they do, the Council will likely take the option to repay LOBO loans to reduce refinancing risk in later years.

Debt rescheduling

52. The PWLB allows councils to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Council may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk. The recent rise in interest rates means that more favourable debt rescheduling opportunities should arise than in previous years.

53. Any decisions involving the repayment of LOBO loans or debt rescheduling will be reported to the Treasury Management Group and the Governance and Audit Committee at the next available opportunity.

Policy on Borrowing in Advance of Need

54. The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

Treasury Investment Strategy

55. The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. Since the beginning of April 2023, the Council's cash balance has ranged between £470.5m and £640.5m; investment balances are forecast to be around £427.4m at the end of 2023/24 and approximately £354.8m at the end of 2024/25.

56. **Objectives:** The CIPFA Code requires the Council to invest its treasury funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults, the liquidity of investments and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income. Where balances are expected to be invested for more than one year, the Council will aim to achieve a total return that is equal or higher than the prevailing rate of inflation, in order to maintain the spending power of the sum invested. The Council aims to be a responsible investor and will consider environmental, social and governance (ESG) risks when investing.

57. **Strategy:** As demonstrated by the liability benchmark above, the Council expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments will therefore be made primarily to manage day-to-day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different sectors and to mitigate the negative impact of inflation on the value of the Council's long-term resources.

58. **ESG policy:** The Council is committed to responsible treasury management and to being a good steward of the assets in which it invests. As stated in paragraph 1 above, the successful identification, monitoring and control of financial risk are central to the Council's prudent financial management, and this includes the identification and management of environment, social and governance (ESG) risks that arise in the course of carrying out treasury management activities. Therefore, the Council integrates ESG considerations into its treasury management decision-making process.

59. The framework for evaluating investment opportunities is still developing. When investing in banks and funds, and after satisfying security, liquidity and yield considerations, the Council will prioritise banks that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Banking and funds operated by managers that are signatories to the UN Principles for Responsible Investment, the Net Zero Asset Managers Alliance and/or the UK Stewardship Code

60. Assets within the strategic pooled funds portfolio are managed by third-party investment managers responsible for the day-to-day investment decisions, including undertaking voting and engagement activities on behalf of the Council. The Council incorporates analysis of ESG integration and active ownership capabilities when selecting and monitoring investment managers.
61. The Council requires its investment managers to engage with companies to monitor and develop their management of ESG issues in order to enhance the value of the Council's investments. The Council also requires feedback from the investment managers on the activities they undertake and regularly reviews this feedback through meetings and reporting.
62. **Business models:** Under IFRS 9, the accounting for certain investments depends on the Council's "business model" for managing them. The Council aims to achieve value from its treasury investments by a business model of collecting the contractual cash flows and therefore, where other criteria are also met, these investments will continue to be accounted for at amortised cost.

Approved counterparties

63. The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in the table below, subject to the limits shown.

	Time limit	Counterparty limit	Sector limit
The UK Government	50 years	unlimited	
UK Local Authorities	10 years	£25m	
Kent local authorities for cashflow purposes only	1 year		£70m
Other Government entities	25 years	£20m	£30m
UK banks and building societies (unsecured) *	13 months	£20m	Unlimited
Council's banking services provider *	Overnight	£20m	
Overseas banks (unsecured) *	13 months	£20m	£30m country limit
Money Market Funds *	n/a	£20m per fund or 0.5% of the fund size if lower	
Cash plus / short term bond funds		£20m per fund	
Secured investments *	25 years	£20m	£150m
Corporates (non-financials)	5 years	£2m per issuer	£20m
Registered Providers (unsecured) *	5 years	£10m	£50m
Loans incl. to developers in the No Use Empty programme			£40m
Strategic pooled funds and real estate investment trusts	n/a		£250m
- Absolute Return funds		£25m per fund	
- Multi Asset Income funds		£25m per fund	

- Property funds		£75m or 5% of total fund value if greater	
- Bond funds		£25m per fund	
- Equity Income Funds		£25m per fund	
- Real Estate Investment Trusts		£25m per fund	

64. This table should be read in conjunction with the notes below.

* Minimum credit rating: Treasury investments in the sectors marked with an asterisk will only be made with entities whose lowest published long-term credit rating is no lower than A-. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used. However, investment decisions are never made solely based on credit ratings, and all other relevant factors including external advice will be taken into account.

65. **Government:** Loans to, and bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by, national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government are deemed to be zero credit risk due to its ability to create additional currency and therefore may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

66. **Secured investments:** Investments secured on the borrower's assets, which limits the potential losses in the event of insolvency. The amount and quality of the security will be a key factor in the investment decision. Covered bonds and reverse repurchase agreements with banks and building societies are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used.

67. **Banks and building societies (unsecured):** Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. Unsecured investments with banks rated below the agreed minimum rating of A- are restricted to overnight deposits with the Council's current banking services provider.

68. **Registered providers (unsecured):** Loans to, and bonds issued or guaranteed by, registered providers of social housing or registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

69. **Money Market Funds:** Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts. They have the advantage over bank accounts of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a small fee. Although no sector limit applies to Money Market Funds, the Council will take care to diversify its liquid investments over a variety of providers to ensure access to cash at all times.

70. **Pooled investment funds:** Bond, equity, multi-asset and property funds that offer enhanced returns over the longer term but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.
71. **Real estate investment trusts:** Shares in companies that invest mainly in real estate and pay the majority of their rental income to investors in a similar manner to pooled property funds. As with property funds, REITs offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile especially as the share price reflects changing demand for the shares as well as changes in the value of the underlying properties.
72. **Other investment:** This category covers treasury investments not listed above, for example unsecured corporate bonds and company loans. Non-bank companies cannot be bailed-in but can become insolvent placing the Council's investment at risk.
73. **Operational bank accounts:** The Council may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Council maintaining operational continuity.

Risk assessment and credit ratings

74. Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Council's treasury advisors, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
- no new investments will be made,
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
 - full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
75. Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that entity until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other information on the security of investments

76. The Council understands that credit ratings are good but not perfect predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the entities in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support, reports in the quality financial press and analysis and advice from Link Group, the Council's treasury

management advisor. No investments will be made with an entity if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may otherwise meet the above criteria.

77. When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2020, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government or with other local authorities. This may cause investment returns to fall but will protect the principal sum invested.

Investment limits

78. The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types listed above subject to the cash limits per counterparty and the durations shown in the table at paragraph 63.

Liquidity management

79. The Council forecasts its cash flow requirements to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a prudent basis to minimise the risk of the Council being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Council's medium-term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

80. The Council will spread its liquid cash over several bank accounts and money market funds to ensure that access to cash is maintained in the event of operational difficulties at any one provider.

Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

81. The Council measures and manages its exposures to treasury management risks using the following indicators.

82. **Security:** The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its internally managed investment portfolio. This is calculated by applying a score to each investment (AAA=1, AA+=2, etc.) and taking the arithmetic average, weighted by the size of each investment. Unrated investments are assigned a score based on their perceived risk.

Credit risk indicator	Minimum Level
Portfolio average credit rating	AA-

83. **Liquidity:** The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	Minimum Level
Total cash available within 3 months	£75m

84. **Interest rate exposure:** The 2021 CIPFA Prudential Code removes the requirement to set treasury indicators for fixed and variable interest rate exposure. Instead, the Council is required to set out how it intends to manage interest rate exposure.

This organisation will manage its exposure to fluctuations in interest rates with a view to containing its interest costs, or securing its interest revenues, in accordance with the amounts provided in its budgetary arrangements and management information arrangements.

It will achieve this by the prudent use of its approved instruments, methods and techniques, primarily to create stability and certainty of costs and revenues, but at the same time retaining a sufficient degree of flexibility to take advantage of unexpected, potentially advantageous changes in the level or structure of interest rates.

85. **Maturity structure of borrowing:** This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing will be:

Refinancing rate risk indicator	Upper limit	Lower limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 5 years	50%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	50%	0%
10 years and within 20 years	50%	0%
20 years and within 40 years	50%	0%
40 years and longer	50%	0%

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date on which the lender can demand repayment.

86. **Principal sums invested for periods longer than a year:** The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The prudential limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	No fixed date
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£150m	£100m	£50m	£250m

Long-term investments with no fixed maturity date include strategic pooled funds and real estate investment trusts but exclude money market funds and bank accounts with no fixed maturity date as these are considered short-term.

87. **Liability indicator:** see paragraph 32 above.

Related Matters

88. The CIPFA Code requires the Council to include the following in its Treasury Management Strategy.
89. **Financial Derivatives:** Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 removes much of the uncertainty over councils' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).
90. The Council will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Council is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be considered when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds and forward starting transactions, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.
91. Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.
92. In line with the CIPFA Code, the Council will seek external advice and will consider that advice before entering into financial derivatives to ensure that it fully understands the implications.
93. **Markets in Financial Instruments Directive:** The Council has opted up to professional client status with its providers of financial services, including advisors, banks, brokers and fund managers, allowing it access to a greater range of services but without the greater regulatory protections afforded to individuals and small companies. Given the size and range of the Council's treasury management activities, the Corporate Director of Finance believes this to be the most appropriate status.
94. **IFRS 9 Statutory Override:** Under the accounting standard IFRS 9, entities are required to recognise the revenue impact arising from the movement in value of investments held at fair value. The MHCLG (DLUHC) initially enacted a statutory over-ride from 1 April 2018 for a five-year period until 31 March 2023 following the introduction of IFRS 9 in respect of the requirement for any unrealised capital gains or losses on marketable pooled funds to be chargeable in year. This was subsequently extended to 31 March 2025 and has the effect of allowing any unrealised capital gains or losses arising from qualifying investments to be held on the balance sheet until 31 March 2025. The Council currently holds investment assets which fall under the statutory override (the strategic pooled funds) and it manages the risk arising from expiry of the statutory override on a corporate basis.

Financial Implications

95. The budget for net investment income in 2024-25 is £13.0m, based on an average investment portfolio of £426m at an average interest rate of 4.88%.¹ The budget for debt interest payable in 2024-25 is £32.5m, based on an average debt portfolio of £748.3m at an average interest rate of 4.35%. If actual levels of investments and borrowing, or actual interest rates, differ from forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

Other Options Considered

96. The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular Treasury Management Strategy for councils to adopt. The Corporate Director of Finance, having consulted the Treasury Management Group, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income in the long term	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income in the long term though potentially not in the short term	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

¹ Gross investment income for 2024-25 is estimated to be £20.8m including £7.8m attributable to other bodies.

Training

The CIPFA Treasury Management Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management.

Training was most recently undertaken by members on 23 November 2023 and further training will be arranged as required.

Annex A – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

	30-Nov-23	30-Nov-23
	Actual Portfolio	Average Rate
	£m	%
External borrowing		
Public Works Loan Board	460.12	4.40
LOBO loans from banks	90.00	4.15
Banks and other lenders (Fixed term)	216.10	4.54
Streetlighting Project	9.79	2.55
Total external borrowing	776.01	4.39
Treasury investments		
Bank Call Accounts	1.00	1.92
Covered bonds (secured)	97.25	4.80
Government (incl. local authorities)	88.80	5.25
Money Market Funds	134.76	5.33
Equity	1.30	
No Use Empty Loans	16.55	4.50
Total internally managed investments	339.66	5.14
Pooled investments funds		
- Property	55.19	5.05
- Multi Asset	53.52	5.00
- Absolute Return	5.19	2.26
- Equity UK	30.21	6.24
- Equity Global	24.74	4.17
Total pooled investments	168.85	5.09
Total treasury investments	508.51	5.12
Net debt	267.50	

GLOSSARY

Local Authority Treasury Management Terms

Bond	A certificate of long-term debt issued by a company, government, or other institution, which is tradable on financial markets
Borrowing	Usually refers to the stock of outstanding loans owed and bonds issued.
CFR	Capital Financing Requirement. A council's underlying need to hold debt for capital purposes, representing the cumulative capital expenditure that has been incurred but not yet financed. The CFR increases with capital expenditure and decreases with capital finance and MRP.
Capital gain or loss	An increase or decrease in the capital value of an investment, for example through movements in its market price.
Collective investment scheme	Scheme in which multiple investors collectively hold units or shares. The investment assets in the fund are not held directly by each investor, but as part of a pool (hence these funds are also referred to as 'pooled funds').
Cost of carry	When a loan is borrowed in advance of need, the difference between the interest payable on the loan and the income earned from investing the cash in the interim.
Counterparty	The other party to a loan, investment or other contract.
Counterparty limit	The maximum amount an investor is willing to lend to a counterparty, in order to manage credit risk.
Covered bond	Bond issued by a financial institution that is secured on that institution's assets, usually residential mortgages, and is therefore lower risk than unsecured bonds. Covered bonds are exempt from bail-in.
CPI	Consumer Price Index - the measure of inflation targeted by the Monetary Policy Committee.
Deposit	A regulated placing of cash with a financial institution. Deposits are not tradable on financial markets.
Diversified income fund	A collective investment scheme that invests in a range of bonds, equity and property in order to minimise price risk, and also focuses on investments that pay income.
Dividend	Income paid to investors in shares and collective investment schemes. Dividends are not contractual, and the amount is therefore not known in advance.
DMADF	Debt Management Account Deposit Facility – a facility offered by the DMO enabling councils to deposit cash at very low credit risk. Not available in Northern Ireland.
DMO	Debt Management Office – an executive agency of HM Treasury that deals with central government's debt and investments.
Equity	An investment which usually confers ownership and voting rights
Floating rate note (FRN)	Bond where the interest rate changes at set intervals linked to a market variable, most commonly 3-month LIBOR or SONIA
FTSE	Financial Times stock exchange – a series of indices on the London Stock Exchange. The FTSE 100 is the index of the largest 100 companies on the exchange, the FTSE 250 is the next largest 250 and the FTSE 350 combines the two

GDP	Gross domestic product – the value of the national aggregate production of goods and services in the economy. Increasing GDP is known as economic growth.
GILT	Bond issued by the UK Government, taking its name from the gilt-edged paper they were originally printed on.
Income return	Return on investment from dividends, interest and rent but excluding capital gains and losses.
IFRS	International Financial Reporting Standards, the set of accounting rules in use by UK local authorities since 2010
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LIBID	London interbank bid rate - the benchmark interest rate at which banks bid to borrow cash from other banks, traditionally 0.125% lower than LIBOR.
LIBOR	London interbank offer rate - the benchmark interest rate at which banks offer to lend cash to other banks. Published every London working day at 11am for various currencies and terms. Due to be phased out by 2022.
LOBO	Lender's Option Borrower's option
MMF	Money Market Funds. A collective investment scheme which invests in a range of short-term assets providing high credit quality and high liquidity. Usually refers to Constant Net Asset Value (CNAV) and Low Volatility Net Asset Value (LVNAV) funds with a Weighted Average Maturity (WAM) under 60 days which offer instant access, but the European Union definition extends to include cash plus funds
Monetary Policy	Measures taken by central banks to boost or slow the economy, usually via changes in interest rates. Monetary easing refers to cuts in interest rates, making it cheaper for households and businesses to borrow and hence spend more, boosting the economy, while monetary tightening refers to the opposite. See also fiscal policy and quantitative easing.
MPC	Monetary Policy Committee. Committee of the Bank of England responsible for implementing monetary policy in the UK by changing Bank Rate and quantitative easing with the aim of keeping CPI inflation at around 2%.
MRP	Minimum Revenue Provision – an annual amount that local authorities are required to set aside and charge to revenue for the repayment of debt associated with capital expenditure. Local authorities are required by law to have regard to government guidance on MRP. Not applicable in Scotland, but see Loans Fund
Pooled Fund	Scheme in which multiple investors hold units or shares. The investment assets in the fund are not held directly by each investor, but as part of a pool (hence these funds are also referred to as 'pooled funds').
Prudential Code	Developed by CIPFA and introduced in April 2004 as a professional code of practice to support local authority capital investment planning within a clear, affordable, prudent and sustainable framework and in accordance with good professional practice. Local authorities are required by law to have regard to the Prudential Code. The Code was update din December 2021
PWLB	Public Works Loan Board – a statutory body operating within the Debt Management Office (DMO) that lends money from the National Loans Fund to councils and other prescribed bodies and collects the repayments. Not available in Northern Ireland.
Quantitative easing (QE)	Process by which central banks directly increase the quantity of money in the economy in order to promote GDP growth and prevent deflation. Normally achieved by the central bank buying government bonds in exchange for newly created money.

REIT	Real estate investment trust – a company whose main activity is owning investment property and is therefore similar to a property fund in many ways
Share	An equity investment, which usually also confers ownership and voting rights
Short-term	Usually means less than one year
SONIA	Based on actual transactions and reflects the average of the interest rates that banks pay to borrow sterling overnight from other financial institutions and other institutional investors
Total return	The overall return on an investment, including interest, dividends, rent, fees and capital gains and losses.
Weighted average life (WAL)	The weighted average time for principal repayment, that is, the average time it takes for every dollar of principal to be repaid. The time weights are based on the principal payments,
Weighted average maturity (WAM)	The weighted average maturity or WAM is the weighted average amount of time until the securities in a portfolio mature.

This page is intentionally left blank

From: Oliver Richardson, Armed Forces Champion
Derek Crow-Brown, Deputy, Armed Forces Champion
Amanda Beer, Chief Executive

To: Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee

Date: 17 January 2024

Subject: Annual Report on the Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This report provides a briefing on Kent County Council's work to support Kent's Armed Forces community, and summarises key achievements since the last report to the Committee and the oral presentation to Full Council in 2023.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to note all that is being done to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent and agree to priorities going forward including promoting Kent County Council's status as a lead MoD Employers Recognition Gold Award Holder.

Members are requested to continue to support the Armed Forces Covenant across the county and to endorse the Council's commitment to this work by engaging locally in Covenant efforts and related events.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Armed Forces Covenant outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. At a local level, Kent County Council was one of the first Authorities to sign a Covenant, back in September 2011. In October 2017, a new combined Armed Forces Covenant including Kent County Council, Medway, 11 Infantry Brigade and RSME was re-signed at the Kent and Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community (AFC) working and residing in Kent and to recognise and remember the sacrifices they have made for us to keep Britain safe and free.
- 1.3 Parts of the Armed Forces Covenant were enshrined in law under the Armed Forces Act 2021. The measures in the Act came into force on 22 November 2022, meaning all Local Authorities and related public bodies are required to show 'due regard' when considering applications from the Armed Forces Community (school places and transport), Healthcare (access to GPs and hospital waiting lists) and Housing (homelessness and Disabled Facilities Grants).
- 1.4 Kent County Council has worked closely with the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the Armed Forces Covenant where several Kent County Council initiatives

have been cited in examples of best practice. Additionally, the Civic Office and the Lieutenancy are well connected into the Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board's work.

1.5 The Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board continues to oversee the implementation of the Covenant and meets twice a year under the chairmanship of the Kent County Council Chairman with the Leader and Armed Forces Champion of Medway Council appointed as vice-chair, supported by Task Groups covering the following themes:

- Health and wellbeing
- Children and Youth
- Employment and Skills
- Recognise and Remember
- Unit Welfare Officers – a Joint Task Group involving Kent County Council and Medway Council Lead Officers

2. Highlights of Kent County Council's Activities to support the Armed Forces Community during 2023

2.1 Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board

2.1.1 The Board has been strengthened by the new Membership of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner; the Chief Executive of Kent Fire & Rescue; the Chief Executive of the RBLI and the Dean of Rochester Cathedral.

2.1.2 On the 21 February 2023 the Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board members endorsed a set of reinvigorated Strategic Aims under four key headings:

- I. Increase visibility of the Armed Forces Community to the civilian population.
- II. Continue to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant plus the new legislation.
- III. Raise awareness amongst schools of the specific needs of service children and their families.
- IV. Support and promote recruitment of volunteers, Regulars and Reservists.

2.2 9th Kent and Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference - Gravesend

2.2.1 The 9th Annual Armed Forces Covenant Conference was held on 6 June 2023 at Gravesham Borough Council with over 180 delegates attending. The theme was 'Joining Up' and a particular focus was placed on improving support for military spouses and service children, working with Kent businesses on communicating the benefits of employing reservists and ex-service personnel, and ensuring health and social care services are as accessible as possible to the armed forces community.

2.3 HMS Kent Freedom Debate and Freedom March – September 2023

2.3.1 On the 21 September 2023, Kent County Council voted and agreed in Full Council to grant HMS Kent (Type 23 Duke class frigate) the Freedom of Kent. The ship's

Commander was also present for the historic vote. A ceremonial march past was held in Maidstone to commemorate the occasion on 22 September 2023. The Royal Marines Band participated in the march, which also commemorated the 34th anniversary of the tragic loss of 11 Royal Marines at Deal. Over 6000 people lined the streets in Maidstone and the occasion was covered extensively in local media.

2.4 MoD Employer Recognition Scheme

2.4.1 On the 23 October 2023, Kent County Council received notification that it had successfully retained its MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award following a rigorous re-validation process.

2.4.2 Kent County Council has been at the forefront in supporting and mentoring Councils and other bodies wishing to apply for MoD Employers Recognition Gold Awards in 2023 as 'military friendly' employers. Canterbury City Council and FM Conway were awarded Gold and Thanet District Council was awarded Silver.

2.5 Census 2021: UK Armed Forces Veterans

2.5.1 In 2021, the Census for the first time asked whether the respondent has served in the Armed Forces. This was welcomed by Kent County Council who, alongside other Local Authorities and Service Charities, had lobbied for this question's inclusion. Asking this question enables a better understanding of the size and location of Kent & Medway's armed forces community, the resulting data then informing the work of the Kent & Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board and its sub-groups, ultimately ensuring the public sector can tailor its services better.

2.5.2 The Census reported that there were 52,545 UK Armed Forces veterans living in Kent in 2021. 88% of Kent's UK Armed Forces veterans were male, and 57.9% were aged 65 and over. 37.2% of Kent's veterans were not in good health, above the national (35.6%) and the regional (33.8%) averages. 32.6% of veterans were disabled under the Equality Act. At 38.7%, Kent had a lower proportion of veterans who were economically active than was seen nationally (42.4%) and regionally (40.4%). Of those who were economically inactive 89.9% were retired. 97.9% of Kent veterans were living in households while 2.1% were resident in communal establishments. [2021 Census - Veterans \(kent.gov.uk\)](https://www.kent.gov.uk/census-2021/veterans)

2.6 Full Kent & Medway CMPB 2023 Annual Report

2.6.1 The Full 2023 Annual Report can be found as appendix 1 attached to this report.

3. **Looking Ahead to 2024**

3.1 The 10th Annual Armed Forces Covenant will be held on 4 June 2024 at 1RSME – Brompton Barracks, Chatham.

3.2 The Recognise & Remember Task Group will continue to publicise the military events calendar (including veterans' activities) in conjunction with the Lieutenancy Officer to celebrate Armed Forces Day 2024 and Kent Reservists Day on 10 September 2024 as well as commemorating Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday 2024 and

encourage Kent County Council Members to support all the local events.

- 3.3 A second Councillor and Staff Survey at Kent County Council is planned in 2024/25 to help understand better the armed forces community within our own workforce.

4. Armed Forces Act 2021

- 4.1 The Armed Forces Act for the first time enshrines the Armed Forces Covenant in law. The primary focus is to prevent service personnel and veterans from being disadvantaged when accessing key local services. As public bodies, Local Authorities now need to show 'due regard' when considering applications from Service Personnel seeking School Admissions, Housing Accommodation and Healthcare.
- 4.2 Kent County Council worked closely with Civil Service colleagues to inform the content of the Act and supporting guidance and already exceeds the minimum standards it sets out. Nevertheless, in collaboration with our local partners, Kent County Council continually revisits service processes and pathways to ensure they meet the needs of the armed forces community, and this is reinforced through regular awareness training for front line staff, senior officers and elected Members.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to note all that is being done to deliver the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent and agree to priorities going forward including promoting Kent County Council's status as a lead MoD Employers Recognition Gold Award Holder.

5.2 Members are requested to continue to support the Armed Forces Covenant across the county and to endorse the Council's commitment to this work by engaging locally in Covenant efforts and related events.

6. Report Authors:

Tim Woolmer

Head of Strategic Partnerships

03000416858

Tim.Woolmer@kent.gov.uk

Canon Peter Bruinvels CC

Covenant Lead and Civilian Military

Liaison Adviser

03000 412986/ 07721 411 688

Peter.Bruinvels@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director

David Whittle

Director of Strategy, Policy,

Relationships & Corporate Assurance

03000 416883

David.Whittle@kent.gov.uk



2023 Annual Report

Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board	5
9th Kent and Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference	6
HMS Kent - Freedom Debate & Freedom march	7
MoD Employer Recognition Awards Scheme	8
Armed Forces Covenant signing	9
The Armed Forces Act 2021 and Covenant Legislation	10
Events	11
Training	13
Armed Forces Champions	14
Armed Forces Veterans Hubs	15
Forces Connect APP	15
Census 2021: UK Armed Forces Veterans	16
Looking to 2024	17

Report Date: 17 January 2024

Email: ArmedForces@kent.gov.uk

Introduction

As Chairman of Kent and Medway CMPB, I am really pleased and proud of all the successes that have been achieved across Kent. It has been a very eventful year with so much happening!

I would highlight the really successful 9th Annual Kent & Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference in Gravesend with top speakers and a record attendance of 180+ representatives including the Lord-Lieutenant of Kent. This was followed by a brilliant Reserves Day at Kent County Council HQ in Maidstone supported by 3PWRR, 36RE and 579 EOD. All played a prominent role and spoke really well. But the icing on the cake was no doubt for me the Freedom Debate at Full Council followed by their Freedom March by HMS Kent in Maidstone the next day lead by the HM The King's Massed Band of the Royal Marines with 6,500 people including many school children lining the streets of Maidstone in late September. Indeed, I will never forget those two stand-out days.



Here in Kent, we are most fortunate to enjoy excellent working relationships with 36 Royal Engineers and especially its Commanding Officer - Lt Col Ryan Castro; 1 Royal School of Mechanical Engineering and Lt Col Guy Cheesman - Commanding Officer and 2 Royal Gurkha Regiment and its Commanding Officer - Lt Col Nicholas Moran and of course, Col David Kenny - Commander, HQ SE as well as with Lt Col Peter Ellis from SERFCA.

We also work closely with 3 Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and its Commanding Officer - Lt Col Nathan Horsman and with 579 Field Squadron (EOD) and Major Duncan Wood. These are excellent and fruitful partnerships which really underline the fact that Kent is very much a Military county, widely respected by the Ministry of Defence.

As Chairman of Kent County Council, I have been privileged to get out and about in the County and meet many people. One of the undoubted benefits of being Chairman is that I am automatically Chairman of Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board and I must say that it has been one of the most enjoyable parts of the role as I attend and participate in so many Military activities and am really getting to know and to understand the Military. It has made me 'armed forces aware' and given me the confidence to represent them and

As Chairman of Kent County Council, I have been privileged to get out and about in the County and meet many people. One of the undoubted benefits of being Chairman is that I am automatically Chairman of Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board and I must say that it has been one of the most enjoyable parts of the role as I attend and participate in so many Military activities and am really getting to know and to understand the Military. It has made me 'armed forces aware' and given me the confidence to represent them and

their interests at the highest level of Government. I am also grateful for the trust that they have put in me and also for the advice that I receive from our officer here at County Hall.

With four months left, I continue to be filled with pride and with all that has been achieved to date including Kent CC having its Employers Recognition Gold Award recently revalidated. It is a privileged role that I have played in working closely with all our partners and now especially HMS Kent. Our partners like me stand committed to ensure that no member of the armed forces community is disadvantaged because of their service. If anything, all our partners and our Board Members are now even more aware of the ultimate sacrifice that our armed forces are prepared to pay to keep Britain and Kent in particular safe and free.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Cal". The signature is stylized with large loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board



The Kent & Medway CMPB is now chaired by Cllr Gary Cooke - KCC Chairman and its new Vice-Chair is Cllr Vince Maple Leader of Medway and their Lead AFC. The

Board membership has been further strengthened by the new membership of the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner; the Chief Executive of Kent Fire & Rescue; the Chief Executive of the RBLI, Richard Lavendar from the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce and the Dean of Rochester Cathedral.



At the 21 February 2023 meeting, the Kent & Medway CMPB said goodbye to Cllr Lesley Game the outgoing chairman of Kent County Council. As well as Lt Col Tim Petransky - and welcomed Lt Col Nathan Horsman who took over from Lt Col Tim Petransky as new CO of 3PWRR.

The Kent & Medway CMPB continues to oversee the implementation of the Covenant and meets twice a year under the chairmanship of the KCC Chairman with the Leader and AFC of Medway Council appointed as vice-chair, supported by Task Groups covering the following themes:

- Health and wellbeing
- Children and Youth
- Employment and Skills
- Recognise and Remember
- Unit Welfare Officers - a Joint Task Group involving KCC and Medway Lead Officers

On the 21 February 2023 the Kent & Medway CMPB - endorsed Kent & Medway CMPB's Strategic Aims under four key headings:

- I. Increase visibility of the Armed Forces Community to the civilian population
- II. Continue to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant plus the new legislation.
- III. Raise awareness amongst schools of the specific needs of service children and their families.
- IV. Support and promote recruitment of volunteers, Regulars and Reservists.

9th Kent and Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference



Our 9th Annual Armed Forces Covenant Conference was held on 6 June 2023 at Gravesham Borough Council with 180+ representatives attending. The theme was 'Joining Up' and it was opened by The Lady Colgrain - Lord-Lieutenant of Kent with keynote speakers including Cdre Rob Bellfield - Naval Commander - Eastern and London Region and Col

David Kenny (Cdr - HQ SE). The most hard-hitting speech came from a Military Spouse who gave a powerful testimony in an online video.

HMS Kent - Freedom Debate & Freedom march



On the 21 September 2023, at a Full Meeting, Kent County Council voted to grant HMS Kent (Type 23 Duke class frigate) the Freedom of Kent. The ship's Commander was also present for this historic vote.

A ceremonial march past was held in Maidstone to commemorate the historic HMS Freedom of Kent occasion on 22 September 2023 with 6,000 people including school children lining the entire route.



HM The King's Massed Band of The Royal Marines participated in the march, which also commemorated the 34th anniversary to the day of the tragic loss of 11 Royal Marines at Deal. 6,000+ people lined the streets in Maidstone, and it made Regional News with both the Commanding Officer and Kent CC Chairman being interviewed live on BBC SE TV Regional News -and Radio Kent.

MoD Employer Recognition Awards Scheme



EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

GOLD AWARD 2023

Proudly supporting those who serve.

Kent and Medway are still performing outstandingly well under the scheme. On the 23 October 2023, Kent County Council received official notification that it had successfully retained its MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold

Award following a rigorous re-validation process. KCC has been very much at the forefront in supporting and mentoring Councils and other bodies such as Kent FRS and Kent Police wishing to apply for MoD Employers Recognition Gold Awards in 2023 as 'military friendly' employers of choice. The Kent & Medway Covenant Lead Officer is pleased to advise that both Canterbury City Council and FM Conway were awarded Gold and Thanet District Council was awarded Silver.

SILVER & GOLD ERS AWARD HOLDERS - (INCLUDING DRM)		
Organisation	Date Awarded	Award Level
Absolute Military	2022	Gold
Armoured Engineering Ltd	2023	Silver
BJF Group	2022	Silver
Canterbury City Council	2023	Gold
Challenger Troop	2018	Silver
Dover District Council	2020	Gold
EC Safety Solutions Limited	2023	Silver
FM Conway Ltd	2023	Gold
Folkestone and Hythe District Council	2021	Gold
Forces Family Finance	2020	Silver
Gravesham Borough Council	2021	Silver
Henderson Facilities Management Ltd	2023	Silver
InvictaK9	2021	Silver
Joint Security Services Ltd	2023	Gold
Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust	2023	Silver
Kent County Council	2018 & 2023	Gold
Kent Fire and Rescue Service	2020	Gold

Kent and Medway NHS & Social Care Partnership Trust	2023	Silver
Kent Police	2022	Gold
Laing O'Rourke	R2022	Gold
Lifesaver First Aid Services	2022	Silver
Medway Council	2020	Gold
Medway NHS Foundation Trust	2019	Silver
MKC Training Services Ltd	2023	Gold
MTS Cleansing Services Limited	R2022	Silver
NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board	2022	Gold
NPC Tree Surgery	2021	Silver
Pantera Group	2021	Silver
Priority Freight	2018	Silver
Royal British Legion Industries Ltd	2020	Gold
Royal Engineers Central Charitable Trust (RECCT)	2022	Gold
Saga Group Plc	2018	Silver
Securitem Consultancy Ltd	2023	Silver
Thanet District Council	2023	Silver
The Education and Skills Partnership LTD	2021	Silver
The Rift Group	2020	Gold
The Royal Engineers Association	2023	Silver
Vistry Group (formally Bovis Homes Ltd)	2019	Gold

Armed Forces Covenant signing



Following the Kent & Medway CMPB meeting on 21 February 2023, Canterbury City Council re-signed the Armed Forces Covenant at the 3rd Battalion The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Leros Barracks.

On 11 May 2023, Kent Fire & Rescue Service was proud to renew its pledge to support the government's Armed Forces Covenant. The agreement was co-signed by Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Castro - Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers, who was joined by Major Ben McGauley (Task Force Commander) and Regimental Sergeant Major, Andrew Hurren.

As part of the Royal Engineers annual memorial service on Sunday 17 September 2023, the Armed Forces Covenant was signed by outgoing Chief Royal Engineer Lt Gen Tyrone Urch on behalf of the Tri-Services, the Bishop of Rochester - The Rt Revd Dr Jonathan Gibbs and the Dean of Rochester Cathedral - The Very Revd Dr Philip Hesketh DL in the presence of Lady Colgrain at Rochester Cathedral.

The Armed Forces Act 2021 and Covenant Legislation

The Armed Forces Act 2021 and Covenant Legislation having had a smooth passage through the House of Lords resulted in new Statutory Guidelines being published. To remind Members of Kent P&R Committee - as public bodies, Local Authorities now need to show 'due regard' when considering applications from Service Personnel seeking School Admissions, Housing Accommodation and Healthcare.



KCC and Medway are well placed to handle such requests as they already do it as it is "the right thing to do" without the need for any new legislation. A view reinforced by the MoD Covenant Lead at the Kent CC Armed Forces Conference in Gravesham. The plan was to 'tighten up' the Armed Forces Covenant having had it enshrined in law - by Statutory Guidelines with Employment, Naturalisation and Social Benefits next for consideration. One recommendation already coming through is that the Armed Forces Community should also be trained along with frontline staff on what the Armed Forces Covenant does and does not do in support of them. 'Managing expectations' has become even more important with an increase in demand from regular and ex-service personnel seeking the best school or one of the best houses in their local area across Kent.

A delegation from Kent attended the National Armed Forces Covenant Conference in September 2023. The theme for the day was 'Preventing Disadvantage' affecting the Armed Forces Community. The conference brought together delegates from Central Government, Devolved Administrations, Local Government, Charities, Housing, Education and Health sectors, to discuss issues, share ideas and build partnerships. Breakout sessions discussed practical ideas to tackle disadvantage faced by the Armed Forces Community, when accessing Housing, Health and Education services.



The keynote speech was delivered by the Rt Hon Dr Andrew Murrison MP, Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families. Following a question raised by Canon Bruinvels the Armed Forces Covenant Minister agreed that 'employment' and the difficulty in finding employment for military spouses should be included moving forward.

Events

During the past 12 months, there was an excellent Freedom march in Rochester lead by Lt Col Nathan HORSMAN - CO 3PWRR and a highly successful Armed Forces Day in Chatham with similar events including AFD Flag Raisings with County Hall being one such high profile example across Kent. Finally, Kent commemorated



all those who lost their lives with both the Kent Poppy Launch event at County Hall Maidstone on 27 October 2023 and then on Armistice Day and at Remembrance Sunday services.

Brompton Barracks hosted the annual Royal Engineers Communities Games in 2023. On 21 October 2023 1RSME ran an event with Medway Council and with Challenger Troop in attendance.

Cllr Oliver Richardson and Canon Peter Bruinvels attended the very successful Kent Army Cadet Force Annual Camp on St Martin's Plain, Folkestone. Reporting back how impressed they both were by the confidence/maturity shown by so many cadets and also by the number of cadets who wanted to become Regulars. Over

500 members of Kent ACF enjoyed a wide variety of activities from fieldcraft-first aid, navigation-water sports.



On 16 August 2023 a Memorial Ceremony, to mark the 80th anniversary of the passing of the RAF Belgian WW2 pilot, the aristocrat Baron Jean de Selys Longchamps DFC, who is buried in Minster cemetery. A service was held in the cemetery with more than 130 guests including, 15 members of the de Selys family, Princess Delphine the half-sister of King Philippe of Belgium and daughter of former King Albert II. Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent James Ryeland, members of the 609 squadron, Wings of Memory Belgium, French biographer Marc Audrit, representatives from Commonwealth

War Graves Commission, Kent County Council, Thanet District Council, Royal British Legion groups from across Thanet, ATC from Manston and 6 standard bearers. The event also included an F-16 fly past, flying low over the cemetery, was carried out by 349 Sqn, the Belgian Air Component.



A very successful Kent Reserves Day was held in September 2023 at County Hall Maidstone, with keynote addresses by The Lady Colgrain and Major Duncan Woods (2 i/c 579 Field Sqn). The day was very well supported by Reservists and CFAVs including staff members from both KCC and Medway. Thanks go to 3PWRR, 36RE and 579 Field Sqn and Lt Col Peter Ellis and the SERFCA Engagement Team.



The Lord-Lieutenant's Awards Night was held on 9 November 2023. So many awards were given both to Reservists and to Cadet Adult Volunteers who had shown many years of dedicated service supporting cadets across Kent. There are now 8 new Lord-Lieutenant cadets. The challenge remains to find another service child suitably qualified for the role.

Training



A very successful Armed Forces Awareness Training Session was held for current and newly Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champions and Covenant Lead Officers, was held at 36 RE HQ Invicta Park Barracks on 5 December 2023, with 27 attending including both the KCC Chairman and Vice Chairman along with Brigadier Andrew Word DL and chair of SERFCA Kent.

Kent CC through its Covenant Lead Officer supports all its Councils, including their Armed Forces Champions and Covenant Lead Officers which includes attending Civil-Military Partnership Panels such as Dover and Medway. Following the successful training through the Forces Connect SE undertaken in Medway, Canterbury and Dover Council last year and with the Forces Connect grant ending, the Kent CC Covenant Lead Officer is ensuring that

many more front line and contact centre staff, as well as, Adult Social Care Staff will be trained, along with middle managers and other senior staff.

Armed Forces Champions

There has been a major turnover of Armed Forces Champions following the May 2023 Local Elections.

Area	Armed Forces Champions	Contact email
Kent County Council Deputy AFC	Cllr Oliver Richardson Cllr Derek Crow-Brown	Oliver.Richardson@kent.gov.uk ; Derek.crow-brown@kent.gov.uk ;
Covenant Lead	Canon Peter Bruinvels CC	Peter.Bruinvels@kent.gov.uk ;
Officer	Tim Woolmer	Tim.Woolmer@kent.gov.uk ;
Medway Council Lead AFC	Cllr Vince Maple	vince.maple@medway.gov.uk ;
Ashford BC	Cllr Peter Feacey	Peter.feacey@ashford.gov.uk ;
Canterbury CC	Cllr Pip Hazleton	Pip.hazleton@councillor.canterbury.gov.uk
Dartford BC	Cllr Peter Whapshott	Peter.whapshott@dartford.gov.uk ;
Dover DC	Cllr Gordon Cowan	cllr-gordon.cowan@dover.gov.uk ;
Folkestone & Hythe DC	Cllr Jim Martin	Jim.martin@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk ;
Gravesham BC	Cllr Peter Scollard	Peter.scollard@gravesham.gov.uk ;
Maidstone BC	Cllr Lottie Parfitt-Reid	LottieParfittReid@maidstone.gov.uk ;
Sevenoaks DC	Cllr Larry Abraham	Cllr.abraham@sevenoaks.gov.uk ;
Swale BC	Cllr Richard Palmer	richardpalmer@swale.gov.uk ;
Thanet DC	Cllr Helen Whitehead	Cllr-helen.whitehead@thanet.gov.uk ;
Tonbridge & Malling BC (Joint AFCs)	Cllr Steve Hammond Cllr Dave Davis	Steve.hammond@tmbc.gov.uk ; Dave.davis@tmbc.gov.uk ;
Tunbridge Wells BC	Cllr Paul Roberts	paul.roberts@tunbridgewells.gov.uk ;

Armed Forces Veterans Hubs

During the past 12 months, an increasing need for new Veterans Hubs and Drop-in centres has been identified with many Ex-Service and Veterans experiencing loneliness and depression. Veterans Hubs in Kent and Medway are based in:

- Ramsgate
- Sittingbourne
- Sheerness
- Faversham
- Canterbury
- Chatham
- Gillingham
- Ashford
- Tonbridge
- Dartford
- Romney Marsh
- Folkestone Sports Centre
- Shorncliffe Barracks
- Cheriton (Nepalese Community)

The Nepalese Community Centre exclusively in Cheriton, Shorncliffe - continues to do well and is especially important because KCC played a part in supporting the local Nepalese Community taking on a lease from KCC to open and run the Community Centre, which is part of Cheriton Library. This Nepalese Community Centre is also supported by Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Forces Connect APP



This free resource is going from strength to strength across the UK 24/7, with over 22,000 downloads and 32 Regions signed up from Cumbria to Cornwall with the Royal Navy planning to have it on their Welfare Portal and the Welsh Devolved Government taking it en bloc. The Forces Connect App was first developed in Kent!

Kent Fire and Rescue Service have installed the Forces Connect SE APP on all operational mobile phones and in the fire engines. Kent Police have also installed the Forces Connect SE APP on all Kent Police Operational mobile phones.

Census 2021: UK Armed Forces Veterans

Following the publication of the 2021 Census figures, we now know that there were 1,853,112 people in England and Wales reporting that they had previously served in the UK Armed Forces (3.8% of usual residents aged 16 years and over).

- Medway: 8529
- Thanet: 5,765
- Dover: 5,710
- Maidstone: 5,664
- Canterbury: 5,217
- Dartford: 2,328

Table 1: Residents who have previously served in the UK armed forces

	Usual residents aged 16+	Number previously served in UK armed forces	Percentage previously served in UK armed forces
2021 Census: UK Armed forces veterans			
England & Wales	48,566,373	1,853,112	3.8%
South East	7,554,580	317,082	4.2%
Kent	1,276,567	52,545	4.1%
Ashford	106,771	4,962	4.6%
Canterbury	132,774	5,217	3.9%
Dartford	90,698	2,328	2.6%
Dover	96,131	5,710	5.9%
Folkestone & Hythe	91,555	5,211	5.7%
Gravesham	84,555	2,351	2.8%
Maidstone	142,136	5,664	4.0%
Sevenoaks	96,603	3,344	3.5%
Swale	121,998	4,773	3.9%
Thanet	115,414	5,765	5.0%
Tonbridge & Malling	105,526	4,023	3.8%
Tunbridge Wells	92,403	3,194	3.5%
Medway Unitary Authority	222,757	8,529	3.8%

2021 Census - TS071 - Previously served in the UK armed forces

The Office for National Statistics (ONS), Table presented by Kent Analytics, Kent County Council

A full report is available on the Kent County Council website [2021 Census - Veterans \(kent.gov.uk\)](https://www.kent.gov.uk/2021-census-veterans)

Looking to 2024

Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Partnership Board's

Strategic Aims:

Promoting, publicising and co-ordinating events that increase the visibility of the Armed Forces Community to the civilian population:

- By holding the 10th Annual Armed Forces Covenant contribute to achieving this aim on 4 June 2024 at 1RSME - Brompton Barracks, Chatham.
- By building on the granting of the Freedom of the County to HMS Kent.
- Hold twice-yearly meetings with Task Force Commanders, Armed Forces Champions and Covenant Lead Officers.
- Recognise & Remember Task Group: publicise the military events calendar (including veterans' activities) in conjunction with the Lieutenancy Officer to commemorate D-Day 80 and to celebrate Armed Forces Day 2024 and Kent Reservists Day on 10 September 2024 and well as commemorating Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday 2024 and encourage KCC Members to support all the local events.
- The Children & Youth Task Group to continue to raise awareness of military life and the impact for families amongst schools with only a few service children.

Continue to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant amongst public sector staff, and making it easier for the Armed Forces Community to access information, advice and support:

- Build on the legacy of Forces Connect SE, ensuring the work is embedded and built upon through regular in-person training and e-learning.
- Encourage the wider use of the Forces Connect App.
- Encourage Unit Welfare Officers to be more proactive in ensuring the armed forces community understand what the Covenant is (and what it is not) and how they are being supported across Kent.

Raising awareness amongst schools of the specific needs of service children and their families, including the Gurkha families:

- Children & Youth Task Group - range of actions identified.
- Consider holding a network event next Autumn for staff who teach service children.

Maintaining a focus on how the most vulnerable within the Armed Forces Community can be supported to access what they need to thrive in their future civilian life:

- Improve identification of those veterans who have greatest needs, via networking across public services and the voluntary sector and improving signposting to support vulnerable people post Covid-19 lock-down which continues to provide a strong platform upon which to build.
- Increase signposting and support for financial and debt management services - and again, Kent Together and Refer Kent provides a basis for this.

Maintaining a strong focus on Recruitment, Staffing and Training on ex-service personnel:

- Support and promote the benefits of recruiting of Armed Forces Reservists and Military Spouses.
- Continue to monitor Kent CCs HR Policy to ensure that KCC remains 'Military friendly' and does now offer Guaranteed Interviews to appropriately qualified ex-service personnel and Veterans, as well as offering mentoring.
- Ensure that KCC continues to offer Armed Forces Awareness Training, especially to Adult Social Care Staff.
- Consider conducting another Councillor and Staff Survey at KCC in late 2024/25 on whether they served and any links with the Armed Forces.
- Build on the successful Revalidation of KCC's Employers Recognition Gold Award which was received in October 2023.
- Develop a proposal for a Kent-wide campaign to encourage more Adult Volunteers for the Cadets, and case workers for the military charities (including targeting retired veterans).
- The Employment & Skills Task Group to take a lead in promoting the benefits of employing Reservists to the Private Sector and Cadets as Apprentices in conjunction with SERFCA.
- Plan and promote Kent Reservists Day 2024.
- Make the most of the benefits of being an Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award holder by sending KCC staff on the Sandhurst / Longmoor Leadership Challenge training and developing the feedback groups to be part of KCC Civil-Military Peer Support Panel.
- Work closely with local partners and the Military to ensure bids for Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund remain of the highest quality, maximising income into the County.

From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council

Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services

Dylan Jeffrey, Cabinet Member for Communications and Democratic Services

Amanda Beer, Chief Executive Officer

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 17 January 2024

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).

18 of the 27 KPIs achieved target for the latest month and were RAG (Red/Amber/Green) rated Green, three were below target but did achieve the floor standard (Amber), and six did not achieve the floor standard (Red).

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 2023/24 financial year.

2. Performance Dashboard

2.1. The current Performance Dashboard for CED and DCED provides results up to October 2023 and is attached in Appendix 1.

2.2. The Dashboard provides a progress report on performance against target for the 27 KPIs for 2023/24. 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 27 KPIs, the latest RAG status is as follows:

- Eighteen are rated Green (three fewer than last report) – the target was achieved or exceeded.
- Three are rated Amber (one more than last report) – performance achieved or exceeded the expected floor standard but did not meet the target for Green.
- Six are rated Red (two more than last report) – performance did not meet the expected floor standard. These are:
 - FN06: Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC outstanding over 6 months old
 - FN07: Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 15 days of KCC received date
 - FN11: Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral
 - CS07: Complaints responded to in timescale
 - GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days.
 - GL03: Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within statutory timescales.

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:

Matthew Wagner
Chief Analyst (interim)
Chief Executive's Department
03000 416559
Matthew.Wagner@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

David Whittle
Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance
03000 416833
david.whittle@kent.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Financial Year 2023/24

Results up to Oct 2023

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

Page 174

*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: Sundry debt due to KCC outstanding over 6 months old	RED	N/A
FN07: Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 15 days of KCC received date	RED	RED
FN08: Invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days	AMBER	AMBER
FN11: Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral	RED	AMBER
FN12: Percentage of working days aggregate bank balance is in credit	GREEN	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
Governance, Law & Democracy	Latest RAG	YTD RAG
GL01: Council and Committee papers published at least five days before meetings	GREEN	GREEN
GL02: Freedom of Information Act requests completed within 20 working days	RED	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	AMBER	AMBER
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

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	AMBER	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	Cabinet Member
Finance	Zena Cooke	Peter Oakford

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Mar-23
FN06	Percentage of sundry debt due to KCC outstanding over 6 months old	25%	29%	24%	43%	RED	n/a		30%	35%	11%
FN07	Invoices received by Accounts Payable within 15 days of KCC received date	65%	72%	67%	65%	RED	65%	RED	90%	85%	Revised indicator
FN08	Percentage of invoices received on time by Accounts Payable processed within 30 days	97%	97%	98%	97%	AMBER	97%	AMBER	98%	95%	99%
FN11	Percentage of financial assessments completed within 15 days of referral	86%	88%	81%	79%	RED	85%	AMBER	90%	85%	91%
FN12	Percentage of working days aggregate bank balance is in credit	95%	95%	100%	100%	GREEN	97%	AMBER	100%	90%	New Indicators for 2023/24
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%	
FN14	Percentage of third-party insurance claims resolved within the designated timescales	98%	99%	98%	100%	GREEN	99%	GREEN	95%	85%	

FN06 – The increase was driven by 4 large invoices (totalling £1.25m) moving over 6 months combined with a significant reduction in total overdue debt. One of those invoices (£187K) is owed by the NHS, their financial controller has been contacted regarding urgent payment; three further invoices have been referred to the relevant team for action.

FN07 – This KPI has been revised to measure invoices received within 15 days instead of within 30 days which it was last year. This was identified as a key revision to ensure payments are made on time. 3,307 invoices were received in Exchequer after 15 days in October. The performance information relating to the submission of invoices will be reviewed by the Corporate Director (Finance) with the details provided to the relevant Corporate Director on a monthly basis to ensure that this is prioritised and the performance improved. The previous KPI set at 30 days shows a YTD performance of 80% and so still short of achieving the new floor standard.

FN08 - Out of 192 invoices processed late, 120 were received by the Accounts team with just two days or less of the 30-day payment target remaining. A further 10 required supplier amendments, bank verifications or had invoice/purchase order issues. Removing these 130 would increase the KPI score to 99%, which would have resulted in the target being met.

FN11 – In August, there was a change in policy meaning financial assessments could be undertaken in advance of care, and this has created an increase in referrals for a financial assessment to be undertaken. Between April to October 2023, 6,156 assessments were completed, 18% more than for the same period the previous year. Three vacant posts within the Financial Assessment team have recently been recruited to, but it is likely that this KPI will not improve until these staff have been fully trained.

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Year to date	Previous Year
FN06b	Value of debt due to KCC (£000s)	19,076	15,124	19,213	14,969	N/a	32,663
FN07b	Number of invoices received by KCC	7,355	9,572	8,228	9,420	55,737	75,381
FN11b	Number of financial assessments received	950	777	833	799	6,156	5,227
FN14b	Number of insurance claims resolved	211	178	148	116	1,485	New indicator

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member
Governance, Law & Democracy	Ben Watts	Dylan Jeffrey

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	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%	100%	GREEN	100%	GREEN	100%	96%	100%
GL02	Freedom of Information (FOI) / Environmental Information Regulation (EIR) requests completed within 20 working days	60%	79%	79%	72%	RED	73%	RED	92%	90%	77%
GL03	Data Protection Act Subject Access Requests (SARs) completed within timescales	47%	49%	54%	65%	RED	52%	RED	90%	85%	64%

GL02 – For the year since April, no Directorate achieved target, with the best performing being Children, Young People and Education with 78% completed in timescale, The highest number of requests continue to be received by Growth, Environment and Transportation (385 requests). Reasons for delays in dealing with requests include prioritisation of other work, and time taken to produce a thorough response to complex requests. The number of requests are at the high end of expectations in the year to September.

GL03 - For Subject Access Requests (SARs) since April, over 80% of these came under the Children, Young People and Education Directorate. Reasons for delays in responding to requests include complexity of some requests, prioritising of other work, and the need for the acquisition and use of redacting tools for electronic records which can add significant time when responding. The number of requests are above expectations in the year to September.

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	YTD	In expected range?	Expected Activity		Previous Year YTD
								Upper	Lower	
GL01b	Committee meetings	9	15	3	22	67		N/a		67
GL02b	Freedom of Information requests	205	151	210	153	1040	Yes	1040	840	869
GL03b	Data Protection Act Subject Access requests	55	51	50	26	302	Above	300	240	261

Deputy Chief Executive's Department

Service Area	Head of Service	Cabinet Member
Marketing and Resident Experience	Christina Starte	Dylan Jeffrey

Key Performance Indicators - Monthly

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
CS01	Percentage of callers who rate the advisors in Contact Point as good	98%	99%	98%	98%	GREEN	98%	GREEN	97%	90%	97%
CS04a	Percentage of daytime calls to Contact Point answered	85%	92%	87%	91%	GREEN	90%	GREEN	90%	85%	87%
CS04b	Percentage of out of hours calls to Contact Point answered	88%	89%	90%	93%	AMBER	92%	AMBER	95%	90%	95%
CS06a	Percentage of daytime calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	74%	71%	74%	*	GREEN	74%	GREEN	70%	65%	73%
CS06b	Percentage of out of hours calls achieving 85% of quality scorecard	74%	74%	77%	*	GREEN	75%	GREEN	70%	65%	80%

* Not available at time of reporting

CS04b - The Out of Hours service call volumes showed an increase compared to last year driven by Highways emergencies due to weather events and the continuing increase in Children's Social Care calls.

Key Performance Indicator – Quarterly

Ref	Indicator description	Dec-22 (Q3)	Mar-23 (Q4)	Jun-23 (Q1)	Sep-23 (Q2)	Qtr RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
CS07	Percentage of complaints responded to in timescale	73%	71%	58%	63%	RED	61%	RED	85%	80%	74%

CS07 – Between July and September, 63% of complaints were responded to within timescales. This is an improvement on last Quarter's performance as the backlog starts to reduce in some areas. In terms of Directorate performance, the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Departments, together achieved 72% of responses within timescale; Growth, Environment and Transport, 65%; Adult Social Care and Health, 56%; and Children, Young People and Education, 51%.

The focus on older cases does have an impact on the closure of new cases in timescale however. An action plan has been put in place to reduce backlogs within the Special Educational Need (SEN) service; these will take some time to reduce, and the impact on performance in this service specifically will continue throughout this year.

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Year to Date	In expected range?	Expected Range		Prev. Yr YTD
									Upper	Lower	
CS08	Number of calls answered by Contact Point	37,149	35,408	37,866	40,335	37,347	258,260	Yes	292,000	243,000	269,753
CS12	Number of visits to the KCC website, kent.gov (000s)	648	677	653	607	580	4,471	Below	5,810	4,810	5,271
CS13	Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point - priority services (seconds)	48	72	39	49	54	49	Yes	120	30	N/a
CS14	Average speed of answer (ASA) by Contact Point - all services (seconds)	109	173	90	147	104	122	Below	300	180	N/a

Page 183

CS12 – In December 2022, the Marketing and Residence Experience Team updated its cookie control mechanism following customer feedback and recent case law, to include a clear and obvious "Reject cookies" button on the cookie control mechanism. This makes it even easier for users to tell us that they don't want us to use cookies, which are needed to count website traffic. This is most likely to have caused the decrease from last year, rather than an actual reduction in website usage. Pages relating to Household Waste Recycling Centres continue to be the most visited, though in lower numbers than the previous two Quarters.

CS14 – Performance 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	Dylan Jeffrey

Key Performance Indicators – Monthly

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev Year
HR09	Training evaluated by participants as having delivered stated learning outcomes	98%	99%	99%	100%	GREEN	99%	GREEN	97%	95%	99%

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	In expected range?	Expected Range Upper Lower		Prev. Yr YTD
HR12	Number of current change activities being supported	90	96	95	91	93	Above	90	80	85
HR13	Total number of e-learning training programmes completed (YTD)	15,727	21,424	27,187	33,443	40,052	Above	37,917	32,083	37,173
HR16	Number of registered users of Kent Rewards	26,683	26,714	27,016	27,047	27,138	Above	27,000	25,000	25,514
HR21	Number of current people management cases being supported	111	121	130	136	145	Above	100	90	101
HR23	Percentage of staff who have completed all 3 mandatory learning events	88%	89%	89%	89%	89%	Yes	90%	80%	84%

HR12 – Change activity is driven by demand from the wider organisation and will fluctuate from month to month, some change activities will also span more than one month. Change activities also vary significantly in complexity, requiring different levels of resource and work to be carried out.

HR 13 – There has been an increase in the number of e-learning training programmes completed due to the introduction of new mandatory e-learning courses for employees in ASCH: ‘A guide to Direct Payments’ and ‘Introduction to Charging’.

HR16 – The number of registered users for Kent Rewards is higher than expected possibly due to the autumn Cycle to Work window and increases in communications, including presentations to schools earlier this year highlighting the benefits of joining Kent Rewards.

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.

Service Area	Interim Head of Service	Cabinet Member
Health and Safety	Maria Kelly	Dylan Jeffrey

Key Performance Indicators – Quarterly

Ref	Indicator description	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	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	90%	85%	99%

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member
Technology	Lisa Gannon	Peter Oakford

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Month RAG	Year to Date	Year RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
ICT01	Calls to ICT Help Desk resolved at the first point of contact	78%	78%	80%	79%	GREEN	77%	GREEN	70%	65%	75%
ICT02	Positive feedback rating with the ICT help desk	96%	95%	95%	94%	AMBER	95%	GREEN	95%	90%	93%
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	99.9%	100%	99.9%	100%	GREEN	99.9%	GREEN	99.0%	98.0%	99.8%
ICT05	Working hours where email is available to staff	100%	100%	100%	100%	GREEN	100%	GREEN	99.0%	98.0%	100%

Page 186

ICT02 - KCC and Cantium have been working together to increase the response rate by adapting the feedback form; this has been successful but has resulted in a drop in positive responses. It's too early to know if this is a significant change but we will work with Cantium to get a better understanding of the figures and to identify the causes of dissatisfaction.

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Year to Date	Previous Year YTD
ICT01b	Calls to ICT Help Desk	9,519	7,785	9,016	9,044	59,227	43,265
ICT02b	Feedback responses provided for ICT Help Desk	606	1,130	1,290	1,401	5,670	2,571

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member
Infrastructure	Rebecca Spore	Peter Oakford

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Month RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
PI01	Percentage of rent due to KCC outstanding over 60 days (including rent deferment invoices)	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.2%	3.6%	GREEN	5%	10%	1.9%

Activity Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Year to Date	Previous Year YTD
PI01b	Total rent invoiced (£000s)	419	48	24	176	56	1,701	1,028
PI03c	Capital receipts banked (£000s)	1,580	1,604	2,373	3,304	0	9,934	2,633

Service Area	Director	Cabinet Member
Infrastructure	Rebecca Spore	Peter Oakford

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Indicator description	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Month RAG	YTD	YTD RAG	Target	Floor	Prev. Year
PI05	Percentage of scheduled Planned Preventative Maintenance completed by due date	98%	99%	99%	98%	GREEN	99%	GREEN	90%	80%	*
PI06	Percentage of reactive help desk tasks completed by due date	95%	97%	98%	98%	GREEN	97%	GREEN	90%	80%	
PI07	Percentage of help desk calls answered within timescale	99%	99%	96%	100%	GREEN	99%	GREEN	90%	80%	

* New indicators from April 2023

Ref	Indicator description	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Year to Date	Previous Year YTD
PI05b	Number of Planned Preventative Maintenance tasks responded to	2,865	3,050	2,491	2,717	3,276	11,909	*
PI06b	Number of reactive tasks responded to	679	629	596	702	881	4,865	
PI07b	Number of help desk calls responded to	420	377	343	309	337	2,450	

* New indicators from April 2023

From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance,
Corporate and Traded Services

Lisa Gannon, Director of Technology

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 17 January 2024

Subject: Kent Public Service Network (KPSN) Re-Procurement 2024

Decision no: 23/00119

Key Decision: Yes, this *decision affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions and 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).*

Past Pathway of report: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 13 July 2021

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All - Countywide

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: Kent Public Service Network (KPSN) is a not for profit, single ICT infrastructure delivering Wide Area Network (WAN), broadband, telecommunication, and internet connectivity services to in excess of 1500 establishments across Kent, including fire stations, schools, local Government offices, universities, colleges and health organisations. Since the creation of the KPSN Partnership in 2008 and its subsequent contract in 2014, it has gone from strength to strength, delivering substantial cost savings where partners have a simple route to market for their ongoing evolving requirements, taking advantage of the aggregated buying power and access to preferential rates that KPSN provides. As well as achieving lower costs, partners have access to the expertise and knowledge provided by a dedicated team to ensure their requirements are delivered in the best way possible i.e., using the network with the power of collaboration that would otherwise create duplication within Kent unnecessarily.

The KPSN agreement with Daisy Updata Communications Ltd (DUCL) is due to expire in August 2024. All contract extensions have been utilised and a replacement supplier is required to continue providing network connectivity.

This report updates Members on the status of the re-procurement of this contract and sets out the next steps.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to:

- i. APPROVE the award of a contract for the provision of network and telecommunication connectivity services for a period of 4 years, from 8 August 2024 to 7 August 2028, with the option for a contract extension of a further 3 years, from 8 August 2028 to 7 August 2031, which will continue to be managed by the Kent Public Services Network Partnership.
 - ii. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Technology to finalise terms of and award contracts to the successful provider and to approve, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, the exercise of any extensions permitted within the agreed contacts; and
 - iii. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Technology to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.
-

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent Public Services Network (KPSN) agreement with Daisy Udata Communications Ltd (DUCL), a company of Capita Plc, is due to expire in August 2024. All contract extensions have been utilised and a replacement supplier is required to continue providing network connectivity to our partners.
- 1.2 In addition to providing secure and resilient core network connectivity, KPSN provides a range of value-added services, such as network security, public and commercial internet, Wi-Fi, CCTV, mail filtering, remote access services and cyber security protection.
- 1.3 KPSN is a partnership, it is not a legal entity and Kent County Council (KCC) is the Contracting Authority.

2. Background

- 2.1 The KPSN is a broadband ICT network developed by a partnership of public sector agencies. Built to the highest standards, this integrated network has been designed to meet growing demands for better access to services, collaboration, and multi-agency shared services. The core principles of KPSN are that a collective approach to the provision of telecommunications services decreases the cost and increases the value proposition to our partners.

2.2 The KPSN Partnership is constituted through a broad range of public sector organisations which are set out in the list below:

- Ashford Borough Council
- Canterbury City Council
- Cantium Business Services
- Citizens Advice North & West Kent
- Dartford Borough Council
- Dover District Council
- Folkestone and Hythe District Council
- GOETEC Limited.
 - University of Kent
 - University of Greenwich
 - Canterbury Christ church
- Gravesham Borough Council
- Janet UK (JISC)
- Kent Connects
- KCC Offices and Libraries, Academies & Independent Schools
- Kent Fire & Rescue Service
- Kent Police
- Maidstone Borough Council
- iMicro Ltd
- Medway Unitary Council
- NHS Kent & Medway ICB
- NHS Kent Community Health Foundation Trust
- NHS East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust
- NHS South, Central and west Commissioning Support Unit
- NHS Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS foundation Trust
- NHS Kent and Medway Partnership Trust
- Pilgrims Hospices
- Shepway District Council
- Sevenoaks District Council
- Swale Borough Council
- Thanet District Council
- Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
- University of Creative Arts

2.3 DUCL is the service provider of the contract that underpins the KPSN Partnership which is due to expire in August 2024.

2.4 The contract was originally let in August 2014 for 6 years with various options to extend for a further 4 years. The 2014 contract opportunity was advertised for a value of £75m over the 10-year duration, however due to consolidation of demand on the network core, the overall spend from 2014-2024 is estimated to finalise between £50m-£55m. Further information can be found in the exempt appendix.

2.5 The challenges of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have completely reset the baseline for public services within Kent and have reinforced the value of an integrated resilient public service network, which underpins service delivery and enables mutual support between public sector agencies.

3. Objectives of the KPSN Re-procurement

- 3.1 Ensuring the continuation of KCC's (and other partners on KPSN) network connectivity requirements are delivered and managed, including a whole range of services providing resiliency, security and flexibility.
- 3.2 Continuing to be the trusted partnership model and vehicle for Kent public sector organisations.
- 3.3 Provide services that are excellent value for money by continuing to aggregate partner requirements and streamline infrastructure where possible.
- 3.4 Be the go-to solution to assist partners with their migration from on premise infrastructure to Cloud solutions, and/or a hybrid of both.
- 3.5 Continue to remove the task of managing a network away from KPSN partners to allow them to focus on their own individual organisation's objectives.
- 3.6 Continue to be a vehicle for partner collaboration throughout the public sector in Kent.

4. Collaboration Efforts

The following options have been considered:

4.1 Collaboration with another County Council

- 4.1.1 Essex County Council (ECC) provide a similar service to KPSN, as they aggregate user requirements to access advantageous pricing, contractual terms, higher levels of services etc. The main difference to the KPSN model is the ECC model was designed as a framework, so ECC user organisations contract directly with the service provider.
- 4.1.2 The ECC service provider is also DUCL, the main difference being DUCL are sited permanently at Essex County Hall and ECC maintain a 'hands-off' approach in the day-to-day activity.
- 4.1.3 The contract between ECC and DUCL terminates at the end of 2024 (4 months after the KPSN contract). Collaborative discussions started in 2019 as there was an opportunity to jointly terminate both DUCL contracts in 2022 (and not take advantage of the final contract extension).
- 4.1.4 KPSN and ECC participated in joint early market engagement in 2020 (ECC leading as the lead authority) which involved virtual meetings with 18 suppliers in the network and communications market.
- 4.1.5 ECC decided not to progress onto a procurement after the early market engagement activity as the information obtained proved that the network and communications market was unstable due to the effects of Covid-19 and the sudden change in what customers needed to continue to operate.

4.1.6 KPSN and ECC jointly decided to discontinue the option of collaboration due to various factors listed below:

- Both organisations had differing appetites to extend the existing contract and KPSN wanted to take advantage of the available extensions left on the contract to allow the market more time to stabilise following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- It was agreed determining the 'lead authority' would be challenging, i.e., ownership, liability, and governance.
- Different operating models were preferred, i.e., partnership working vs. framework call-offs.
- Different funding models were preferred, i.e., self-funding via partner contributions vs. 'hand-off' approach and the supplier manages the financial model.

4.2 Collaboration with NHS

There is a continued appetite to explore a more centred/grouped collaboration with the NHS, however, there has not been an opportunity to open dialogue, despite the attempts from KPSN. This could have been due to the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) consolidation (reduction from 9 to 1 CCG) and resources available. In addition, the CCG were in the process of changing their CSU (Clinical Support Unit) provider during this time.

Despite no traction being gained in a collaborative procurement effort, KPSN has continued to work with NHS organisations which has resulted in a number of them becoming new KPSN Partners.

5. Options considered and associated risk

5.1 The following options were considered for the re-procurement of the KPSN 2024 contract:

5.1.1 **Option 1 - Further competition through RM3808 CCS framework.** Whilst this would provide competitive process and deliver the same benefits as our chosen option, the incumbent supplier would not be able to bid as they are not on the relevant lots, and it is best practice to include the incumbent where possible.

5.1.2 **Option 2 - Direct award to current supplier.** This option is positive in terms of stability and continuity but reduces scope to seek improved value for money through relevant competition arrangements.

5.1.3 **Option 3 - Full tender process under Public Contract Regulations.** This provides the greatest flexibility for determining best end solution but is not viable at present due to extensive timescales, mobilisation periods and discontinuity.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 The KPSN contract is a self-funded partnership with the new contract estimated to cost between £30M and £40M for the total contract duration of 7 years (with all extensions considered). All costs incurred are recharged to partners. KCC is both a partner and the Contracting Authority and only pay for the services it receives from its technology budgets. An important feature of the network is that it is self-sustaining financially. The means to ensure that the network remains resilient and fit-for-purpose is provided through a renewals reserve programme and the re-procurement activity has been fully funded through a procurement reserve. Each partner makes a contribution to the reserves, as part of their recharges, to enable the replacement of end-of-life hardware and software. It also funds the programmed upgrades of circuits which go above 50% average utilisation, to maintain the required capacity as partners' requirements flex and additional sites join the network.
- 6.2 The cost of the KPSN core infrastructure is fairly static, consequently the addition of new partners and/or sites, results in a decrease in the cost to existing partners. Conversely, the loss of partners/sites potentially increases the cost, however the risk is fairly well mitigated by means of a robust contract between KPSN and the partners.
- 6.3 The schools' market has become significantly more competitive over recent years, and schools can be tempted by a cost reduction for what may appear to be an equivalent service. KPSN has recently partnered with two organisations (one existing partner and one new partner) to continue providing value for money services to the schools' sector.
- 6.4 There are also opportunities for growth, however, such as the potential addition of 700 private care homes to the network as part of the Digital Inclusion Programme, the recent addition of the NHS Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) that has a requirement of up to 300 GP surgeries, or Kent Highways utilising KPSN for street furniture or Traffic Management.
- 6.5 It is also worth noting that zero partners have left KPSN since its creation.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 KCC is the Contracting Authority and all partners (including KCC) have signed a legally binding Partnership Service Agreement before taking on KPSN services.
- 7.2 All new partners are required to sign a Partnership Services Agreement prior to taking on KPSN services. This agreement sets out the roles and responsibilities of each party.
- 7.3 As costs may decrease with new partners onboarding to KPSN, costs could also increase should a partner leave KPSN or reduce its requirements on the network. The Partnership Services Agreement sets out the termination notice period for partners to cease requirements, which is 12 months' notice, plus the remainder of the financial year the notice is served in. This time allows KPSN

the opportunity to investigate streamlining the network where possible to minimise any financial impact that may arise.

7.4 The procurement undertaken was conducted by using a recognised public sector framework in strict accordance with the Public Contract Regulations (PCR2015) and in consultation with Strategic Commissioning.

7.5 Internal and external Legal advice has been sought and funded by KPSN from the inception of this re-procurement.

8. Equalities implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQiA) (Appendix B) has been completed and due to the nature of what KPSN is no issues or key issues have been identified.

9. Data Protection Implications

9.1 KPSN conducted the Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screening tool and concluded a DPI was not required.

9.2 KPSN has no access to the data that transmits over the KPSN network.

9.3 KPSN suppliers (including subcontractors) has no access to data that transmits over the KPSN network.

9.4 Only the data owner and handler are able to access and have visibility of the data.

10. Governance

As the contract is held by KCC, the re-procurement of the contract requires a key decision in accordance with the KCC's constitution and governance process.

11. Conclusions

11.1 The KPSN contract has been a successful partnership arrangement which has facilitated connectivity across the public sector in Kent since 2008. This has proved invaluable to its partners. The current contract is due to expire in 2024. It is recognised the services currently provided by KPSN and its model will need the flexibility to allow partners to deliver their forward strategy and advances in technology.

11.2 The KPSN – DUCL contract has now used all possible extensions, making the final expiration of the contract August 2024. The 30+ partners contributing to KPSN have all expressed an interest to continue utilising KPSN services for their network connectivity needs for the foreseeable future. It is also worth noting the contracts governing the relationship between KPSN and the partners have no end date. They are automatically renewed each year and have strict termination periods (12 months plus the remainder of the financial year the

notice is served) to protect the stability and funding of the partnership and Contracting Authority (KCC).

- 11.3 A KPSN partner engagement exercise was conducted in 2022 to analyse partner appetites and requirements for the next 5-10 years with regards to their Cloud migration strategies, which concluded 32% would not be able to migrate until at least 2027 and a further 47% beyond 2027. 5% of partners had no timescales or objectives in place. The existing network is considered by all partners to be fit for purpose and allows flexibility and scalability where required. The general consensus between partners is that the contract is end of term, not end of life.
- 11.4 A market analysis process was conducted in late 2022 that involved 8 network and communication suppliers (both large and SME) to ascertain the best way forward for KPSN considering the impact and challenges faced by Covid19 and the financial impacts of Brexit.
- 11.5 A full procurement exercise has been undertaken, with evaluations due to be completed by end December 2023.
- 11.6 Potential new contract costs can be found in the exempt appendix. The cost of the current contract is expected to finalise at £53,218,149 for the total of 10 years.
- 11.7 The procurement was based on a like for like basis which will minimise any impact to the services partners receive, no matter who the service provider is. We have ensured we have a service to offer no matter where the partner is, whether they require the services we provide today currently, a hybrid set of requirements or fully implemented Cloud based services. We aim to futureproof the service offering as best as possible, to cover all ranges of requirements.
- 11.8 The indicative key milestones are as follows:

Indicative Milestone	Key Dates
Partner engagement activity	May 2022 – June 2022
Market Analysis	September 2022
Governance including Full Commercial Case approved	August 2023
Undertake Procurement	August 2023 – December 2023
P&R Cabinet Committee - Key Decision	January 2024
Contract Award	February 2024
Contract Mobilisation	February – August 2024
New supplier fully in place	August 2024

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to:

- i. APPROVE the award of a contract for the provision of network and telecommunication connectivity services for a period of 4 years, from 8 August 2024 to 7 August 2028, with the option for a contract extension of a further 3 years, from 8 August 2028 to 7 August 2031, which will continue to be managed by the Kent Public Services Network Partnership.
 - ii. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Technology to finalise terms of and award contracts to the successful provider and to approve, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, the exercise of any extensions permitted within the agreed contacts; and
 - iii. DELEGATE authority to the Director of Technology to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.
-

12. Background Documents / Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix A – Exempt Financial Information
- 12.2 Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment
- 12.3 Appendix C - Proposed Record of Decision

13. Contact details

Report Author: Stuart Cockett, Interim Head of KPSN Telephone number: 03000 41 01 34 Email address: stuart.cockett@kent.gov.uk	Director: Lisa Gannon, Director of Technology Telephone number: 03000 41 43 41 Email address: lisa.gannon@kent.gov.uk
---	---

This page is intentionally left blank

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

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

KPSN 2024

Responsible Officer

Daniel Medley - DCED T

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

Commissioning/Procurement

Strategy/Policy

No

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

IT/Technology

Responsible Head of Service

Stuart Cockett - DCED T

Responsible Director

Lisa Gannon - DCED T

Aims and Objectives

To complete a tender exercise in order to award new WAN and LAN service provider for the KPSN Partnership. New contract to commence on 8th August 2024 (or sooner if required for migration).

I do not consider the process to present any potential for discrimination as KPSN (Kent Public Services Network) is a network that provides user organisations (i.e. Local Authorities, Blue Light, Education, Health and Charities) connectivity to enable the use of their own tools and systems. KPSN does not provide 'useable' services directly to end users that would allow for any form of discrimination. KPSN partner organisations will have policies in place to protect their workforce and other users for their particular use requirement over the KPSN network.

For example, KCC's tools and systems that require internet connectivity and associated security elements use the KPSN network as their access to the internet.

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

No

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?
Not Applicable
Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?
KPSN (Kent Public Services Network) is a network that provides user organisations (i.e. Local Authorities, Blue Light, Education, Health and Charities) connectivity to enable the use of their own tools and systems.
KPSN does not provide 'useable' services directly to end users that would allow for any form of discrimination. KPSN only enables connectivity for organisations own network and communicational requirements.
For example, KCC's tools and systems that require internet connectivity and associated security elements use the KPSN network as their access to the internet.
KPSN partner organisations will have policies in place to protect their workforce and users for their particular use requirement.
Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?
No
Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?
Yes
Section C – Impact
Who may be impacted by the activity?
Service Users/clients
No
Staff
Staff/Volunteers
Residents/Communities/Citizens
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
Details of Positive Impacts
Not Applicable
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

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services

DECISION NO:

23/00119

For publication Yes

Key decision: Yes

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: Kent Public Services Network (KPSN) 2024 reprourement

Decision: As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, I agree to:

- i. **APPROVE** the award of a contract for the provision of network and telecommunication connectivity services for a period of 4 years, from 8 August 2024 to 7 August 2028, with the option for a contract extension of a further 3 years, from 8 August 2028 to 7 August 2031, which will continue to be managed by the Kent Public Services Network Partnership.
- ii. **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Technology, to finalise terms of and award contracts to the successful provider and to approve, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, the exercise of any extensions permitted within the agreed contacts; and
- iii. **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Technology to take other relevant actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts and other legal agreements, as required to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Kent Public Services Network (KPSN) contract with its service provider, Daisy Updata Communication Ltd (DUCL) for the provision of WAN, LAN and other network connectivity services expires on 7 August 2024.

KPSN is a self-funding, ICT network delivering secure and resilient connectivity services to 32 public sector organisations including Kent County Council, who also acts as the Contracting Authority for the contract with the service provider. KPSN services are critical in providing the Council (and Partners) resilient and secure network connectivity across all business functions/services.

The term of the contract will be August 2024 to August 2028 with the option to extend for up to three further years.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

No public consultation has been undertaken.

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee will consider this on 17 January 2024.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Option 1 - Further competition through RM3808 CCS framework. Whilst this would provide competitive process and deliver the same benefits as our chosen option, the incumbent supplier would not be able to bid as they are not on the relevant lots, and it is best practice to include the incumbent where possible.

Option 2 - Direct award to current supplier. This option is positive in terms of stability and continuity but reduces scope to seek improved value for money through relevant competition arrangements.

Option 3 - Full tender process under Public Contract Regulations. This provides the greatest flexibility for determining best end solution but is not viable at present due to extensive timescales, mobilisation periods and discontinuity.

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

.....
signed

.....
date

From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance,
Corporate and Traded Services
Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 17 January 2024

Subject: Proposal for the new Asset Management Strategy

Key Decision: Involves the adoption of major new strategies or frameworks which are not included on the Policy Framework.

Classification: *UNRESTRICTED*

Electoral Division: All

Summary:

This report provides an update on the proposal for the development of the new 2024 - 2030 Asset Management Strategy.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee are asked to note the development of the proposal for the new 2024-2030 Asset Management Strategy and comment on the draft Aims and Approaches set out in this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Asset Management Strategy (AMS) ended in 2023, and a replacement Asset Management Strategy (2024 –2030) is being developed, alongside Kent County Council's (KCC's) core strategic objectives and by considering the outcomes achieved and lessons learnt from the existing AMS (2018-2023).
- 1.2 The current AMS 5-year plan 2018 to 2023 focused on six key themes:
 - Innovation and customer focus,
 - Safe, warm, dry, and proactively compliant,
 - Effective asset and estate management,
 - An efficient, adequate, and appropriate estate,
 - Maximising regeneration and growth in Kent,
 - Reducing the estate's environmental impact and the environment's impact on the estate.
- 1.3 Internal engagement workshop sessions have been undertaken to review the 2018-2023 AMS, which reflected on what had been achieved; lessons learnt; and areas for improvement. It also identified areas to be considered for the new Strategy, which includes ambition, vision, and new themes.

1.4 These lessons learned will inform the new AMS.

2. The Current 2018 - 2023 Asset Management Strategy

2.1 The current strategy set out to deliver the following key outcomes:

- Optimise asset performance and income to provide value for money and support service delivery.
- Keep properties safe, compliant with regulations, and in good repair.
- Drive efficiency by ensuring the estate meets evolving organisational needs regarding space, location, and cost.
- Manage assets effectively utilising best practices and enhancing data/reporting for decision-making.
- Maximise opportunities for income generation and growth through the asset base.
- Reduce the environmental impact of the estate in line with Kent's Environment Strategy.
- Complete transfer of any remaining directorate-managed complex assets into the corporately managed estate.
- Improve monitoring and management of compliance across all the Council's assets and services.
- Adopt project management best practices for asset-related initiatives.
- Develop staff through training on asset management strategies and plans.
- Assign clear asset-related roles and responsibilities across teams.
- Leverage technology to transform service delivery models and the Council's property footprint.

2.2 The outcomes were significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during the course of 2020, 2021 and part of 2022 as a new normal was established.

2.3 The key findings of the internal engagement workshop sessions included:

2.3.1 Key Successes:

- Rationalisation of the property portfolio by 10%, from 2,230 assets down to 1,816 through disposals and mergers. Improvement in the quality of asset data recorded on KCC's property database. This has enabled key decisions and priorities to be made by the Asset Strategy team regarding the future of these sites.
- Delivery of the Council's capital and disposal plan
- Success in receiving governmental grants, has meant the enhancement and implementation of local carbon projects. This has been achieved through solar farms; school expansions and maintenance projects which has promoted energy efficiency and savings to KCC sites and has generated energy for the national grid. Assisting KCC to meet its net zero targets.
- Wildlife friendly landscaping has been identified and implemented and has promoted bugs, butterflies, and other wildlife to return to the area, aiding in plant diversity.
- Staff development within Infrastructure has meant the provision of a skilled and diverse workforce, which has been achieved through apprenticeships and project management qualifications and continues to be a priority.

- The launch of the Future Assets Programme as part of the Strategic Reset priorities. Office facilities which are aligned to and support KCC's People and Service Strategy.

2.3.2 Lessons Learned:

- The Corporate Landlord model for good estate and asset management was not fully embedded across the organisation. Issues included lack of centralised control and siloed decision making.
- Backlog maintenance remains a risk at £165 million, with some buildings in poor condition. Condition surveys and investment prioritisation processes needs improvement.
- Property performance measures could be strengthened. Further work is recommended to establish portfolio wide key performance indicators (KPIs) and benchmarks to drive improvement.
- Currently there are a number of data recording systems, which has caused issues with the provision of consistent, real and reliable data.

2.4 In summary the 2018-2023 AMS outcomes were that good progress was made to rationalise the estate, securing capital receipts, meeting environmental goals, and developing staff. However, further work is needed on strengthening capacity, data systems, property performance, and backlog maintenance.

3 Moving Forward with the New 2024-2030 Asset Management Strategy

3.1 The new AMS has been devised from KCC's strategic core objectives; Securing Kent's Future budget recovery plan; the evaluation of the 2018-2023 AMS and from feedback through stakeholder engagement.

3.2 The key drivers for the new strategy are:

i) Securing Kent's Future:

- Financial Sustainability: achieving sustainability requires a commercially focused approach that balances supply and demand for services.

ii) Net Zero Targets:

- Reducing our environmental footprint and improving efficiency are essential to achieving our Net Zero emissions targets.

iii) Property Enhancing Service delivery:

- Optimising our property portfolio is crucial for enhancing service delivery.
- This includes ensuring the property service provided in buildings meets the service need and any new investment in buildings is designed to be fully fit-for-purpose by supporting service delivery.

iv) Adherence to Legislative Framework and Health and Safety Compliance

- Compliance with the legislative framework and health and safety regulations is paramount.

3.3 This strategy will ensure that the KCC's property and assets portfolio are optimised along with the continued collaboration with partners regarding the potential shared use to ensure efficiencies can be realised to deliver KCC's statutory and essential

services. Securing our short and medium-term position is crucial for effective future planning.

3.4 The new strategy will seek to ensure that the Council's asset portfolio is aligned to service delivery, is greener, and financially sustainable.

3.5 We aim to do this by committing to a new mission statement a draft of which is set out below:

“KCC is committed to providing a sustainable estate of the right size and type to meet its operational and business needs. The estate must be adaptable to change, affordable and sustainable.”

3.6 It is proposed that the new strategy will be for 6 years to 2030. This is to align the AMS with KCC's other key strategies, such as:

- i) The Kent Economic Strategy 2030
- ii) The Kent Environmental Strategy 2030
- iii) The Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2030
- iv) Framing and Securing Kents Future 2022-2026 & 2023-2025

3.7 We are embarking on a journey to transform how we manage our assets and would like to set ambitious goals for the next six years. However, we need to breakdown ambitions to lay the groundwork to ensure we have a sustainable estate by focusing on the following:

- i) Data accuracy will continue to be a priority and will ensure the baseline data is secure with a solid sustainable foundation.
- ii) The KCC estate will be analysed in respect of its use; landlord responsibility; income and expenditure and potential for partnership working with the establishment of baseline data to enable future KPIs to measure performance and outcomes.
- ii) The strategy will be reviewed at key intervals to ensure that it continues to be aligned with KCC's core strategic and emerging objectives, and where required, amended to reflect these.

3.8 Following the previous 2018-2023 strategy, the outcomes and lessons learnt will continue to be strengthened to ensure a solid foundation, to refine our asset information into one cohesive framework. This will allow us to critically evaluate our portfolio, retaining only the essential assets that align with service needs. This process will establish a new baseline estate.

3.9 The accurate baseline data will ensure that KCC can enable the implementation of long-term, lifecycle management strategies, which will capture comprehensive lifecycle information for all its assets, enabling whole-life cost analysis to inform decision-making. This will ensure KCC maintains a proactive approach to its estate.

3.10 Through buy in from all stakeholders across KCC, all decisions relating to the requirement, use or need of an asset will require a robust and sound business case.

- 3.11 By aligning assets with service requirements, our future estate will directly support the service provision's needs and integrated models. Assets will be designed and managed for multi-purpose use; flexible in terms of function; and facilitating agile working to create a fit for purpose estate.
- 3.12 We will actively engage with stakeholders internal and external to KCC to demonstrate how assets can enable new operating models, digital adoption, and integrated delivery to shape service transformation.
- 3.13 Environmental principles will be embedded into our asset strategies to continuously improve energy efficiency, reduce emissions, and drive sustainability with the aim of driving towards KCC's net zero targets in line with the Council's policies within the resources that are available.
- 3.14 Robust asset data will enhance KCC's strategic capital and revenue planning and will enable the forecast for long-term asset and investment needs, which will promote spending efficiencies and building utilisation by enhancing the performance of the estate.
- 3.15 We will work to adopt smart building technologies, utilise intelligent building management systems, and automation to provide flexibility and data-driven insights within the resources that are available. This will ensure there is a holistic approach to the management of KCC's estate, where efficiencies, economies of scale and the monitoring of our estate will become proactive rather than the current reactive approach.
- 3.16 By embracing smart technology, we will be able to focus on improving the management of KCC's assets and will be able to have reliable and effective systems in place, to ensure rent reviews, lease renewals, building maintenance, parts replacements etc. are undertaken in a timely and efficient manner.
- 3.17 We will continue to develop our culture and invest in our staff to provide a holistic service that embraces these technologies and enhances the service offer that supports the use of KCC's operational buildings.
- 3.18 All proposed changes in property requirements for a Service, which includes bringing services back in-house, will be supported by a sound business case that considers initial investment but also ongoing costs and provides a budget for future maintenance and lifecycle costs.
- 3.19 We will seek to explore a sinking fund model for the corporate estate within the resources available to cover the ongoing maintenance requirements of all the non-school assets. This will be informed via planned preventative maintenance assessments and life-cycle condition surveys for existing assets which will be utilised to support service delivery. The maintenance budgets continue to be under pressure, and it will be important to ensure that any spend is prioritised. For any new assets/change of use projects, this will be funded from the project initiation to ensure that the already inefficient Modernisation of Assets (MoA) budget is not stretched further.
- 3.20 Any business cases that propose an increase in building footprint or prevents the reduction in the carbon footprint, must factor in the funding for carbon offsetting

costs, so they do not have a detrimental impact on achieving the 2030 carbon neutral target (which requires a 35% reduction in the building footprint). The project budgets will need to fund the offsetting.

3.21 There is a requirement for KCC buildings to be compliant and adhere to the Equality Act, which includes Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requirements, however, this does not always result in buildings being practical for all users based on individual needs. Currently there is no specific budget to support the non-school estate to make buildings accessible for staff or users (although there is a budget for school adaptations to meet individual student’s needs, funded from top-slicing the budget). As part of the new AMS, it is proposed to explore an element of existing maintenance budgets to be allocated to create a dedicated budget for making buildings accessible to meet individual staff needs, and potentially for service users if the budget allows. Any provision or ringfencing of the budget for this purpose will result in further reprioritisation of the funding that is available.

4. New Focus/Aims

- 4.1 Drawing on the themes identified in the previous AMS (2018-2023), internal stakeholder workshops were conducted to review the existing themes/principles and to decide whether they were still relevant and appropriate for the new strategy.
- 4.2 The workshops agreed that the ‘themes’ should become the ‘Aims and Approaches’ which is supported by its definition/objectives/principles to provide clarity. These will be framed to support the context in Securing Kent’s Future:

Key Draft Aims	Description
Sustainability	To provide economic and environmental sustainability, by being budget focused and laying a firm foundation for the future.
Optimisation	Ensuring efficient use and commercial management, to always maintain best value and utilisation for KCC and its service user.

Draft Approach	Description
Transparency	Internally and externally, when you deal with us you will find we are transparent, open and deal with you fairly.
Collaboration	With stakeholders and other organisations to improve asset management practices and innovations.
Innovation	A culture of continuous improvement and constant innovation of asset management by embracing and utilising new technology, use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and testing new practices.

- 4.3 Within the approach the key enablers are: having the right data, the right skills, the right reporting structures, the right capacity, and people in the right place, doing the right thing with access to robust data.
- 4.5 The strategy will require a culture shift towards asset sharing; flexibility; and cross-service and external collaboration, to ensure best value, economies of scale, efficiencies and services which are fit for purpose in a positive and focused environment, which is critical to Securing Kent's Future.

5. Options considered, dismissed, and associated risk

Since the current strategy expired in 2023, the Council will need to adopt a new strategy to support its core strategic objectives moving forward and to support Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy.

6. Equalities implications

Since this is an overarching strategy there are no equality implications, but there may be implications when the strategy is implemented, at which point an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) will be completed.

7. Data Protection Implications

There are no data protection implications.

8. Governance

In line with the Council's governance process, since this decision involves the adoption of a new strategy not included on the Policy Framework, a key decision will be required to adopt the new strategy.

9. Next Steps

9.1 Continue to draft the new AMS, taking on board feedback from the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee and stakeholder/partner engagement in January 2024.

9.2 Return to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee in March 2024 with the new AMS for consideration.

10. Recommendations

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee are asked to note the development of the proposal for the new 2024-2030 Asset Management Strategy and comment on the draft Aims and Approaches set out in this report.

11. Background documents

Asset management strategy 5-year plan 2018 – 2023 (Kent.gov.uk)
https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/5545/Asset-management-strategy.pdf

12. Contact details

Report Author: Rebecca Anderson Job title: Interim Asset Strategy Manager Telephone number: 03000 41 77 31 Email address: rebecca.anderson2@kent.gov.uk	Director: Rebecca Spore Job title: Director of Infrastructure Telephone number: 03000 41 67 16 Email address: rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk
--	---

This page is intentionally left blank

From: Roger Gough, Leader of the Council

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 17 January 2024

Subject: Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029

Decision Number: 23/00097

Key Decision: *Involves the adoption of major new strategies or frameworks which are not included on the Policy Framework.*

It has a significant effect on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions

Classification: Unrestricted

Electoral Divisions: All

Future pathway: Cabinet, 25 January 2024 (information paper)

Summary:

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy is a partnership document overseen by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. The strategy includes both statutory requirements for tier one local authorities to support people accessing safe accommodation services and commitments across the partnership to support people impacted by domestic abuse across Kent and Medway.

An eleven-week consultation was completed on the draft strategy, which generated 244 responses. Responses have been analysed and the draft strategy updated accordingly. A consultation report, **Appendix A**, and a ‘You Said, We Did’ document has been completed (the ‘You Said, We Did’ is attached to the consultation report). **Appendix B** the Summary Strategy and **Appendix C**, the full Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy are attached to this paper. **Appendix D**, the Equality Impact Assessment is also included within the paperwork.

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked either endorse or comment on or make recommendations to the Leader on the proposed decision to adopt the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2024 – 2029 (as set out within the PROD).

1. Background

1.1 In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act was passed in law. The Domestic Abuse Act created a statutory requirement for tier one local authorities with cooperation from tier two authorities to:

- assess need for accommodation-based support,
- prepare a strategy to provide such support to victims,
- give effect to the strategy,
- monitor the strategy and
- report back annually to central government¹.

1.2 Kent had an active strategy when the Act was passed, managed and overseen by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. This Group has representation from Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service, the NHS, the Department of Work and Pensions, and district, borough, and city councils.

1.3 When the Domestic Abuse Act gained royal assent, tier one duties for both Kent and Medway were integrated into the existing 2020 strategy, recognising that safe accommodation is part of a wider partnership response to domestic abuse.

1.4 The current strategy finishes in 2023 and a 'progress made' report was published on the consultation web page and shows work to meet the strategy commitments. Opportunities for improvement identified within the 'progress made' report have been built in to the 2024 – 2029 strategy supporting continuous improvement. This report is available in **Appendix E**.

2. The 2024 – 2029 strategy

2.1 The Summary Strategy and full Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029 is attached as **Appendix B** and **Appendix C**.

2.2 This strategy was drafted in partnership with Medway Council, with support from a project group (ICB safeguarding, Police and Crime Commissioners Office, Kent Police and Probation) and in coordination with the partners of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group.

2.3 The strategy continues to develop a whole partner response to improving the experiences of those impacted by abuse. Once finalised a delivery plan will be established and monitored to support meeting commitments. Activity indicators are also included as part of the strategy which will form a dashboard to support the work of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group moving forward.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services>

2.4 The identification of priorities and themes in the strategy has been sought from a wide range of stakeholders as detailed within the consultation report (**Appendix A**). Lived experience narratives have supported the development of identified themes, including learnings from interviews with adults and with children and young people.

3. Consultation process

3.1 The public consultation launched on the 24 July and ran until Monday 9 October 2023. Significant informal consultation happened before and during this period with a number of meetings attended by the strategy team (a full list is available within the consultation report). Reach from meetings attended is approximated at around 900 people (although with some possible duplication).

3.2 The formal consultation generated 244 responses, with 1,035 participants interacting with the page (such as downloading a document), and 2,424 visits to the consultation page (again this would include duplicate visits).

3.3 Of those who responded to the consultation and gave information, 33% disclosed being directly affected by domestic abuse, and a further 13% had a friend or family member impacted by abuse. Only 15% of people who responded to the consultation said they had not been impacted by domestic abuse.

3.4 The consultation responses have supported a number of changes made to the document highlighting key opportunities for improvement. Findings are summarised below.

- On the section focusing on **the Domestic Abuse Act** 73% of respondents strongly or tended to agree that the strategy gives you the information you need about the Act. Respondents highlighted a need to clarify information on children as victims of abuse between their caregivers and including information on adolescent to parent violence. Respondents emphasized that the strategy could strengthen messaging on the impact of domestic abuse on those with protected characteristics including disability, gender (both men and women), sexuality and age.
 - Information on the Domestic Abuse Act definition of children as victims of domestic abuse has been made clearer within the final document, with links to other relevant legislation included. To combat the gendered perception respondents had of the strategy, and to emphasise the cross-cutting nature of abuse, a new infographic section with inclusive imagery has been included.
- **Early Intervention and Prevention** - 86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Increasing awareness of Clare's Law'

had the highest number of people strongly agree and therefore was not amended after the consultation. 'Increasing understanding of abuse' had the lowest number of people strongly agree within this section (although all were rated highly).

- Changes made to this section of the strategy include an addition on better understanding the increasing use of technology and abuse, additional commitments on supporting professional awareness of those with no recourse to public funds and commitments on supporting professionals to appropriately respond to disclosure (including understanding signposting and referral options).
- **Immediate need** - 86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Supporting children and young people during immediate need' had the highest number of respondents strongly agree, and 'experiences of justice' and 'highlighting civil options' had the lowest number of people strongly agree within this section. The commitments with lower levels of support in these sections were impacted by respondents' negative experiences and underlined the need to improve our partnership response in these areas.
 - In response, wording on civil options has been strengthened with an embedded link which includes further information on civil orders. Additional commitments have been added to 'experiences of justice'.
 - Following feedback, we have also added a section on counter allegations.
 - Additionally, a section has been added to 'being responsive to individual need' which asks those working across services to challenge assumptions or stereotypes of abuse.
 - An addition on homeowners and access to support has also been added following feedback, as well as a section on pets and the importance of safe accommodation options which can accommodate animals.
 - Inclusion of flexibility of services to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities when seeking safety has been highlighted.
- **Recovery** - 84% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Recognising the mental health impact of abuse' had the highest number of respondents strongly agree and 'prioritising family bonds' had the lowest number of people strongly agree within this section.
 - Concern was expressed around re-traumatisation caused through family courts and management of child contact. The 'prioritising family bonds' section of the strategy was redrafted.
 - Additionally, the subheading 'recognising the mental health impact of abuse' has changed to 'the impact of abuse on mental health' as suggested by a respondent.

- ‘Recognising the experts’ section of the strategy has been redrafted to make it clearer that the experts are those who have been impacted by abuse, and also to acknowledge the key role of the voluntary sector within this space.
- 3.5 Many positive responses on the strategy were received. These are further detailed within the consultation report.

4. Financial implications

4.1 The impact of domestic abuse has financial costs to many services within the public sector including Police, Probation, Health and Social Care. The strategy aims to support partnership working to improve collaboration and enhance service design to maximise outcomes from available funds from across the partnership to improve the experiences of those accessing services.

4.2 Tier 1 and tier 2 authorities receive funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to discharge statutory duties within the Domestic Abuse Act around safe accommodation, strategy development, partnership working and assessing need. The funding received to date by Kent County Council is detailed in the table below. Within KCC this funding is used to support safe accommodation provision including refuge, and security measures which allow people to remain in their own homes, enhance service delivery, therapeutic support for adults and children, and to support staff costs both across commissioning, strategy development and partnership working.

<u>Year</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>	<u>2023/2024</u>	<u>2024/2025</u>
	<u>£3,103,909</u>	<u>£3,112,501</u>	<u>£3,174,764</u>	<u>£3,234,633</u>

- 4.3 Provision of support for people who remain in the community and functions supporting the review and management of domestic homicide reviews is financed through partnership arrangements. In relation to community-based support this includes non-statutory allocations.
- 4.4 The strategy seeks to bring together the aims of each partner organisation and acknowledges that it is ambitious. It also notes that funding routes for both KCC and partners may change within the lifetime of the strategy.
- 4.5 The Kent and Medway Executive Group, of which KCC is a key partner, can review and revise the strategy if needed. This includes through a review period built into the strategy after three years, in 2027, when the Executive will consider whether this strategy is still representative of the challenges faced and ambitions of the members of the Executive Group given resources available.

5. Equality implications:

5.1 Protected characteristics and the intersectionality of these directly impacts risk of domestic abuse and the types of abuse which an individual may experience. The Equality Impact Assessment, available in **Appendix D**, shows a positive impact from the strategy due to commitments which recognise this. The strategy seeks to ensure that services meet needs across protected characteristics.

6. Next Steps

6.1 The Strategy was presented at the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group on the 13 December 2023 to enable partners to take it through their internal governance processes and gain approval prior to publication.

Following final approval, by all key partners of the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, the strategy will be published on the KCC and partner websites.

6.2 The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will be responsible for creating a delivery plan to support the commitments within the strategy and to monitor outcomes. These will be reported to Kent County Council’s Policy and Resource Cabinet Committee on a yearly basis.

Report Authors

Serine Annan-Veitch Projects & Partnership Manager, Domestic Abuse Serine.annan-veitch@kent.gov.uk	Iona Hunter-Whitehouse Domestic Abuse Project Officer, Projects & Partnerships Team iona.hunter-whitehouse@kent.gov.uk	Stacey Clark Project Manager, Referrals Lead for Financial Hardship Stacey.clark@kent.gov.uk
--	---	---

Responsible Assistant Directors/Directors

Akua Agyepong, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care and Health Akua.Agyepong@kent.gov.uk	Florah Shiringo Assistant Director, Integrated Childrens Services Florah.Shiringo@kent.gov.uk	David Whittle Director, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance David.Whittle@kent.gov.uk
---	---	---

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough, Leader of the Council

DECISION NO:

23/00097

For publication**Key decision: Yes**

Key decision criteria: The decision covers more than two electoral divisions and involved the adoption of a new strategy.

Title of Decision: Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029**Decision:**

The Leader of the Council is asked to:

- adopt the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership Strategy 2024 – 2029 on behalf of Kent County Council.
- delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, to refresh and/or make revisions with the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group as appropriate during the lifetime of the strategy.
- delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to take relevant actions, including but not limited to finalising the terms of, and entering into required contract or other legal agreements, as necessary to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, and the associated governance structure, is a partnership which includes Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Police, the Police and Crime Commissioners Office, Probation, Kent District, City and Borough Councils, the Department of Work and Pensions, the NHS and Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

The current Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy was developed in 2020 and refreshed in 2021. This strategy was revised to include new statutory tier one duties linked to safe accommodation, recognising that safe accommodation is part of a wider response to domestic abuse. The current strategy finishes in 2023 and a 'progress made' report is published on the consultation web page, showing work completed to meet the strategy commitments and highlighting opportunity areas which are incorporated within the 2024-2029 strategy.

In developing the 2024-2029 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy, Kent County Council and Medway Council have worked with the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group to create a document which supports a coordinated partnership response across services. The Executive Group seek to utilise available funding from across partners to improve outcomes, working towards the strategies aim: 'to *reduce the*

prevalence of domestic abuse and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly.'

Financial Implications: The impact of domestic abuse has financial costs to many services within the public sector including Police, Probation, Health and Social Care. The strategy aims to support partnership working to improve collaboration and enhance service design to maximise outcomes from available funds from across the partnership to improve the experiences of those accessing services.

Tier 1 and tier 2 authorities receive funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to discharge specific statutory duties within the Domestic Abuse Act.

Within KCC this funding is used to support safe accommodation provision, enhance service delivery and to support staff costs both across commissioning and the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Partnership. Partners gain funding from multiple routes including the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office.

Changes in financial allocation including through revision in political priorities could impact delivery against the strategy.

Provision of support for people who remain in the community and functions supporting the review and management of domestic homicide reviews is financed through partnership arrangements. In relation to community-based support this includes non-statutory allocations.

The strategy acknowledges that it is aspirational and that funding routes for both KCC and partners may change within the lifetime of the strategy.

The Kent and Medway Executive Group, of which KCC is a key partner, can review and revise the strategy if needed. This includes through a review period built into the strategy after three years, in 2027, when the Executive will consider whether this strategy is still representative of the challenges faced and ambitions of the members of the Executive Group given resources available.

Legal Implications: The Local Authority has a statutory obligation to meet the duties set out in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, including to:

- assess need for accommodation-based support¹,
- prepare a strategy to provide such support,
- give effect to the strategy,
- monitor the strategy, and
- report back annually to central government

The strategy must clearly set out the overall and holistic purpose, aims, priorities and approach to deliver a rounded offer of support to those impacted by domestic abuse. This includes detailing the purpose, plans and approaches working across tier one and two local authorities with partners, including other services within the authority, specialist domestic abuse providers, PCCs, housing and health bodies (not limited to) through a Local Partnership Board.

The Local Partnership Board was established in Kent in May 2021, and is part of the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group governance structure. Kent County Council and Medway Council's statutory requirements to create a strategy on domestic abuse safe accommodation services is integrated within the full partnership strategy to support coordinated responses across services.

Additional relevant legislation includes:

- The Children Act (1989) which recognises harm caused to children by domestic violence including '*impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another*' (Adoption and Children Act, 2002).

¹ 'Domestic Abuse' Kent Public Health Observatory <https://www.kpho.org.uk/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/health-intelligence/population-groups/domestic-abuse#tab1> Page 222

- The Human Rights Act (1998) including Article 2, Right to Life, and Article 3, Freedom from Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment.
- The Care Act (2014), including Section 42 which states that if an adult with care and support needs is suspected to be at risk of any form of abuse or neglect, the local authority must make enquiries and take steps to protect them.

The strategy summarises additional relevant legislation within Appendix B.

Implementing the Kent & Medway Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy will support meeting Domestic Abuse Act duties across 2024-29 and support the council in meeting its statutory duty to provide support for all survivors residing in what is defined as safe accommodation.

Specific legal implications for operational or funding allocation activity will be considered through the delegated decision-making as normal.

Equality implications: Protected characteristics and the intersectionality of these directly impacts risk of domestic abuse and the types of abuse which an individual may experience. The Equality Impact Assessment shows a positive impact from the strategy due to commitments which recognise this. The strategy seeks to ensure that services meet needs across protected characteristics.

The strategy recognises that people experiencing abuse who may have limited access to public funding due to their immigration status may be highly vulnerable (no recourse to public funds) and seeks to support collaborative and innovative working to support those impacted by this status.

Data Protection implications:

The development of the strategy does not require a Data Protection Impact Assessment to be completed.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy was publicly consulted on between the 24th July and 9th October and the consultation report is included with the paperwork.

The proposed decision will be discussed at the Policy & Resources Cabinet Committee on the 17th of January.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Consideration was given to the following:

The option of not renewing a domestic abuse strategy was discarded as the council has a statutory duty to have a strategy covering safe accommodation for those experiencing domestic abuse.

The option of having a single agency strategy was considered. However, this would not bring with it the benefits around building a coordinated partnership response to domestic abuse across service provision.

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

.....
signed

.....
date

This page is intentionally left blank

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 - 2029

Consultation report

November 2023



Executive Summary

In March 2020, the first Kent and Medway domestic abuse strategy was finalised. This was refreshed in 2021 when the Domestic Abuse Act gained royal assent and created statutory responsibilities for tier one authorities to support people impacted by domestic abuse within safe accommodation.

The strategy is due to end in 2023 and a new Kent and Medway domestic abuse strategy 2024 – 2029 has been developed to continue to provide the strategic direction of the domestic abuse work across the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Partnership Group. This document details the consultation process and findings for the Kent and Medway domestic abuse strategy 2024 – 2029.

The Kent and Medway domestic abuse strategy 2024 - 2029 is a partnership strategy supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue, Kent Police, the Integrated Care Board (safeguarding), the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, Probation, the Department of Work and Pensions (Kent) and all Kent District, Borough and City Councils.

The draft strategy has been formally developed by collecting information through in-depth interviews on lived experience of domestic abuse across both Kent and Medway, and through seeking the views of the voluntary sector and frontline practitioners through workshops and discussions. Additionally, the 2020 – 2023 strategy was reviewed and a 'Progress Made' report created which identified areas for future development. Findings were integrated into the 2024 – 2029 strategy.

A consultation on the draft strategy began on the 24 July 2023 and ended on the 9 October 2023, running for 11 weeks. A total of 244 responses were received, 4 of these were via email.

149 people responded as an individual, 43 as a professional working with people impacted by domestic abuse and 36 on behalf of an organisation. Of those who responded to the consultation and completed this question 33% of people disclosed being directly affected by domestic abuse, and a further 13% had a friend or family member impacted by abuse. Only 15% of people who responded said they had not been impacted by domestic abuse.

Findings

Upon closure of the consultation a comprehensive review of the feedback took place by a team of both KCC and Medway officers.

On the section focusing on the **Domestic Abuse Act** 73% of respondents strongly or tended to agree that the strategy gives you the information you need about the Act.

Respondents highlighted a need to expand information on children including adolescent to parent violence. In response this section of the document has been revised.

Respondents highlighted that the strategy could strengthen messaging on the impact of domestic abuse on those with protected characteristics including disability, gender (both men and women), sexuality and age. This has been made clearer within the final document through the use of infographics.

Early Intervention and Prevention - 86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Increasing awareness of Clare's Law' had the highest number of people strongly agree, and 'increasing understanding of abuse' had the lowest number of people strongly agree within this section (although all were rated highly).

Changes made to this section of the strategy include an addition on better understanding the increasing use of technology and abuse, additional commitments on supporting professional awareness of those with no recourse to public funds and commitments on supporting professionals to appropriately respond to disclosure (including understanding signposting and referral options).

Immediate need - 86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Supporting children and young people during immediate need' had the highest number of respondents 'strongly agree', and 'experiences of justice' and 'highlighting civil options' had the lowest number of people 'strongly agree' within this section.

In response wording on civil options has been strengthened with a link which includes further information on civil orders embedded. A number of additional commitments have been added to 'experiences of justice'. Following feedback, we have also added information on counter allegations.

Additionally, a section has been added to 'being responsive to individual need' which asks those working across services to challenge assumptions or stereotypes of abuse.

An addition on homeowners and access to support has also been added due to feedback, as well as a section on pets and the importance of safe accommodation options which can take animals.

Inclusion of flexibility of services to meet the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities when seeking safety has been highlighted.

Recovery - 84% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Recognising the mental health impact of abuse' had the highest number of respondents 'strongly agree' and 'prioritising family bonds' had the lowest number of people 'strongly agree' within this section.

Concern was expressed around re-traumatisation caused through family courts and management of child contact. The 'prioritising family bonds' section of the strategy was redrafted.

Additionally, the subheading 'recognising the mental health impact of abuse' has changed to 'the impact of abuse on mental health' as suggested by a respondent. 'Recognising the experts' section of the strategy has been redrafted to make it clearer that the experts are those who have been impacted by abuse, and also to acknowledge the key role of the voluntary sector within this space.

The equality analysis highlighted a need to include information on access to services for those living in rural areas and to include a commitment on supporting professionals to challenge behaviours which may be linked to an interpretation of cultural identities based on subordination and unequal power. Both areas have been included within the post consultation version of the strategy.

The equality analysis also highlighted under-reporting of abuse by older adults, those with a disability and the higher likelihood of experiencing abuse as a gay, lesbian or bisexual person. Throughout the strategy there are commitments focussed on raising awareness, increasing service uptake, supporting collaboration to develop needs led work and working with the specialist 'by and for' market to combat this.

Contents

1. Background.....	6
2. Strategy purpose.....	6
3. Informal consultation process.....	7
<i>Figure 1: Menti meter - answers to the question ‘what do you think will make the biggest difference to the people you support who have or are experiencing domestic abuse? ...</i>	8
<i>Figure 2: What are the achievable things we can do? (some examples from the workshop).....</i>	8
4. Formal consultation process	9
5. Findings.....	10
5.1 Who responded?	10
Because of the sensitive nature of this topic area postcode data was not recorded within this consultation, however for those who gave additional information the following was collected:.....	11
<i>Figure 3: shows district coverage where this information was given:.....</i>	11
<i>Figure 4 A spread of ages who responded to the consultation</i>	12
<i>Figure 5: Organisational responses gained:.....</i>	12
5.2 Information on the Domestic Abuse Act.....	13
5.3 Findings across key themes:	14
5.3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention	14
5.3.2 Immediate Need.....	16
5.3.3 Recovery.....	18
5.3.4 Equality analysis:	19
<i>Figure 6: how much do you agree or disagree the commitments in the strategy could achieve this aim?</i>	21
<i>Figure 7: If you are responding as an organisation, please tell us how much you agree or disagree that your organisation will be able to support the commitments made in this strategy?.....</i>	21
6. Next Steps.....	23
Appendix A: Engagement during informal and formal consultation.....	23
Appendix B – You Said, We Did.....	26

1. Background

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act was passed in law. The Domestic Abuse Act creates a statutory requirement for tier one local authorities to prepare a strategy to provide support in safe accommodation to victims of domestic abuse, give effect to the strategy, monitor the strategy and report back annually to central government¹.

In 2021 there was an existing partnership Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy brought together by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. This group includes representation from Kent County Council (KCC), Medway Council, Probation, Police, the Integrated Care Board (ICB) (safeguarding), the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), Kent Fire and Rescue, DWP and District, Borough and City Councils.

Tier one duties linked to safe accommodation were integrated into the existing 2020 strategy, recognising that safe accommodation is part of a wider partnership response to domestic abuse. The current strategy finishes in 2023 and a 'progress made' report was published on the consultation web page which shows previous work to meet the strategy commitments. Opportunities for improvement identified within the 'progress made' report are built in to the 2024 – 2029 strategy.

In early 2023 a team across Kent County Council and Medway Council started work on the 2024 - 2029 Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy, working with a small project group which included representation from the ICB, Police, Probation and OPCC. The team also worked closely with the Domestic Abuse Coordinators group which includes representation from all District, Borough and City Councils in Kent.

The development of the 2024-2029 strategy has been based on research, workshops and in-depth interviews completed with those who have experienced abuse and practitioners who support them. As detailed within this report, the learnings have been used to develop strategy.

2. Strategy purpose

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group oversees the development of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy, and seeks a partnership response to *'reduc[ing] the prevalence of domestic and sexual abuse, and ensur[ing] that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly, and those who show abusive behaviours are held to account'*.

The partnership recognises that multiple organisations are involved in a person's journey when they are impacted by abuse and through working across the

¹'Delivery of support for victims of domestic abuse' Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. (accessed Nov 23) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-support-within-safe-accommodation/delivery-of-support-to-victims-of-domestic-abuse-in-domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-services>

partnership, responses can be strengthened. The purpose of the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy is to work collaboratively to improve responses to domestic abuse by working and monitoring process against joint commitments for change. The strategy also details tier one statutory obligations within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

Once the strategy is finalised a delivery plan will be established and monitored to support meeting commitments by the Kent and Medway Executive Group. Activity indicators are also included as part of the strategy which will form a dashboard to support monitoring.

Statutory requirements for tier one organisations are overseen by Local Partnership Boards (one within Kent and one within Medway) as stipulated within the statutory guidance and through internal meetings.

3. Informal consultation process

To support the voice of lived experience, research was commissioned which included 10 in-depth interviews and workshop sessions with those impacted by abuse. Previous research on the experiences of men impacted by abuse, and research on the experiences of children and young people were also used in the development of themes.

Learnings from this research created the structure of the strategy with quotes of experience being used to support identification of opportunities for change.

A 'Progress Made' report was completed in April 2023. This was key to show the impact of strategic and partnership working on the delivery of change to date, but also to support the identification of areas where we could work better. The 'Progress Made' report highlights opportunities for improvement and these were reviewed by the partnership project group (ICB safeguarding, Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Probation, Medway Council and Kent County Council) before being integrated into the 2024 – 2029 strategy.

The project team then worked with the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Coordinators Group (with representation across each District) to explore opportunities within early intervention, immediate need and recovery.

The Coordinators Group then supported the facilitation of a workshop with a wide range of frontline staff and voluntary sector organisations with approximately 80 people in attendance, where options for working together and change were brainstormed. Learnings supported the development of draft commitments.

- Ensure commissioned services have a robust Domestic Abuse policy
- Sharing information of the services available in a better way
- Consistency in information
- Empathic services
- A collaborative, comprehensive training package
- Shared language
- High quality, accessible and appropriate training on trauma, sexual abuse, domestic abuse and online safety for staff in universal services
- Training people on support programmes like Freedom
- Utilise social prescribing
- Multiagency training, mandatory training for domestic abuse and sexual abuse, public awareness raising - comms

One to one sessions were held with each partner to discuss the development of the draft strategy. The project team presented at a number of meetings which included the Local Partnership Board, the Domestic Abuse Chairs Forum (Chairs of each local forum), the Voluntary Sector subgroup, the Kent Community Safety Partnership and Kent Housing Group.

From this information an Executive Summary, full strategy document, and both a British Sign Language and Easy Read versions of the strategy were produced and uploaded for consultation.

A consultation stage Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was carried out to assess the impact the strategy could have on those with protected characteristics. The EqIA was available as one of the consultation documents and the questionnaire invited consultees to comment on the assessment that had been carried out.

4. Formal consultation process

A 11-week public consultation period took place between the 24th July to the 9th October 2023. This extended period was chosen partly recognising the impact of summer, but also to support gaining as many responses as possible.

To raise awareness the project team:

- emailed stakeholder organisations and partners,
- invited 7,548 people registered with 'Let's Talk Kent' under the filtered topics public health and wellbeing, community safety and children and families to participate in the consultation.
- delivered a workshop for 13 attendees with lived experience across Kent and Medway and collated their feedback.
- organic and paid for media posts from KCC corporate, and Medway Council accounts across Twitter (now X), Facebook, Instagram and Linked In

- social media posts shared by partners.
- electronic flyers and posters sent to all Youth Centres, Libraries and Children’s Centres.
- emailed known interfaith groups and faith organisations.
- emailed contacts on ‘voluntary community and social enterprise organisations’ in Kent and Medway.
- emailed the Kent Association of Local Councils
- postings in newsletters and Teams channels (x17, listed **Appendix A**)
- internal communication channels (Kent and Medway)
- attended voluntary and community sector meetings
- attended community events including;
 - Tovil Community Event
 - DAWN Maidstone
 - Adult Social Care Summit
 - AgeUK, Thanet
 - Rise4Disability
- media releases and website publications (detailed in **Appendix A**).

Meetings attended during this period are listed in **Appendix A** with reach of approximately 900 people². Feedback was recorded using a template and analysed during the consultation process.

5. Findings

Findings were analysed by Kent County Council and Medway Council officers, and core areas discussed with a cross partnership project group. A ‘You Said, We Did’ document has been developed which highlights the main changes made to the strategy in **Appendix B**.

5.1 Who responded?

The formal consultation generated 244 responses (4 of these were via email).

1,035 participants interacted with the page (such as downloading a document), and there were 2,424 visits to the consultation page³.

Participation in the consultation was self-selecting and is not an indicative sample of the whole Kent and Medway population.

Of those who responded to the consultation and gave information 33% disclosed being directly affected by domestic abuse, and a further 13% had a friend or family

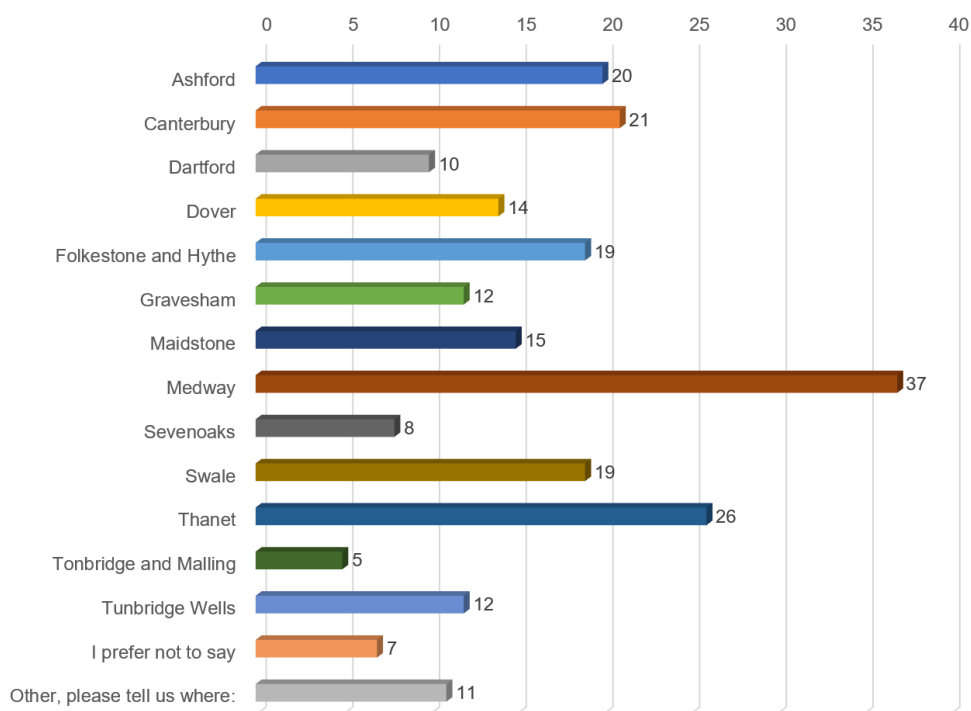
² There may be duplication within this number with some individuals being at the same meetings.

³ This figure will include repeat visits/ downloads

member impacted by abuse. Only 15% of people who responded said they had not been impacted by domestic abuse.

Because of the sensitive nature of this topic area postcode data was not recorded within this consultation, however for those who gave additional information the following was collected:

Figure 3: shows district coverage where this information was given:



While the majority of people found out about the consultation via 'Let's Talk' (114), a number also learned of the consultation via social media (42).

Around half of respondents chose not to give additional information about themselves. The information below is for those who did.

- 17 men, 87 women and 1 person who preferred to use their own term responded to the consultation.
- 45 people belonged to a particular religion or belief, with 37 being Christian, 2 being Hindu and 1 being Muslim.
- 10 people described themselves as having a physical impairment, 4 as having a sensory impairment, 12 as having a longstanding illness or health condition, 10 as having a mental health condition, 1 as having a learning disability and 4 as 'other'.
- 24 people described themselves as a carer.

- 90 people described themselves as White English, 1 person as White Scottish, 1 person as White Welsh, 1 as White Gypsy/Roma, 2 as Asian or Asian British Indian, 1 as Mixed White & Black Caribbean and 1 as Mixed White & Asian.

Figure 4 A spread of ages who responded to the consultation

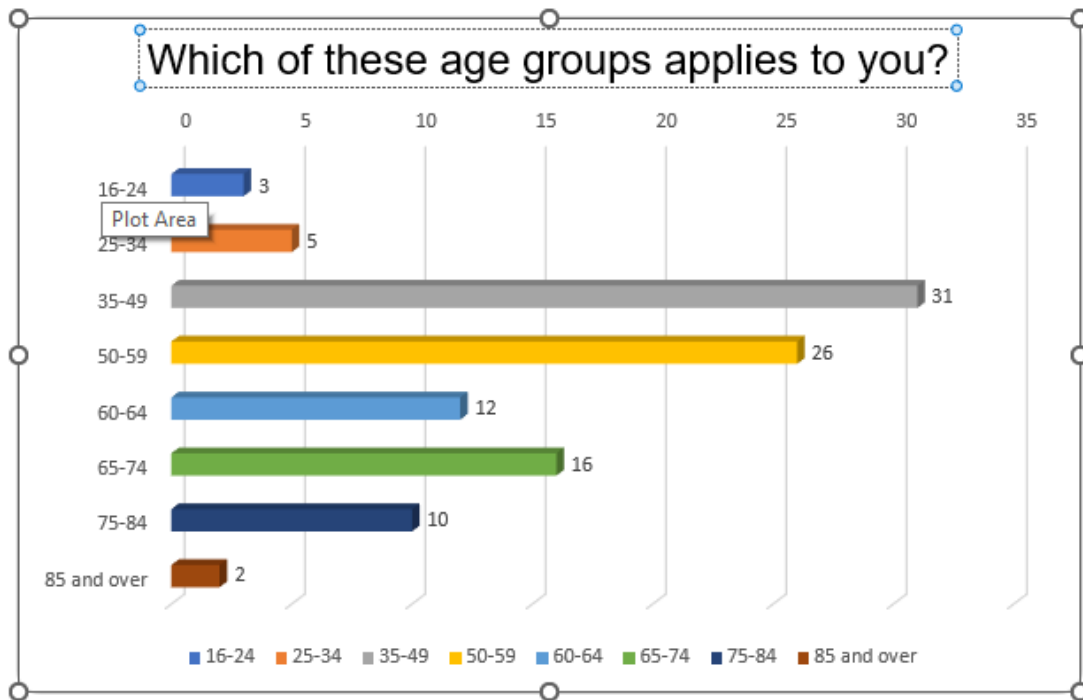


Figure 5: Organisational responses gained:

Kent Fire and Rescue	Dartford Council	Oasis Domestic Abuse Service	Switch Youth Services	Tunbridge Wells Soroptimists
Kent County Council (early help and integrated commissioning)	Lydd Parish Council	SATEDA	Medway Family solutions	New Road Primary School
Tonbridge and Malling Community	Gravesham Borough Council	Mankind Initiative	Inspire Academy	Peninsula East Primary

Safety Partnership				
Kent and Medway ICB Safeguarding Team	Swale borough Council	Protection Against Stalking	Virtual Schools Kent	Wainscott Primary School
Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust	Ashford Community Safety Partnership	Clarion Housing Group	Luton Primary	Millmead Children's Centre
Sevenoaks District Council	Rising Sun	Moat Homes limited	St James Academy	Super Stars Preschool
NHS Kent and Medway ICB		Dad's Unlimited	Greenacre Academy	

5.2 Information on the Domestic Abuse Act

The strategy provides an explanation of parts of the Domestic Abuse Act. It also provides statistics on domestic abuse nationally, and safe accommodation statistics given from Kent and Medway.

The following question was asked: *'to what extent to you agree or disagree that the strategy gives you the information you need about the Domestic Abuse Act?'*

Strongly agree	55 respondents
Tend to agree	119 respondents
Neither agree or disagree	40 respondents
Tend to disagree	13 respondents
Strongly disagree	8 respondents
Don't know	3 respondents

Comments included:

'More recognition of adult child/parent abuse'

'What the domestic abuse act doesn't cover / commonly confused situations such as child abuse'

'Where statistics are given, they should be the same for Kent and Medway, so we can compare services across the authorities'

Respondents highlighted a need to expand information on children and the Domestic Abuse Act. In response this section of the document has been revised.

Respondents highlighted that the strategy could strengthen messaging on the impact of domestic abuse on those with protected characteristics including disability, gender (both men and women), sexuality and age. Although some information was included within the consultation document on these characteristics this has been made clearer within the final document through the use of infographics.

5.3 Findings across key themes:

The consultation lists a number of commitments from the partnership across the areas of early intervention and prevention, immediate need and recovery. As detailed above these draft commitments were based on discussions on opportunities within the 'Progress Made' report, learnings from lived experience and workshops, and learnings from the informal consultation process.

5.3.1 Early Intervention and Prevention

The following subheadings sit under this area:

- **Increasing understandings of abuse.** Commitments under this section include to work collaboratively to promote consistent messaging and to increase awareness and make sure communication is accessible.
- **Professional training.** Commitments under professional training includes supporting professionals across services to be domestic abuse informed and taking opportunities to identify risk and using trauma informed responses.
- **Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours.** This includes supporting awareness of adverse childhood experiences, working alongside communities to promote positive behaviours and challenge harmful gendered stereotyping and work on bystander and upstander interventions.
- **Clare's Law** includes reviewing the process around Clare's law to try to increase accessibility and awareness.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Increasing understandings of abuse	140	65	15	10	6	0
Professional Training	146	59	17	7	6	0
Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours	152	47	23	6	7	0
Increasing awareness of Clare's Law	159	44	23	5	3	1

86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed.

'Increasing awareness of Clare's Law' had the highest number of people strongly agree, and 'increasing understanding of abuse' had the lowest number of people strongly agree within this section, however all scored highly.

Comments in this section included:

'...there may be benefit to adding a commitment to facilitating safe disclosure as there can be challenges for staff to support with this, especially for colleagues at work, where confidential spaces are limited.'

'A strategy to help people be more aware of what coercive behaviour [is] would be very beneficial. It would be very helpful and future-thinking to include a project to raise awareness of this in secondary schools at sixth form level as this is often where coercive behaviours first start to develop and it would be pro-actively supporting future generations of adults.'

With the increasing use of technology, addressing online harassment, cyberstalking, and other forms of digital abuse is becoming more important. Integrating strategies to tackle these issues can be valuable.

'Increasing awareness amongst professionals advising victims (and making victims themselves aware) of what level of support is available to individuals with no access to public funds.'

Changes made to this section of the strategy have been based on this feedback. This includes:

- developing a new section on better understanding the increasing use of technology and abuse,
- additional commitments on supporting professional awareness of those with no recourse to public funds,
- commitments on supporting professionals to appropriately ‘ask the question’ and respond to disclosure,
- working with schools will be integrated into the delivery plan as this is developed. More changes are detailed in the ‘**You Said, We Did**’ document (**Appendix B**).

5.3.2 Immediate Need

The following subheadings sit under Immediate Need:

- **Being responsive to individual need** focuses on meeting the needs of our diverse population which may include working with specialist services.
- **Reducing risk** focuses on the management of risk and seeking to reduce this.
- **Strengthening services** explores the importance of using available resources across the partnership wisely, working collaboratively and taking advantage of available opportunities.
- **Highlighting civil options** includes increasing awareness and understanding of civil options.
- **Experiences of justice** explores commitments which support people through their justice process.
- **Supporting children and young people during immediate need** recognises that children and young people who have experienced abuse may have specific support needs.
- **Access to housing** recognises the importance of a safe space to be in immediate need and seeks to work collaboratively to strengthen responses.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Individual need	151	59	12	10	4	0
Reducing risk	146	63	11	6	8	0
Strengthening services	156	54	15	2	6	0

Highlighting civil options	122	73	25	7	7	1
Experiences of justice	118	66	30	8	6	5
Supporting children	162	40	16	7	8	2
Access to housing	149	48	17	8	9	3

86% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Supporting children and young people during immediate need' had the highest number of respondents 'strongly agree', and 'experiences of justice' and 'highlighting civil options' had the lowest number of people 'strongly agree' within this section.

'I would like to see mention of how authoritative abuse would be dealt with if the abuser is a "professional" within the services that are meant to help.'

'Realise pets are support animals for many survivors and will not leave their home if they cannot take them with them. Therefore, it may be useful to have some temporary accommodation that accept pets.'

'A trained effective response team. Client are re traumatised by being referred on and on to many organisations. They give up.'

'Autistic children need to have their specific needs understood. I couldn't take mine from their home and routine with no warning to a place they don't know. They wouldn't have coped at all.'

'Support with paying for accommodation where the person has a mortgage. When you are being financially controlled the fact you have a mortgage means nothing. You can't force them to sell the house to get your name off the mortgage whilst you are living with and being abused by them.'

The project team have made the following changes to this section:

- a number of respondents highlighted the specific experiences of men and domestic abuse. Within 'being responsive to individual need' we have added a section on challenging our assumptions or stereotypes of who might be a 'victim', and who may be a 'perpetrator'.
- a section on homeowners and access to support has been added.
- a section on recognising the importance of pets to those that need to flee has been added.
- an additional commitment has been included for those impacted by No Resource to Public Funds.

- recognising the risk caused by the emotional and psychological impact of abuse and the associated coping mechanisms that people may use has been added.
- information on strengthening referral pathways has been added.
- a requirement for flexible services which can support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities has been highlighted.

5.3.3 Recovery

The following headings sit under the 'Recovery' section of the strategy.

- **Recognising the mental health impact of abuse**, being responsive to the trauma of domestic abuse and understanding the possible mental health impacts.
- **Processing experience and promoting connection**, this section focuses on rebuilding self-confidence after abuse.
- **Prioritising family bonds**, acknowledges the impact on the whole family of domestic abuse, and explores whole family approaches to support.
- **Reaching economic independence** highlights the financial and economic impact of abuse and the importance of regaining financial security.
- **Recognising the experts** discusses the importance of always listening to those with lived experience within work on domestic abuse.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree or disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Mental health impact of abuse	171	41	12	5	6	1
Processing experience	132	73	16	6	5	3
Prioritising family bonds	107	68	37	11	8	1
Reaching economic independence	133	66	21	8	6	0
Recognising the experts	122	67	29	4	11	1

84% of respondents strongly or tended to agree with the commitments listed. 'Recognising the mental health impact of abuse' had the highest number of respondents 'strongly agree' and 'prioritising family bonds' had the lowest number of people 'strongly agree' within this section.

Concern was also expressed around re-traumatisation caused through family courts and child contact. Meetings were held with Integrated Childrens Services (KCC) and with The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) to support the redrafting of this section.

'More focus on post-separation abuse from a co-parent when there are children involved. Using emotional abuse or coercive control against the mother by not looking after the children properly when in the co-parent's care.'

'In the Prioritising family bonds section, it is important to restate the issue of "restricting access to children" being an abusive behaviour and how much this is perpetrated.'

'In terms of recognising the experts, the experts need to be able to empathise and understand not just pay lip service. And with regards strengthening family ties they need checking first as not all family is sympathetic.'

'In addition to economic impact of those living with serious illness'

'Recognising the mental health impact of abuse - feel this is worded round the wrong way - should it not be the impact of abuse on mental health?'

In response the project team has made the following changes to the 'Recovery' section of the document:

- the subheading 'recognising the mental health impact of abuse' has changed to 'the impact of abuse on mental health'.
- recognition of the link between mental health needs, problematic substance use and domestic abuse as linked to multiple episodes of trauma has been included.
- The 'prioritising family bonds' section has been rewritten to aid clarity.
- the 'recognising the experts' section of the strategy has been redrafted to make it clearer that the experts are those who have been impacted by abuse, and also to acknowledge the key role of the voluntary sector within this space.

Changes are highlighted in **Appendix B: You Said, We Did**.

5.3.4 Equality analysis:

Respondents were asked if they feel there is anything which should be considered relating to equality and diversity.

Comments included the following:

'Rural communities struggle to access services- transportation issues also housing in rural areas and accessing ongoing support'

'Under religion, I noted the emphasis on honour-based violence. But there was not recognition of the issue of so-called 'male headship' in some Christian churches, which provides leverage and cover for domestic abuse, and the use of doctrine to prevent people from reporting abuse, leaving relationships or processing experiences as abuse.'

'Learn about different types of abuse in the community [as] it's there it's hidden.'

In response to feedback the project team have:

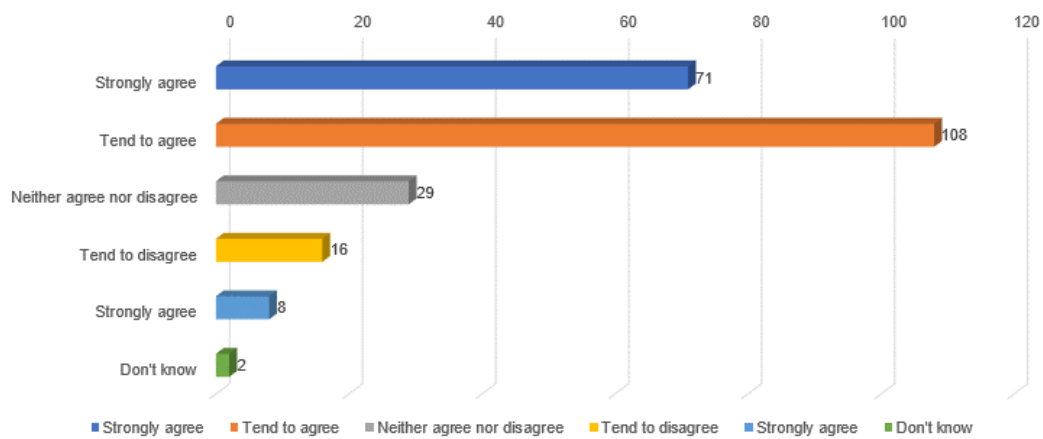
- added a section on those living in rural areas in the Immediate Need section of the strategy.
- included an additional section within professional development (early intervention and prevention) which includes training to challenge behaviours which may be linked to an interpretation of cultural identities based on subordination and unequal power. This will further be developed as the Executive Group moves to create the delivery plan.

The equality analysis also highlighted under-reporting of abuse by older adults, those with a disability and the higher likelihood of experiencing abuse as a gay, lesbian or bisexual person. Throughout the strategy there are commitments focussed on raising awareness, increasing service uptake, supporting collaboration to develop needs led work and working with the specialist 'by and for' market to combat this.

5.3.5 Anything else

Respondents were asked *how much do you agree or disagree the commitments in the strategy could achieve this aim?*

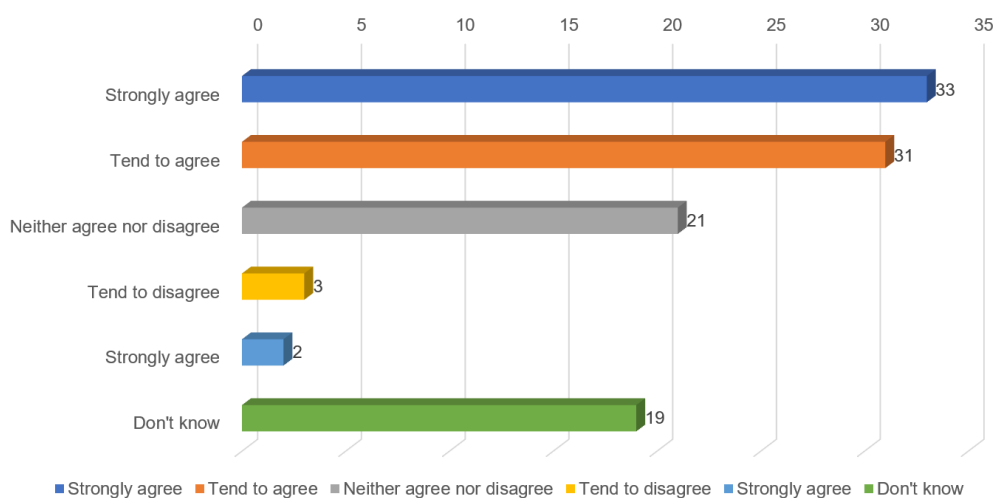
Figure 6: how much do you agree or disagree the commitments in the strategy could achieve this aim?



179 respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree that the commitments within the strategy could achieve the aim. 24 respondents either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed.

To the question 'If you are responding as an organisation, please tell us how much you agree or disagree that your organisation will be able to support the commitments made in this strategy' the following responses were gained.

Figure 7: If you are responding as an organisation, please tell us how much you agree or disagree that your organisation will be able to support the commitments made in this strategy?



64 respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree and 5 respondents either tended to disagree or strongly disagreed with 19 not knowing.

The aim of the strategy is consistent with the 2020 – 2023 strategy and with the Terms of Reference of the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. These findings will be used by the group to explore the development of the aim in the future.

There were a number of really positive comments on the strategy. Some are included below.

‘Really encouraging and positive that the Strategy makes commitments to address what have been identified as gaps in provision e.g. strengthening services around recovery, more support to safely keep victims in their own homes and piloting making refuge accommodation available to male victims. Thank you - we will look forward to working with you to deliver the Strategy in our area.’

‘The strategy is excellent, and reassurance that it is a promise, and not something organisations will pay lip-service to, [it] will help survivors have trust that they can seek support and will be seen and heard’.

‘The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy is comprehensive and has a thoughtful approach to addressing the complex issue of domestic abuse. The strategy effectively highlights a broad spectrum of essential areas, demonstrating a strong commitment to providing support and resources for survivors and their families.’

‘The inclusion of early intervention and prevention measures, such as raising awareness of domestic abuse and its various forms, is an excellent step toward fostering a safer environment and promoting healthy relationships. Additionally, the strategy’s emphasis on professional training is crucial in ensuring that those in positions of influence are equipped to identify and respond to domestic abuse effectively.’

‘I particularly appreciate the strategy’s dedication to recognising the diverse needs of survivors and its commitment to providing equitable and accessible support services. The focus on addressing barriers such as mental health support requirements and financial independence underscores the strategy’s understanding of the multi-faceted challenges survivors often face.’

‘The strategy’s commitment to collaboration among partners is a key strength. The call for continued liaison and collaboration is essential for maximising the impact of the strategy. By working together, partners can avoid duplication of efforts, streamline resources, and ensure a more cohesive and holistic approach to support services. This collaborative approach is crucial in reaching as many individuals as

possible and preventing any unnecessary burden on both survivors and service providers.’

6. Next Steps

Once approved the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will be responsible for creating a delivery plan to support the commitments within the strategy and to monitor outcomes. These will be reported to Kent County Council’s Policy and Resource Cabinet Committee on a yearly basis.

Report Author

<p>Serine Annan-Veitch</p> <p>Projects & Partnership Manager, Domestic Abuse</p> <p>Serine.annan-veitch@kent.gov.uk</p>		
--	--	--

Responsible Assistant Directors/Directors

<p>Akua Agyepong, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care and Health</p> <p>Akua.Agyepong@kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>Florah Shiringo Assistant Director, Integrated Childrens Services</p> <p>Florah.Shiringo@kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>David Whittle Director, Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance</p> <p>David.Whittle@kent.gov.uk</p>
--	--	--

Links to documents:

Consultation documents: Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy

<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-strategy-2024-2029>

Appendix A: Engagement during informal and formal consultation

Meetings attended:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suicide Prevention meeting (adults) • The Domestic Abuse Voluntary Sector subgroup • Kent Community Safety Partnership • Kent Community Safety Information Session

- Medway Safeguarding Board
- Medway Community Safety Executive Group
- Blue Light Project
- Medway Voluntary Action Forum
- Children and Adults Directorate Management Team
- Medway Homelessness Forum
- Kent Housing Options Group
- The Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs
- Tunbridge Wells Members Briefing
- KCC All Party Members Briefing
- Single Parent Staff Group (KCC)
- Rainbow Staff Group (KCC)
- Soroptimist (Folkestone and Hythe, Maidstone and Medway)
- Health Visting Services (across Kent)
- Domestic Abuse Forums (across Kent and Medway)
- Joint Kent Chiefs
- Children's Suicide Prevention Meeting
- Sevenoaks District Community Safety Partnership
- Kent and Medway Women's Forum
- SPACE Matters
- Reducing Abusive Behaviour Working Group

Newsletters

- People's Panel
- Adult Social Care – For You, Newsletter
- Kent and Medway Better Health and Suicide Prevention newsletter,
- Learning Disability Partnership Board,
- Keeping Safe group,
- Your Voice Network
- Let's Talk Kent,
- Armed Forces Leads and Unit Welfare Officers
- Disability Assist October Newsletter
- Kelsi e-bulletin September and October
- Kent Association of Head Teachers
- Dad's Unlimited newsletter
- Aspire, MS Teams Channel and August Communications Round up
- Staff Ethnic Diversity Forum – Allies, MS Teams Channel
- Carers East Kent
- East Kent Partnership Bulletin
- DA Practice Newsletter September for ICS staff
- A Better Medway

Awareness raising workshops:

- Informal consultation workshop (April 23) – approximately 80 attendees from the public and voluntary sector
- Formal consultation (September 23) approximately 40 attendees from the public and voluntary sector including:
 - Kent Police, Tunbridge and Malling Borough Council, Dover District Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Sevenoaks Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Medway Council, Ashford Borough Council, Thanet District Council, MHS Homes, Department of Work and Pensions, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Forward Trust, Dads Unlimited, Angel Lane, Home Start, Protection Against stalking, New Leaf Support Domestic Abuse Service, Safe Arms.
 - Medway Survivor Feedback Workshop with 13 people with lived experience, from across Medway and Kent.

Presence at community events:

- Tovil Community Event
- DAWN event Maidstone
- Adult Social Care Summit
- Age UK, Thanet
- Rise4Disability

Media releases and website publications:

- North Kent Mind – news release
- Kent and Surrey bylines
- Dunkirk Parish Council
- Faversham Town Council
- Chartham Parish Council
- Neighbourhood Alert
- The Isle of Thanet News
- Kelsi
- Lydd Town Council
- Newington Parish Council
- Ryarsh Parish Council
- Medway and Maidstone Soroptimists
- Horsmonden Parish Council
- Ditton Parish Council
- Stronger Kent Communities (shared via Linked In)
- Health Watch Kent

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrotham Parish Council
Other actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emailed posters sent to all libraries and children centres • Emailed interfaith groups and known faith groups • Knet • Emailed contacts on 'Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Organisations in Kent' • Emailed 'Let's Talk' consultation list • Emailed KALC (Kent Association of Local Councils)

Appendix B – You Said, We Did.

You said, we did

The below table summarises some of the themes from the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy consultation and how changes have been made in response.

You told us:	Changes we've made:
Background information and the Domestic Abuse Act	
We could make stronger links within the strategy to issues such as stalking and homelessness.	<p>We have included information on interlinking strategies and boards which support this join up.</p> <p>We recognise that stalking and homelessness interlink with domestic abuse and have strengthened the references within the strategy.</p>
We could include more detailed information on the definition of domestic abuse, including the impact	We have revised this section of the strategy and included further information on children.

on children and adolescent to parent abuse.	A hyper link to the Domestic Abuse Act is also included.
You highlighted increased risk across different protected characteristic groups.	We have included an infographic section which gives information around risk.
We could include more data on domestic abuse in Kent and Medway.	We agree, and this has been added.
To include commitments on how we will support those with No Resource to Public Funds	This is now included within the 'immediate need' section of the strategy.
Early Intervention and Prevention	
We need to strengthen work with schools, making sure they have the information that they need to support education and early intervention.	<p>The Partnership will commit to inviting schools to events to increase information sharing across Kent and Medway as part of the delivery plan.</p> <p>We will seek opportunity to work with schools to support healthy relationship, upstander and bystander education.</p> <p>We will support training on trauma informed responses where children disclose abuse and seek support.</p>
You asked if professional training could include increasing knowledge regarding immigration status, honour-based violence, forced marriage and challenges faced by the LGBT+ community	A commitment has been added to reflect this.
Professional development must include training on how to challenge behaviours which may be linked to an interpretation of cultural identities	We agree. Our staff need to be equipped, confident and able to explore and challenge behaviour which may be linked to interpretations of aspects of culture

based on subordination and unequal power.	which put people at risk of harm, abuse or death.
We need to have strong and transparent management of accusations of abuse against our own staff.	We agree and have added a commitment within experiences of justice.
You highlighted the importance of active listening and non-judgemental responses.	We have added a commitment supporting this to 'professional training'.
You highlighted the importance of staff understanding how to manage and respond to disclosures.	We agree, and this has been added to 'professional training'
You have highlighted the increasing risk of technology, and how this can be used in abuse.	We agree. We have included a section on better understanding changing technology and how this is used in domestic abuse within 'strengthening services'.
Immediate Need	
We need to recognise that abuse of pets can be used by the person perpetrating abuse, and that many people will not flee if their pet is not safe.	This is an important point. We have added a section on pets.
We should commit to better referrals and stronger communication between agencies to reduce a person having to re tell their experience multiple times.	We agree and have added this to 'immediate need'.
We should include more information on available legal protections.	These protections may change over the lifetime of the strategy so we have included

	<p>a link to the Crown Prosecution Service website which will include the latest information.</p>
<p>The strategy should include strengthening management of counter allegations.</p>	<p>We will include a commitment to better understand counter allegations within the 'Experiences of Justice' section.</p> <p>We will reference typologies of abuse and the importance of professional training on these typologies.</p>
<p>The strategy currently does not address gendered experiences of abuse.</p>	<p>The draft has sought to be inclusive of all experiences of abuse.</p> <p>We recognise that women suffer higher risk of serious violence and death, and also that more women than men are impacted by domestic abuse.</p> <p>We also recognise that men and those who have transitioned gender or are non-binary may experience further barriers to reporting or accessing services.</p> <p>We have added information on challenging stereotypes and bias, supporting evidence-based understandings of the perpetration and impact of abuse.</p>
<p>We should recognise the impact that moving to safe accommodation has on children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities</p>	<p>We have added a commitment to support children with Special Educational Needs having their needs considered when moving into safe accommodation.</p>
<p>You highlighted that it can be difficult to access safe accommodation support if you are seen to hold assets (such as a mortgage).</p>	<p>We agree and have added this to the strategy and will continue to look at this area within the delivery plan.</p>

<p>We should include the way that children can be used within abuse, including within the court process.</p> <p>Children may copy abusive behaviours which can create a form of secondary abuse.</p>	<p>We have included this within the 'Immediate Need' section of the strategy.</p>
<p>You highlighted that both Kent and Medway have rural communities, and this can increase barriers to access.</p>	<p>We agree and have included this within 'immediate need'.</p>
<p>Recovery</p>	
<p>You highlighted that we should recognise that drugs and alcohol use may be linked to ways of coping with experience.</p>	<p>We agree and have included this within the 'recognising the mental health impacts of abuse'.</p>
<p>Some were concerned that the wording around 'prioritising family bonds' could lead to these bonds being prioritised over safety.</p>	<p>This section has been re drafted to aid clarity.</p>
<p>You fed back on counter allegations and the impact of these on emotional and physical safety, particularly where post-separation abuse impacts recovery.</p>	<p>As well as adding a new paragraph and additional commitments under Immediate Need we have included promoting professional training on the use of counter allegations, family court and safe child contact arrangements to the 'prioritising family bonds' section of the strategy.</p>
<p>You highlighted that 'recognising the experts' must be people who have experienced domestic abuse rather than professionals. Also, we should clearly acknowledge the role of the voluntary sector within this work.</p>	<p>We have made this clearer in the strategy.</p> <p>We agree that this work is dependent on the vital contribution of the voluntary sector and have added this to the strategy.</p>
<p>How we will measure success</p>	

We should have more details on the individual projects which will meet the commitments.	This information will be within the delivery plan which will support the strategy and will be monitored by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group.

This page is intentionally left blank

Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 – 2029

Accessing support

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next 5 years.

In Kent and Medway you can access domestic abuse services by contacting Victim Support for assessment and referral to your local service by calling **0808 168 9111** or using the **Live Chat** facility.

Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women’s Aid and Refuge on 0808 2000 247 or the Men’s’ Advice Line on 0808 801 0327. If you are concerned about your use of abusive behaviour the Respect helpline is available on 0808 8024040.

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

If you can’t speak out loud, you can press 55 so that the operator knows you need help. You can also video call 999 to communicate in BSL for free by visiting the 999 BSL website or downloading the app.

Contents

Introduction	05	Early intervention and prevention	17
Governance	06	Immediate needs	21
The Domestic Abuse Act 2021	07	Recovery	30
Domestic abuse facts and figures	09	How we will measure success	35
Funding	15	Activity indicators	36
Kent and Medway strategic priorities	16	Appendices	37



An executive summary of this strategy has been produced. The executive summary is available in Easy Read and in British Sign Language.

In partnership with and supported by



Foreword

Signed



Roger Gough
Leader, Kent County Council



Vince Maple
Leader, Medway Council



Simon Wilson
Assistant Chief Constable (Crime), Kent Police

Domestic abuse is prolific and wide reaching. In 2022 2.4 million adults experienced abuse¹. The impact of abuse can result in a range of negative and harmful effects on health, wellbeing and outcomes in life. Domestic abuse impacts upon future generations and their ability, capacity and attitude towards relationships, parenting, self-esteem and mental health. Abuse does not sit in isolation but may be linked to other life experiences which may include financial and economic exclusion, mental health support needs, substance dependencies or homelessness.

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group are proud to be prioritising and continuing to build on the achievements of our domestic and sexual abuse multiagency partnership. This strategy, our second Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2024- 2029) has been developed using narratives of lived experience.

These narratives are powerful and illustrate the often-complex journey a person moves through that may include identifying abuse, immediate need and recovery. This journey can look different for everyone and is not linear.

Domestic abuse can be hidden, leaving lasting physical, mental, social, and economic damage. Within this strategy we aim to challenge negative societal attitudes and stigma linked to discussing abuse, encouraging conversation and education. We need to ensure the immediate needs of people are met, by establishing support services to help intervene when a person is ready to disclose abuse, support

children impacted by abuse and aid the development of programmes which challenge perpetration and abusive behaviours. We must also work to ensure that services can be shaped and developed to respond to a longer-term journey of recovery, recognising that this recovery involves broader structures which aid the re-establishment of stability. Many different services, both statutory and voluntary work to support families and individuals affected by domestic abuse across Kent and Medway. These services often work together to make sure that provision is coordinated, identifying potential areas for improvement in the services that are being delivered. This strategy seeks to support this coordination working to ensure that people feel safe, secure and supported during their journey.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to those who have provided examples of lived experiences of abuse and engaged with our research programmes both in Medway and in Kent, thank you to the children and young people who have given their ideas for development of services and thank you to the professionals who have given their time to feed into the development of this strategy. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not be formed.

¹. Office of National Statistics, Domestic abuse in England and Wales overview: November 2023
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2022>

Introduction

This is a document produced by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group which includes partners across Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Services, Kent Police, the National Probation Service, the NHS, the Department of Work and Pensions, the Police and Crime Commissioner and all Kent District, Borough and City Councils (referred to in this document as the Partnership).

This strategy works to achieve the joint collective aim to: ‘reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly’.

This strategy identifies joint commitments across the Partnership for those impacted by domestic abuse, and is inclusive of those who are or have been abused, those who perpetrate through abuse, and children who witness abuse, using the voice of people who have experienced abuse to identify areas of priority across the Partnership’s collective service provision.

This strategy also supports Kent County Council and Medway Council’s statutory duty to fulfil their responsibility to have a strategy which details aims and priorities for adults and children who have experienced domestic abuse in safe accommodation services.



Governance

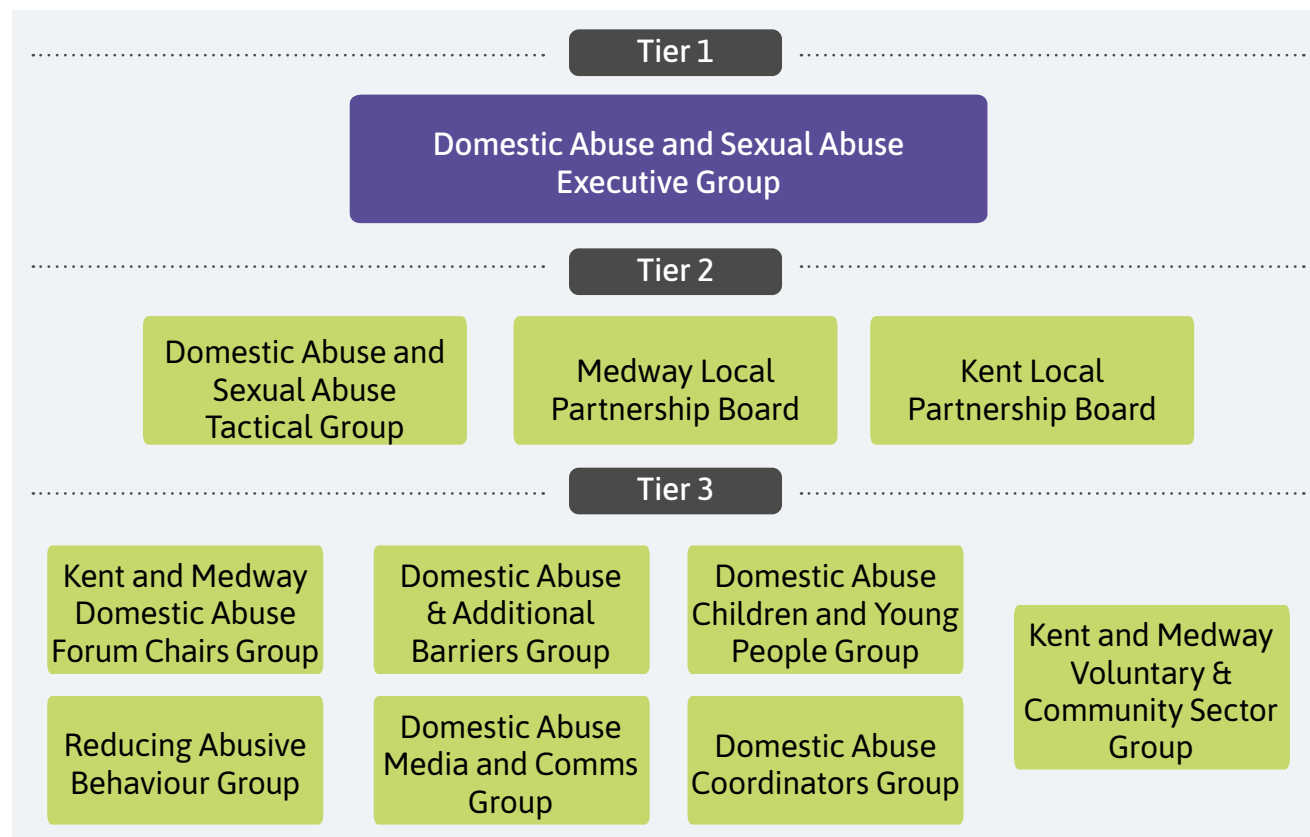
The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group, and the associated governance structure supporting this work, brings together experts in the field of domestic abuse, who work in partnership to strengthen responses across Kent and Medway.

The Executive Group is supported by a number of meetings including the statutory Local Partnership Boards within Kent and Medway which ensure delivery of legal duties linked to the 2021 Domestic

Abuse Act. This strategy includes areas which relate to these legal duties which are highlighted using this logo:



The Partnership will work collaboratively to meet the commitments within the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy which sets out the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Executive Group's joint vision, priorities, and commitments.



The Domestic Abuse Act 2021

The Domestic Abuse Act received Royal Assent at the end of April 2021. The Act works to increase awareness of domestic abuse, to improve the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and to strengthen support for people who have experienced abuse.²

The Act also creates a statutory definition of domestic abuse for the first time. Behaviour is classed as domestic abuse when:

‘two people are personally connected to each other, over the age of 16 and where the behaviour between each other is abusive.’³

This definition may relate to both a single incident or a course or pattern of behaviours. It includes those who are in, or have been in intimate relationships or behaviour between family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

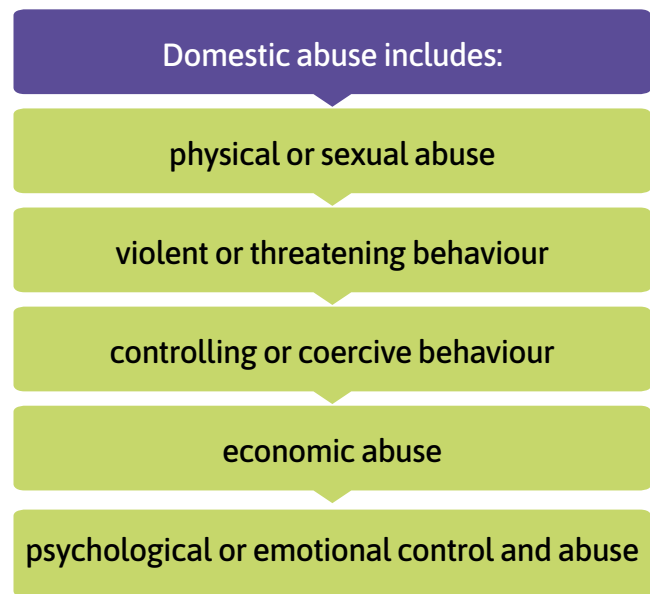
Domestic abuse impacts children. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse and are related to either of the parties are considered victims of domestic abuse independently of the adult who experiences the abuse.

Children suffer both direct and indirect harm from domestic abuse and while the strategy uses the definition from the Domestic Abuse Act, definitions in other legislation related to child abuse and neglect may also be relevant.

Adolescent to parent violence is classified as domestic abuse when both parties are over the age of 16. While it is recognised that adolescent to parent violence can

equally involve children under 16, interventions may be different from responses to adults perpetrating abusive behaviours.

Additionally, ‘honour-based’ abuse is an umbrella term which may involve physical abuse including forced physical traumas such as breast flattening or female genital mutilation, psychological pressure or forced marriage. This is often perpetrated by a person’s family and members of a community with the aim of protecting or defending honour. This is a violation of human rights and a form of domestic abuse.⁴ Harmful behaviours due to ‘honour-based’ abuse can present in different ways and are sometimes used as leverage and cover for domestic abuse.



2. Domestic Abuse Act 2021 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

3. Reference as above

4. The Crown Prosecution Service, November 2023

[So-Called Honour-Based Abuse | The Crown Prosecution Service \(cps.gov.uk\)](#)

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 continued

Statement on sexual abuse

While this strategy seeks to coordinate aims and delivery on domestic abuse it will incorporate sexual abuse when this aligns with the domestic abuse definition. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership recognise that sexual abuse and violence happens outside of this definition.

The Partnership seeks to support coordinated working on sexual abuse which is not included within this strategy. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will create a working group made up of key partners to establish the actions required across the Partnership to strengthen and embed responses to sexual abuse and violence across Kent & Medway. This working group will collaborate with existing partnership activities and statutory responsibilities, such as the safeguarding boards and responses to the Serious Violence Duty, to ensure approaches are aligned.

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Kent County Council and Medway Council have a responsibility by law to assess the need for, and provide support for those in safe accommodation for all those impacted by abuse and their children, both for those who live within area, and those who come from outside the area.

The definition of safe accommodation includes:

1. refuge;
2. specialist accommodation (including dedicated specialist support for people with protected characteristics such as a disability);
3. dispersed accommodation which includes self-contained accommodation;
4. move on, or second stage accommodation, a place to move to when intensive support is no longer needed but a level of support is still beneficial;
5. sanctuary schemes where physical security measures have been put in place into a person's home.

No recourse to public funds

"While I appreciate the help I received, I also feel I was grossly misguided. And I think my situation is very niche and they weren't quite sure how to guide me... In cases like mine, where there's the element of, you know the immigration aspect and financial abuse to the extent I've experienced..."

People experiencing abuse who may have limited access to public funding due to their immigration status may be highly vulnerable, their status may be an additional way for a person using abusive behaviour to control them.

Dependent on a person's situation there may be opportunities to support them under various legislation which might include the Care Act (2014), the Childrens Act (Section 17, 1989) and the Human Rights Act (1998). This strategy includes a commitment to increase professional awareness, which is further detailed in the 'Immediate Need' section of this strategy.

Domestic Abuse facts and figures



Page 265

Statistics on domestic abuse are helpful in identifying trends, but any use of statistics needs to be carefully considered because domestic abuse is often hidden and under reported.

Nationally



An estimated 2.4 million adults aged 16 and over have experienced domestic abuse within the last year. This is a prevalence rate of around 5 in 100 adult.⁵



Women are around twice as likely to experience abuse than men, equating to an estimated 1.7 million women and 699,000 men.⁶



Between April 2018 and March 2021 269 women and 104 men were victims of a domestic homicide.⁷



Over 10% of adults with a disability experienced domestic abuse in the last year, compared to 4% of adults without a disability.⁸



People from minoritized ethnicities are less likely to disclose abuse and may suffer 1.5 times longer before seeking help.⁹



Bisexual adults were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year (15.2%) than gay or lesbian (8.4%), or heterosexual adults (5.2%).¹⁰



Research has suggested that up to 80% of trans people have experienced emotionally, sexually, or physically abusive behaviour from a partner or ex-partner.¹¹

5. "Office of national Statistics, Domestic Abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: November 2023"
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwalesoverview/november2023>

6. Reference as above

7. Reference as above

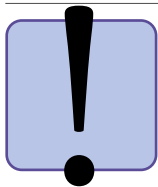
8. Reference as above

9. "Nomis, Official census and labour market statistics, November 2023"
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/apsnew>

10. "HM Government, Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan, November 2023"
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/624422988fa8f527785ed11c/E02735263_Tackling_Domestic_Abuse_CP_639_Elay_002_.pdf

11. "LGBT Youth Scotland, Transgender People's Experiences of Domestic Abuse, November 2023"
<https://www.scottishtrans.org/our-work/census2022/>

Domestic Abuse facts and figures continued



There were 2,887 offences related to honour-based abuse were recorded in England and Wales in the year ending March 2021.¹²



Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse in their household.¹⁷

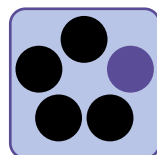


Over 22,000 domestic abuse referrals were made through the Kent domestic abuse helplines in 2022.²¹



In 2022 the Forced Marriage Unit dealt with a total of 302 cases.¹³

Kent & Medway



1 in 5 recorded crimes (22%) in Kent and Medway are related to domestic abuse.¹⁸



Over 4000 people accessed community services such as MARAC, community and specialist IDVAs or outreach support in Kent & Medway in 2022-23.²²



One in four (23%) victims of recorded domestic homicides are over the age of 60. They were almost equally likely to be killed by a partner or spouse (46%) as they were by their (adult) children or grandchildren (44%).¹⁴



Over 63,000 adults in Kent & Medway were projected to have experienced domestic abuse in 2021-22.¹⁹



Over 24,000 children in Kent & Medway live in a household where an adult was experiencing domestic abuse.²⁰

Both Kent and Medway produce strategic needs assessments for domestic abuse which use data from services to identify trends in service provision and highlight any gaps in support and provision, or areas which we need to strengthen.



32% of homeless women said domestic abuse contributed to their homelessness.¹⁵



Nearly 4 times as many women in the lowest income bracket had experienced domestic abuse in the last 12 months (17.0%), compared with those in the highest household income bracket (4.3%).¹⁶

12. "Home Office, Statistics on so called 'honour-based' abuse offences, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022, November 2023" <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022>
 13. "Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Forced Marriage Unit statistics 2022, November 2023" [Forced Marriage Unit statistics 2022](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forced-marriage-unit-statistics-2022)
 14. "Age UK, Parliamentary Briefing, No Age Limit: Domestic Abuse, November 2023" <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/parliamentary-briefing---domestic-abuse---jan-2020.pdf>
 15. "Safelives, Homelessness and domestic abuse, November 2023" <https://safelives.org.uk/spotlight-5-homelessness-and-domestic-abuse>

16. "Office of National Statistics, November 2023" (Office for National Statistics) (2017) Domestic abuse in England and Wales: year ending March 2017. London: ONS.
 17. "NSPCC, Child abuse and neglect in the UK today, November 2023" [Child abuse and neglect in the UK today | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-we-do/learning-and-research/child-abuse-and-neglect-in-the-uk-today/)
 18. Domestic Abuse Statistics Data Tool, Home Office, November 2022
 19. From Kent & Medway's service reports 2022-23: Internal data
 20. "Children's Commissioner, Children in families at risk, 2018" <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/vulnerable-children/children-in-families-at-risk-local-area-maps/>
 21. From Kent & Medway's service reports 2022-23: Internal data
 22. Reference as above

Domestic Abuse facts and figures continued

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Data from our refuges and other safe accommodation

(2022/2023 commissioned services data)

Kent

- 208 people accessed Kent County Council commissioned refuge.
- 51.9% of people in Kent refuges had accompanying children.
- 6.3% of people in refuge identified as lesbian, gay, or pansexual.
- Of those in refuge, 8.2% had a physical or sensory disability and 1.9% had a learning disability.
- 42.3% of those in refuge identified as needing mental health support (as a secondary need).
- 63.9% of individuals in refuge identified as “White – British” and 31.7% identified as other ethnic minority groups.
- 52.4% of people in refuge came from outside Kent.

Medway

- 59 people accessed safe accommodation services in Medway.
- 47 children were supported whilst in safe accommodation.
- 15 adults and children accessed counselling and play therapy in refuge.
- 21% of people accessing refuge accommodation in Medway identified as black or from a minority ethnic group.
- 13% of people were between 16 – 25 years old.
- 51 % of people reported as having a mental health need.
- 16% of people had a disability in refuge.
- Over a year 113 people have benefited from Sanctuary Scheme adaptations to enable them to remain safely in their homes.



Domestic Abuse facts and figures continued

Gaps identified from the 2021 needs assessment which focused on safe accommodation are highlighted within the table below, as is information on how we will, or have met these gaps.

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Identified gaps in provision

Kent

Gap identified

Support services for children and young people in safe accommodation.

How we will meet or have met the gap

Within Kent the safe accommodation support service for children is commissioned. This service supports access to group, one-to-one and peer support, and has extended the length of provision available for therapeutic support for children and young people.

Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.

Training is being developed for those working with people with mental health support needs on domestic abuse, and for those working in domestic abuse on mental health. Additional training has also been rolled out on intersectionality between dependencies (including alcohol and drug dependencies) and domestic abuse.

Specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisors have been commissioned. These roles provide a dedicated, intensive, specialist resource delivering a joined-up, multi-agency support package, liaising with key organisations such as mental health services, substance misuse treatment services and criminal justice agencies to deliver consistency and positive outcomes for vulnerable clients.

Enhanced therapeutic support is also available which provides enhanced and responsive therapeutic support and additional provision for those with co-occurring conditions (16 years+) to improve access to refuges.

Further work is ongoing to develop projects in this area.

Domestic Abuse facts and figures continued

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Kent

Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of refuge or other safe accommodation.

Tenancy Support Officers have been introduced to increase support and advocacy for those moving from safe accommodation.

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation will support strong and consistent housing responses across area, and is being sought by all tier 2 authorities, supported by Kent County Council (KCC).

Provision in Sanctuary schemes vary across the county, meaning some people may get more robust support in one scheme compared to another.

Kent County Council will commission a Sanctuary service which will extend the availability of services within Kent .

Safe Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER) is a scheme which has been developed by Kent County Council with engagement from all partner agencies and people with lived experience of domestic abuse.

The scheme will extend the availability of Sanctuary services within Kent and access to support for those residing in properties where Sanctuary has been applied.

Access to refuge accommodation for men

A pilot which will support men in safe accommodation has been commissioned.



Domestic Abuse facts and figures continued

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Medway

Gap identified

How we will meet or have met the gap

Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.

Medway Council will continue to commission an Access Independent Domestic Violence Adviser to offer specialist support for those with barriers to access such as complex mental health needs or substance and/or alcohol dependency. This is also an outreach post to work with those who are rough sleeping with the aim of supporting people into safe accommodation.

Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of refuge or other safe accommodation.

Medway Council have introduced a specialist Domestic Abuse Housing Options Officer, who are also a trained Independent Domestic Violence Advisor to support access to secondary accommodation.

Support in temporary accommodation.

The dispersed accommodation contract was reviewed early in 2023 to include households placed in temporary accommodation due to domestic abuse, providing they are placed in suitable 'safe and relevant' accommodation as outlined in Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. An additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor has been brought in to support people facing multiple barriers to access, who have needed Sanctuary measures installed in their property

Mental Health support within safe accommodation.

The mental health needs of children and adults are supported through an in-house counselling service, for people in both refuge and dispersed safe accommodation.

Access to refuge accommodation for men and other people impacted by abuse who cannot access refuge e.g. larger families, those with pets or other needs.

Medway Council has commissioned a dispersed accommodation scheme for those people where refuge is not suitable/accessible or those who want to remain in Medway and close to their school, work or support networks. This scheme started in December 2021.

Funding

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has created specific funding to support those impacted by domestic abuse who access safe accommodation. The funding allocated to date is detailed in Appendix A. At the time this strategy was published the funding allocation was not known past 2024/2025. Funding available will continue to be used to meet gaps identified through the needs assessments which are refreshed or renewed yearly.

Whilst statutory funding is specific to the support of those who reside in safe accommodation, we know that most people experiencing domestic abuse will choose to access support in the community, wanting to increase their safety whilst maintaining their networks and homes.

Within this strategy we have used the information available including published research, quantitative information and talking to people about their experiences, to identify where the Partnership can make a difference, but we do recognise that this strategy is aspirational and that not all elements are funded through statutory monies.

Funding for some areas of this strategy is dependent on continued local and national funding and options for collaborative bids. The Partnership will seek opportunities to access monies to support commitments and work with local providers to strengthen local bids from Kent and Medway.



Kent and Medway strategic priorities

This section of the strategy outlines commitments from the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group (the Partnership).

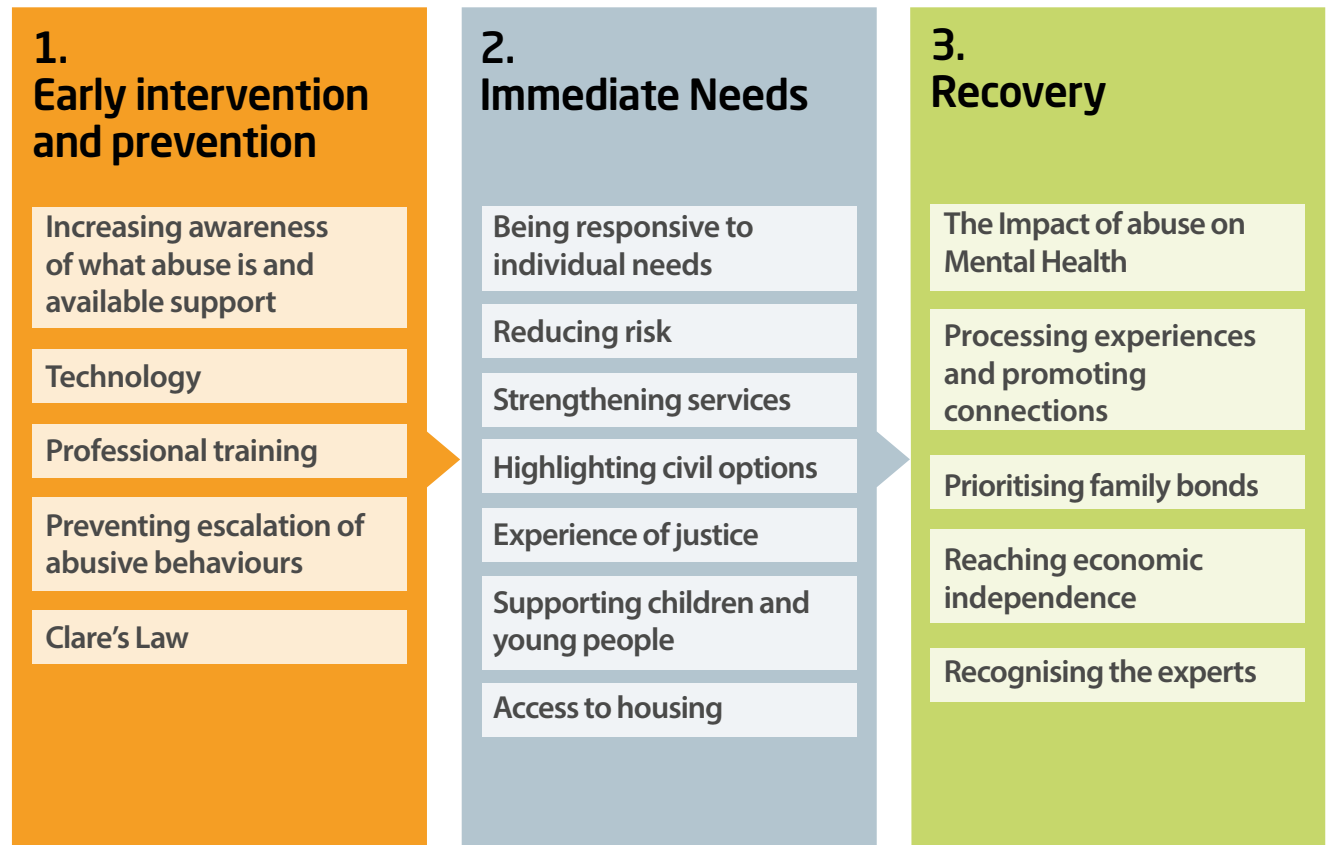
It starts with a focus on early intervention and prevention which aims to challenge negative societal attitudes and stigma linked to discussing abuse, increasing awareness, reducing the escalation of abusive behaviours and encouraging conversation and education.

The strategy then moves to focus on support when

a person is in crisis or in immediate need exploring the provision and support that adults, children and families need at this time.

Lastly the strategy explores recovery, and how services can be shaped and developed to respond to a longer-term journey and progression to healing, recognising that this involves broader structures which aid the re-establishment of stability.

The headings under each priority have been informed by research and from interviews on experience.



1. Early intervention and prevention

"For me it's like everyone just needs educating. What is domestic abuse? So, at school you go all the way through every organisation. You know, every judge, solicitor, whoever is involved in anything to do with domestic abuse should be trained... People would think differently. I think, you know, courts would be different, the legal system will be different and other people's perceptions. Even if it's taught at school, young girls, boys, how they grow up and their perception of what abuse is [is] really important."

"I feel like something needs to be taught in schools. That's just my opinion. Because what I kind of uncovered with my counselling is that me personally, a lot of my issues stem from childhood trauma, and then you end up finding yourself in a relationship at a young age with a trauma bond... If I had been taught better about relationships and what gaslighting is and what manipulating someone looks like I would [have been] a lot more educated like now."

"Communication with different generations is key – different forms for different ages e.g. TV (awareness) for older people, social media and TikTok for younger generations - targeted messages for different generations"

"More awareness needed for everyone -e.g., the lady at the GP that takes your blood and notices a bruise on your arm"

What do we mean by early intervention and prevention?

This theme aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, to stop domestic abuse occurring, to help people identify domestic abuse as early as possible and get support in place to stop the impacts from escalating.

Early intervention can take different forms. We know that anyone can be impacted by abuse at any age, and identifying opportunities to reduce the long-term impacts needs to happen across life stages.

Early intervention means increasing awareness and providing education, so that people are aware of what domestic abuse is, while giving people the skills they need to identify healthy relationships.

If a person has identified that they are experiencing abuse, they need to know what support is available, so they can get the right support at the right time to prevent further escalation.

Education also helps people to identify when their behaviours may be abusive. Earlier identification of harmful behaviours can support access to interventions which can prevent escalation of this behaviour.

Clare's Law can also support opportunities to identify risk earlier and is included within this section.

Early intervention and prevention *continued*

Increase awareness of what abuse is and available support

"I think even that domestic abuse helpline needs to be even more sign posted because I didn't even know about it. And they helped me to where I am now".

"Having and knowing where to go when you are in that real lonely state is one of the most important things, if you have got nobody else".

"[people experiencing abuse] have just got to feel that they can go somewhere. Because when you do reach out, you've reached that point where you really need help and you don't want people just to leave you hanging."

Knowing where and how to access support is crucial, when a person is ready to reach out for help, they must know where to turn. Effective communications can support increased awareness and can also be used to promote understanding of domestic abuse and that it can affect anyone irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, disability or orientation.

Understanding what a healthy relationship is and what it looks like can support identification of relationships which are abusive.

To increase awareness of service provision and of what domestic abuse is, the Partnership will:

- work collaboratively to promote consistent messaging on access, ensuring that messaging and imagery is inclusive and diverse;
- use available communication channels to increase awareness of what abuse is and that it can impact anyone, ensuring communication is accessible;
- work to 'reach out' to groups currently not accessing services; this includes making communications accessible and translating information where appropriate;
- include communications on 'honour based' abuse including forced marriage, and work with communities to better understand how best to increase awareness of support;
- increase awareness of the different types of abuse including coercive behavior, economic abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, harassment and stalking and online or digital abuse;
- continue to improve information, promotion and uptake of available resources for more consistent domestic abuse curriculum content as part of healthy relationship and sex education, helping to identify abuse in early intimate relationships.

Technology

The use of technology to perpetrate domestic abuse has risen with the increase in use of smart phones, tablets and internet connected home devices. Those using abusive behaviours use these tools to further harm people who are experiencing the abuse by monitoring, stalking, harassment and impersonation.

More understanding of rapidly changing technologies and how this is used to perpetrate domestic abuse is needed to prevent escalation and reduce the risk.

The Partnership will:

- increase the awareness of technologies used to perpetrate abuse so it can be more easily recognised and prevented.

Early intervention and prevention *continued*

Professional training

“Domestic abuse training needs to be there for every professional and it should be a statutory thing that every professional needs to have, like health and safety. Because if people knew how to recognise the signs of it, I think people could help others to pick it up and to recognise it themselves, or at least be able to offer them a service that’s available in your area if you want to access it.”

- support professionals across our services to be domestic abuse informed, taking opportunities to identify risk and using trauma informed approaches in response;
- continue to develop our understanding of trauma and ensure our staff have access to training and development opportunities to explore and develop in this area;
- train professionals to help people feel safe when disclosing abuse;
- ensure training is available for staff on areas such as options for support and the additional barriers experienced for those with no recourse to public funds, who are LGBT+ or are experiencing ‘honour based’ abuse, forced marriage, financial and economic, sexual or coercive abuse;
- equip staff to be able to explore and challenge behaviour which may be linked to interpretations of aspects of culture which put people at risk of harm, abuse or death.

The principles of trauma informed practice are safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment and cultural consideration, empathically exploring the question of ‘what’s happened to you’. A ‘healing centered’ approach progresses this compassionate enquiry, and helps identify the strengths of those exposed to trauma, empowering them to heal and re-establish their own well-being, as opposed to being defined by being the victim survivor of traumatic events.

As employers we have a duty to our employees. This includes where they are impacted by abuse.

The Partnership Will:

- support policies and procedures that allow people to access specialist support and to make adaptations that enable them to stay safe at work;
- support behavior change and create accountability for those using abusive behaviour by taking a robust approach to any allegations of abusive behaviour made against our staff. We will instigate a formal management investigation in line with our policies and procedures and will support the complainant to understand available options for support.

Across the Partnership we have the opportunity to promote stronger understandings of abuse throughout our staff groups.

Staff should feel confident and empowered to respond to disclosures within complex contexts that they may find themselves within. People who disclose should feel safe and listened to. It is important that staff are trained as part of their induction and that training is reviewed and updated regularly.

We need to ensure that professionals working across our services have the training to develop the skills they need to identify and respond to domestic abuse as early as possible.

To support our staff to identify domestic abuse, and have trauma informed, healing centred, strong responses the Partnership will:

Early intervention and prevention continued

Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours

People who perpetrate through abusive behaviours cause significant harm to others. To stop abuse from occurring, recurring, or escalating we need to address those causing it. People perpetrating abusive behaviours may themselves have experienced or witnessed abuse and they can be at increased risk of suicide.²³ We need interventions in place to support the person while challenging and disrupting this behaviour.

Education is important in helping people to define abuse and to challenge behaviours and attitudes linked to this. We are working closely with the Violence Reduction Unit and Prevent team who support narrative on positive, strength-based identities where abusive and dangerous behaviours are challenged.

To reduce the escalation of abusive behaviours the Partnership will:

- support awareness of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) and trauma informed practice;
- work across communities to promote positive behaviours and challenge harmful gendered stereotyping;
- support work on bystander and upstander interventions;
- work with the Prevent team to better understand links between extremism, incels and domestic abuse;

- work to increase the recognition of, and response to, those perpetrating abusive behaviours across Partnership services in order to support the person, promote accountability and disrupt abusive behaviour.

Clare’s Law

“You know, there’s Clare’s Law, but Clare’s law is not well known. If you haven’t been through domestic abuse, you don’t know what Clare’s law is...”

If effectively used Clare’s Law can help to identify risk of abuse.

To increase the take up and use of Clare’s Law to prevent harm the Partnership will:

- review processes around Clare’s Law to try to make this as accessible as possible and increase use;
- increase awareness of the scheme through local social marketing so that people can make informed decisions about their safety.

Clare’s Law also known as the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) gives people the ‘right to ask’ if their current or ex-partner has any previous history of violence or abuse. It is called Clare’s Law after Clare Wood who was killed in 2009 by an ex-partner who unknown to her had been violent to previous partners.

Under the ‘right to ask’ the person impacted by abuse, family members and close friends can ask for this information which is released to the person at risk. The request is considered by a panel of Police, Probation, and other services. Information is only then passed on to the person at risk if it is deemed lawful, proportionate and necessary.

Under Clare’s Law people also have the ‘right to know’ where services proactively release information if they believe someone is at risk.

23. “National Suicide Prevention Alliance, Highlighting the link between domestic abuse and suicide, November 2023” <https://nspa.org.uk/resource/link-domestic-abuse-and-suicide/>

2. Immediate Needs

What do we mean by immediate needs?

"I was in such a bad place and didn't know where to go, who to talk to. It was hard to talk because of the kids around. It was hard to actually pick up the phone and physically try and call someone and talk to them. You know, some sort of service. So in the end, one evening I was just at a point where I really just wanted to end my life again and I found the Victim Support online and it had the online chat, so I started talking to somebody from there. That helped."

"It is the real loneliness. That is what for me probably was the hardest part in the beginning. . . I do believe for me the loneliness every time he would go was what made me take him back. I had nobody. I mean, normally you would have friends you can pick up the phone and call. I didn't have that. I had no friends anymore, not one."

"The IDVA service was amazing – I was so lonely; I didn't know how to do anything- didn't know how to use the TV because I wasn't allowed to before. If someone was able to check in with a phone call more frequently it would have been very helpful, every day or every few days after referral."

By immediate needs we mean the services, interventions and support that people need whilst

domestic abuse is occurring and in the immediate aftermath. These services may help with managing risk and increasing safety, but people may also need support with practical issues such as access to housing and school places.

All experiences of abuse are individual, and our services need to be flexible and responsive to meet these needs. Feedback from workshops and the voluntary sector highlighted the importance of high quality, joined up support, non-judgemental responses where people feel heard, and services which are both open to all and tailored to individual need.

Within this section we also look at housing and safe accommodation services with commitments to support improved responses.

Being responsive to individual need

"I had police officers turn up to ask me how I was. One of them sat down with me, gave me probably about sort of eight or nine different brochures. And it was like, you know, phone these people talk to these people. And but you don't wanna be here when she comes back. . . I think they handed me some [pamphlets] and they were just like, you know, these people won't be able to help you because these only deal with women. But if you give them a phone call and say, you know can you give me numbers? They would probably have other numbers you can call for help."

Immediate Needs continued

“If you’ve got money, whether it’s joint money or not, there’s not much help for you. People perceive that you can go and get a good solicitor, or you can leave him. Pack your bags and just leave and get in the car and go. And also, if you’ve got a home, you’re not getting housing, they aren’t gonna give you a home because you’ve got a home. ... I think there’s a lot of women probably like me who can never get out.”

“Even in diversity, there’s still diversity that needs to happen, but here no one looks like me, so I think there’s also that loneliness here where I want to go to staff, but you can’t quite understand all the things that I may need because you don’t know what it’s like to be me. Constantly having to explain yourself and who you are is exhausting.”

The Partnership must ensure that services can meet the needs of our diverse population; recognising that people’s journeys, trauma, support needs, and recovery are different. Characteristics such as our ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disabilities, and age can affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need.

Information collected nationally, and locally from those with lived experience of domestic abuse, has highlighted a need for specialist services that are tailored to diverse characteristics.

Some individuals and communities may face multiple and intersecting barriers to support. This can in turn result in the over or under representation of people facing these inequalities within our support services.

People facing multiple barriers may have overlapping need, which may be underpinned by a history of abuse. There may be high rates of mental health need, and problematic substance use (which can be a form of coping mechanism), contact with the criminal justice system and issues around housing or homelessness. People who have barriers to access may have experienced multiple episodes of trauma and/or adverse childhood experiences, which increases their likelihood of further trauma such as domestic abuse.

To respond to need we should ensure that services are equipped to support people experiencing multiple barriers effectively.

All people who experience domestic abuse are impacted differently by their unique experiences. These experiences can be shaped by our characteristics, including our gender and gender identity.

The strategy recognises that domestic abuse can manifest differently across relationships but that our biases can shape how we perceive a situation. Professionals must always challenge bias or assumptions which may stereotype a ‘victim’ or a ‘perpetrator’, including in relation to gender. Understandings of abuse must be evidenced based.

All people will have reasons for not reporting abuse, and therefore barriers to access, but the strategy recognises that our characteristics can influence these barriers.

These may include:

- challenge in recognising or identifying the behaviour as abusive, and that you are experiencing abuse;
- feelings of embarrassment or shame;
- being afraid of the repercussions of reporting including in relation to child access.

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



“Sanctuary are super quick, they are amazing, it (the adaptations) was done within a few days and I felt my house was as secure as MI5 after”

“It doesn’t matter if I have a big house, I can’t be in it with someone who is violent”

Commitments

To support those who flee abuse and seek support in safe accommodation the Partnership will:

- have the right safe accommodation options, and specialist support, that meets the needs of anyone experiencing abuse whether they are male, female, nonbinary or trans, non-disabled or disabled, whether they are experiencing abuse from a partner or family member and whatever their sexual orientation or ethnicity;
- strengthen options for people facing multiple barriers when trying to access safe accommodation, which may include dependencies or mental health support needs;

- ensure safe accommodation options for all family types, including those with older male children and larger families are available;
- increase awareness of options for support where people may own assets;
- explore opportunities to provide short-term accommodation for people at risk of facing multiple barriers, such as homelessness and domestic abuse;
- recognise the importance of pets for those who are needing to flee. We will work to raise awareness of the housing options and support services, which aim to prevent families fleeing abuse from having to give up their pets;
- recognise that some individuals experiencing abuse will be homeowners and seen to have assets, for some this may limit their accommodation options. We will work to raise awareness of the available support routes for these residents across Kent and Medway.

Homeowners

We recognise that some individuals experiencing abuse will be homeowners and for some this may limit their accommodation options. Shared home ownership can also facilitate post separation economic abuse. We will work to raise awareness of the available support routes for these residents, across Kent and Medway.

To ensure that services are able to respond and meet the needs of our diverse population the Partnership will:

- increase service uptake for under-represented groups by seeking to address barriers to access and improve accessibility of services;
- reduce barriers to access for those living in rural communities;
- strengthen links with community groups, faith groups and leaders to expand on opportunities for partnership work;
- further collaborate to develop needs led work and support the specialist ‘by and for’ market (services that are run by the community that they are designed for);
- explore ways to promote learning and development on issues around intersectionality, including mental capacity, coercive controlling behaviour and financial and economic abuse;
- work to increase access for those experiencing multiple barriers by using a multi-agency approach to support the work of our commissioned domestic abuse services, including the introduction of multi-agency meetings and panels to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- increase professional awareness of possible options to support those with No Recourse to Public Funds including charity options.

Immediate Needs continued

Reducing risk

"I called the police and that was the first time I called the police on him for domestic violence, and this was probably like the 15th 16th thing that's happened between us."

Domestic abuse takes multiple forms with risk impacted by a number of factors; this includes the abusive persons history, recent separation from the person perpetrating abuse, whether the person experiencing abuse is pregnant or has a young child and, the barriers they experience in working with services amongst other factors. In keeping people safe risk must be managed and where possible reduced.

To support strong management of risk the Partnership will:

- establish the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) hub and case management system to strengthen our response to the highest risk domestic abuse cases;
- work with the Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Boards to ensure that learnings from Domestic Homicide Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Children's Safeguarding Practice reviews are supported;

- work to increase participation with, and referrals to multi-agency tasking and coordination (MATAAC) groups, which are in place for those at high risk of repeating abusive behaviours;
- where a person is perpetrating abusive behaviour, work together to ensure timely information sharing about abusive incidents that allows for risk management and coordinated actions that promote accountability and disrupt behaviours;
- support processes in place to notify both the person who has experienced the abuse and professionals to ensure that the appropriate measures are in place prior to prison release dates;
- strengthen the Offender Focused Approach in investigation of crimes linked to Violence Against Women and Girls;
- increase availability and access to programmes aiming to support people perpetrating abusive behaviour to make sustainable change in their relationships;
- increase the awareness of harassment and stalking including the signs, the risk and how it can escalate, ensuring services work collaboratively to respond.
- explore approaches to increase professionals' access to specialist domestic abuse advice to aid risk management and safeguarding practice.

- recognise risks caused by the emotional and Psychological impact of abuse and associated coping mechanisms, promoting healing centered working across the Partnership.

Strengthening services

It is important that we use all resources wisely to ensure the strongest support available for those impacted by domestic abuse. This means working collaboratively to utilise opportunities and commission where gaps in existing services are identified.

The definition of domestic abuse is inclusive of sexual abuse where this forms part of the domestic abuse experienced. It is important that services align so that people receive the expert care and support needed.

To utilise opportunities to strengthen provision, the Partnership will:

- work towards creating a central resource which lists commissioned services to support collaborative commissioning and increase awareness of provision including with front line professionals;

Immediate Needs continued

- work across our services to identify opportunities to extend collaborative commissioning, starting by identifying priority themes;
- provide a quick and effective response to people seeking domestic abuse support through streamlined referral pathways and clear information and guidance for professionals;
- continue to work to identify funding and bidding opportunities, supporting our providers to collaborate to bring together strong bids;
- work to identify lobbying opportunities to enable the Partnership to support services which help people in the community or in other accommodation options including temporary accommodation;
- make sure that referral and signposting is clear for people impacted by abuse and the professionals working to support them, including creating accessible journey maps across different services to aid understanding of possible processes and interactions;
- work to ensure that domestic abuse services are aligned to deliver expert care to those that need it.

Highlighting civil options

Reporting incidents of abuse to the police, and navigating the criminal justice system, may not always be the first or preferred route for a person experiencing abuse. This may be for reasons such as fear of reprisal or previous negative experiences of the justice system.

There are various civil options available to people experiencing abuse, such as non-molestation orders and occupation orders which can help to protect adults and their children, and disrupt the behaviour of the individuals perpetrating the abuse.

Some civil orders, such as Stalking Protection Orders can be obtained by Police and used as a preventative tool within policing. For information on all of the civil orders available please see the Crown Prosecution website <https://www.cps.gov.uk>

To increase uptake of available civil options the Partnership will:

- grow awareness of the civil options that are available to people experiencing domestic abuse;
- ensure a victim centred approach when handling breaches of civil orders;
- where possible, work to strengthen the conditions and wording of orders obtained by Police;

- ensure that professionals are aware of civil orders and how to signpost people experiencing abuse to support services which can help them to obtain the relevant orders.

Experiences of justice

For those experiencing domestic abuse the decision to report offences to the police or to seek help from services is not taken lightly and can be daunting. People experiencing abuse want to be listened to, taken seriously, for the person offending to be held accountable, and to be able to make their own choices about what happens next.

To strengthen experiences of justice the Partnership will:

- increase professional training on gathering evidence of coercive and controlling behaviour to support conviction rates;
- advocate for greater specialist domestic abuse support for those who are going through the criminal justice system;
- hold those using abusive behaviours to account through the criminal justice system, this includes exploring and offering help to change behaviours through effective interventions.

Immediate Needs continued

People who use abusive behavior can attempt to use services that this partnership provides as a tactic to perpetuate and further the abuse. This can include allegations of abuse against the person they are abusing, making false allegations around parenting and children, reporting that the person experiencing abuse has unmanaged mental health issues the malicious use of police call outs and of the courts.

To support the person experiencing abuse the Partnership will:

- promote training, policies and practice guides that are inclusive of identifying coercive behavior, recognising the typologies of abuse and responding safely to counter allegations;
- utilise relevant legislation to maintain a focus on what is right for the child, prioritising their physical and emotional safety and ensure proceedings are cognisant of the impact on the non-abusive party;
- explore how those impacted by abuse can best be supported in during the family court and fact finding processes;
- promote clear guidance on the availability and use of legal aid;
- support families together where it is safe to do so and it is their choice.

Supporting children and young people during immediate need

"I think, just like, someone to talk to about it, like, yeah, I think someone to just talk to in general because like, sometimes you don't want to talk about it to your parents, you don't want to talk about it to your friends... a professional or someone, someone who you feel like you can trust" (child age 14).

"like as a family you can cause you, you kind of forget things when you're by yourself... So like you [talking about mum] will remember things that I might not remember that are important" (child age 14)

"They did a lot of activities for the kids. And for us, because they took us all to the zoo one day in the summertime, which is really, really nice because I don't think any of us have really gotten out like that."

"My child had already taken so much time off school, just like every other kid [because of the pandemic]. But then to add another six months to that and then not have provisions in place for catch ups and stuff... They are doing OK, but they could do with extra support. That is one thing that I would have said and I did ask about, but, I was told that it could be looked into, but I just don't think it ever happened. Is that if the child's gonna be out of school longer than a month, if they could somehow implement a tutor to come into refuge, to teach them that would be amazing."

Children who experience abuse between their caregivers are victims of abuse in their own right, and as such it is important that services are available, and that the Partnership develops its response to children who experience abuse. This includes making sure that where abuse is occurring and a child or young person has been present during an incident, the right people are made aware.

Young people can also experience or use abusive behaviours within their own relationships. Making sure that there is appropriate support and information available for young people is imperative.

Immediate Needs continued

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities may find it more difficult to move to safe accommodation, which is often away from their usual place of residence, routine and home comforts. The move helps ensure safety but can present additional challenges for the child and so it is important that these challenges are recognised when a move to safe accommodation is needed.

Commitments

Tier 1 authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that children have access to support who are in safe accommodation. To improve access to services for children in safe accommodation, the Partnership will:

- offer support for children in safe accommodation, both for children from Kent and Medway who stay in area, and those who are living in safe accommodation in Kent and Medway from other local authority areas;
- ensure that all children and young people in safe accommodation have access to support that is age appropriate and meets their needs, which may include access to ongoing education, counselling, play therapy, advocacy services and other opportunities;

- minimise time out of education for children and young people fleeing with an adult experiencing abuse;
- work with partners to support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities having their needs considered when moving into safe accommodation.

It is important to recognise that many children and young people stay within their communities, and, in the case where families have separated, may be navigating relationships between parents. Children and young people as witnesses to abuse are likely to experience trauma responses and should be supported. Children and young people’s voices are crucial in developing strong responses. The Partnership will:

- ensure that children’s voices and experiences are represented through formal governance and in designing and reviewing services;
- recognise the importance of schools in supporting children and young people and work collaboratively, sharing information where appropriate to improve outcomes;
- develop comprehensive whole family support, recognising the importance of recovery for wider family networks and blended family groups;
- continue to improve the process for sharing Domestic Abuse Notifications to ensure that it is equitable across the education and healthcare systems.

SAFE ACCOMMODATION



Access to housing

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced changes which impact housing authorities. The Act now extends priority need status to all those who are eligible for assistance and homeless as a result of domestic abuse. This will mean that housing authorities no longer need to consider if a person is vulnerable as a result of their abuse in order for them to access accommodation secured by the local authority.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 places requirements on housing authorities in relation to security of tenure when rehousing people fleeing domestic abuse who were an existing lifetime social tenant.

The Act emphasises that support is available to all those fleeing abuse, including those who cross local authority borders, and that housing and support needs for adults and children fleeing abuse should be met irrespectively of whether they have stayed close to home or moved to another authority.

Immediate Needs continued

"I wasn't able to get housing and I think housing is massive. It's such a massive, massive part of leaving because when you've got two children in an abusive situation like that, you do everything to protect them..."

"That's the issue with the whole refuge situation, it's too long. I know there's a housing crisis and these things, but, like I was saying to you earlier about the emotions, you then start falling back into depression because you're still [in refuge]."

If a person is forced to leave their home to find safety, access to a safe place for themselves and their children (if they have them) is paramount. If a person is forced to leave without their children, it is important that their accommodation is safe and is a place that their children can visit.

Once a person is ready, it is also important that they have support to gain secondary or move on accommodation so they can leave safe accommodation at a time which is right for them.

Kent County Council, Medway Council, Borough, District and City councils are working across Kent and Medway to ensure availability of safe accommodation options and to improve access to safe and stable accommodation for people experiencing abuse.

District, Borough and City Councils across Kent and Medway have a protocol in place to support reciprocal moves across borough boundaries. This scheme sets out a commitment to cooperate in a transparent and equitable way to assist applicants to move in exceptional circumstances; and local housing authorities to manage the process of accepting and referring applicants. This can prove to be particularly effective for applicants needing to move out of their current area to a safer one as a result of domestic abuse.

A second scheme has recently been introduced, associated with the Kent Housing Group. This scheme enables individuals and families who are at risk of domestic abuse and who have a social tenancy, to move to a safe area whilst retaining their tenancy. This is a collaboration between social housing providers and landlords to make better use of their housing stock and protect residents who are at risk of domestic abuse.



Immediate Needs continued

To strengthen our housing response, the Partnership will:

- work across our services to understand need and demand for housing for those fleeing domestic abuse;
- explore projects which strengthen the housing response including options for specialised referral and support routes;
- further explore why people are having to be housed in temporary accommodation or may be choosing to move into temporary accommodation rather than safe accommodation options;
- work with the Kent Housing Group as they explore action across temporary accommodation to support availability and quality;
- recognise the importance of social and family networks and how this impacts accommodation choices;
- continue to support those leaving refuge or dispersed accommodation and temporary accommodation to find more permanent, settled accommodation;
- extend training to staff on domestic abuse and homelessness legislation, working to reduce the amount of people impacted by domestic abuse identified as intentionally homeless;
- advance the safety planning knowledge and trauma informed processes within housing settings including through the Domestic Abuse Housing Accreditation
- ensure a consistent Sanctuary approach across Kent and Medway to enable those who wish to remain in their homes to do so, with the addition of security measures.



3. Recovery

What do we mean by recovery?

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. These repercussions remain long after the immediate safety needs have been met.

In this section we will be looking at what the Kent & Medway Partnership will do to support people to recover from these experiences.

Whether the abuse is from a family member or a romantic partner the tactics of abuse may be used to isolate a person from friends and family, to erode self-esteem, distort sense of reality, take away financial autonomy and ability to make decisions. The process of recovery is personal and is not linear.

Each person who is impacted by abuse will have a different vision for what this looks like and how they would like to be supported to achieve this.

The Partnership want Kent & Medway to be a place where people have the opportunity to thrive, to recover from the harm, heal and build resilience.

Having a robust approach to supporting people to heal from the trauma of abuse is also part of our commitment to the prevention of further abuse.

The impact of abuse on mental health

As a response to the trauma of domestic abuse, many of those affected have mental health support needs, we also know that people using abusive behaviour are more likely to target those who may be more vulnerable due to their mental health needs. Mental ill-health is frequently used against people experiencing abuse, who report barriers to support.

Barriers range from shame and stigma to complicated service landscapes, rigid referral criteria, long waiting lists and a lack of appropriate services. For groups facing additional forms of discrimination and inequality, these impacts can be compounded. Between 60 and 70% of women seeking mental health support have experienced domestic abuse. Despite this, feedback around the mental health response has highlighted a lack of pathways that are tailored to the needs of those recovering from abuse.²⁴

“I still have night terrors. I feel like I’m right back there. I feel like he’s in the room.”

Research shows that trauma caused by domestic abuse can increase rates of mental health support needs, those with existing mental health support needs may also be more vulnerable to domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse can also be linked to problematic substance use (which can be a form of coping mechanism), contact with the criminal justice system and issues around housing homelessness.

24. APPG 2022 Report: The Road to Recovery: Meeting the Mental Health Needs of Domestic Abuse Survivors - Women’s Aid, November 2023 (womensaid.org.uk)

Recovery continued

People who have barriers to access may have experienced multiple episodes of trauma, and or adverse childhood experiences, which increases their likelihood of further trauma such as domestic abuse.

"It gave me a safe space every week. But again, you know, you're talking about 8 years' worth of abuse. It's never gonna come out and be healed in 12 weeks."

"Having counselling support for me and play therapy for the children, without the worry of a waiting list in the community has been the best thing for us."

"I'm currently trying to find some counselling for myself but that's quite a battle at the moment. I need specific trauma counselling and that's quite hard to access without having to pay for it. [...] There's a real gap in service provision with regards to trauma counselling for those that aren't able to pay for it privately."

"I've got anxiety and PTSD and it's really affecting my eating. I've been trying to get more therapy but I've been told I'm not eligible as I don't meet the criteria for support."

"You might have ended your support and feel like you are much better [but] something can still trigger you and put you back there, then there is no support."

Domestic abuse services often operate based on the level of risk caused by the person perpetrating abusive behaviour, but a persons need for services which support recovery, may not correspond to a risk-based model. This also fails to recognise the long-term impact of abuse, which lasts beyond the period of crisis.

In recognising the intersectionality between domestic abuse and mental health support needs the Partnership will:

- promote better understanding of domestic abuse and trauma-informed practice within mental healthcare settings;
- develop mental health support that is responsive to the needs of people who have been impacted by abuse;
- continue to strengthen understandings of suicide and domestic abuse;
- promote service delivery models that look at the needs of a person as well as the risk posed to them by the person perpetrating abuse;
- support opportunities to encourage a goal-based outcome to manage the end of support;
- explore opportunities to provide clear pathways for people who would like support around abusive experiences that are no longer current or posing active risk.

"I think with domestic abuse, it takes a very, very long time to process what's happened... It's something that's a long-term recovery I suppose... I think a lot of things are triggering me and that's bringing back a lot of emotions about what has happened and the way that I feel about myself and I feel like I need the support more now."

Processing experiences and promoting connection

Domestic abuse erodes self-esteem and creates feelings of shame, guilt, and loneliness. Supporting people to understand the abusive tactics that have been used in their relationships and processing the effect that this has had is an important step in recovery, for both adults and children.

*"It's like the calm after the storm, where I've now gone, oh s**t – actually you're not OK. You are harbouring some real trauma that you've never said out loud, that you haven't had time or space to."*

"I think for me [a group programme] would be really good to do because I don't think I totally accept or understand the level of abuse that I went through, because for me it was just a general normal day-to-day thing... I think it would really help me to have a better understanding of the abuse that I actually went through and the trauma that that caused and help me come to terms with that."

Recovery continued

“My eldest is doing the Freedom programme at school. The school are phenomenal... They do play therapy and games... They’re teaching them what a positive relationship looks like.”

“I’ve been getting some invites for peer support groups, if I can juggle my working week around I’d quite like to go to those, just to sit with other people.”

About Group Working:

Psycho-educational groups provide a space for domestic abuse education, processing, and recovery. They provide a supportive setting for people to talk about their experiences whilst learning about the tactics used by people using abusive behaviour. This can increase safety, understanding of trauma responses, awareness of warning signs as well as lessening isolation and establishing social bonds.

Groups offer a safe and confidential place for people who would not normally have an outlet, validating each other in an empowering way.

“Doing the phoenix programme has been amazing [...] I looked forward to it because it was communication with other people.”

The tactics of abuse and steps to increase safety, such as moving away, increase isolation and loneliness. Feeling connected to other people is crucial for mental wellbeing and self-esteem.

“I’m living somewhere where I don’t know anyone. I don’t have any family. You know, I generally don’t have any support, so I’m with the children 24/7, which isn’t a bad thing, but it’s intense... I’m definitely lonely. And then I don’t help myself because I’m so scared of meeting anyone or it happening to me again.”

To promote connection the Partnership will:

- work to ensure there is an equitable and accessible group work service across Kent & Medway for adults and children, promoting joined up delivery;
- seek to deliver groups collaboratively in a wide range of settings to encourage participation;
- support initiatives that help people build confidence and grow their positive social support networks;
- continue to explore programme’s that allow people to remain safely in their own community networks.

Prioritising family bonds

Parenting and family relationships can be deeply affected by the experience of abuse. Abusive tactics are used to isolate and undermine relationships and can also impact on the space and energy to parent in the way you want to. Domestic abuse can both directly and indirectly disrupt the relationship between a parent and their child and between family members.

Supporting all members of the family to process their experiences and rebuild strong healthy bonds is a crucial part of recovery. The non-abusive parent’s needs must be seen alongside their children’s needs.

Children who have experienced abuse can mimic disruptive behaviours, undermining the non-abusive parents’ ability to cope. We also know that the largest predictor of future victimization and perpetration is experiencing or witnessing abuse in the past.²⁵ The intergenerational transmission of risk can be mitigated by supporting parents and children to recover together. Giving parents and children coordinated support and new strategies after abuse is important in creating strong recovery journeys, which are themselves a form of prevention.

The majority of children who have experienced abuse will continue to have contact with the abusive party. In some situations, it may also be appropriate to work with the person using abusive behavior to facilitate healthier parenting and safer co-parenting.

25. JDiBrief – Analysis, Repeat Victimization: Summary (1of5) Author: Chainey, S, UCL Jill Dando Institute. Accessed: 30th May 2023. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/jill-dando-institute/sites/jill-dando-institute/files/repeat_victimisation_1-5_all.pdf

Recovery continued

We must work as a partnership to prioritise children’s emotional and physical safety, as well as the safety of the non-abusive parent.

“In the end, because of his loss of control over me, he then ramped up his control of our daughter.”

“[My son] spent a long time not being able to get over the fact that we weren’t together. But [the abuser] didn’t live here. The school spent a long time talking to him about why, because when [the abuser] lived here, he wasn’t happy... We got to the bottom of it and he said it wasn’t because he wanted mummy and daddy back together but because when mummy and daddy were together it was the last time he consistently saw daddy. It took a good six months to get it out of him. To understand. He would shut down every time we asked why.”

“Everything just got the better of me and I could feel myself losing myself. I wanted to get some help to just try and help me get some strategies in place for my parenting with my children because I felt like I was losing them a little bit as well.”

Recognising the impact of abuse on wider family bonds, the Partnership will:

- promote integrated support for the child/ren and the non-abusive parent, investigating options for whole family support, addressing needs of the individual and of the unit;
- explore providing services that support parenting after experiencing abuse;
- provide services that aim to increase the safety of children by supporting the abusive person as an individual and as a parent, increasing their insight into the impact of their behaviours, whilst holding them accountable for the abuse;
- promoting professional training on the use of counter allegations, misuse of family court and safe child contact arrangements.

Reaching economic independence

Financial and economic abuse is a pattern of coercing and controlling behaviour that dominates a partner or family member’s ability to acquire, use and maintain financial resources.

For many people affected by domestic abuse the impact of abuse can drastically alter their financial situation which may include losing homes or tenancies, property loss or damage. The effects of economic abuse may include unemployment, diminished employment prospects, debt, or coerced debt. This can lead to long-term consequences and can severely limit long-term economic stability and financial independence.

“When you leave refuge the support workers apply for grants for you to try and get furniture and appliances and stuff like that for when you move.”

“It all came down to the fact that we had assets. Whichever avenue I took there were assets, and you could sell your house to release the asset but of course you can’t sell the house it’s not yours to sell it’s in joint names and so it’s a continuous dead end.”

“When people talk about control and coercion, I don’t think there is a way that you can actually articulate how horrific it is when you’re in it.”

“He cancelled all my banking credit cards and transferred all of the money from our accounts so that I couldn’t access any of it.”

The impact of abuse often undermines practical stability and safety, including financial and economic control. The Partnership will:

- work to increase the recognition of financial and economic abuse as a factor in domestic abuse with professionals, who are working with older people or people who have care needs;

Recovery continued

- work to establish clear support for people who have experienced economic abuse and who have left, or are contemplating leaving an abusive relationship or situation;
- provide education and awareness to help people recognise the features of economic abuse and awareness of mechanisms to reduce vulnerability;
- promote access to financial advocacy for people who have experienced abuse;
- utilise the Employer Champion Scheme to involve employers to make sure the workplace is a safe space for people who have experienced abuse;
- increase awareness of specialist support offered by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to those who have experienced abuse, including specific domestic abuse support offered for housing benefit, Job Seekers and Employment Support and Universal Credit.

We want to say thank you to those who have helped. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not have been formed.

The Partnership also acknowledges the commitment and contribution of voluntary sector provision within this space. Without the dedication of many within the sector services would not function. Many within these services have personally experienced abuse.

Rebuilding identity and empowerment are important factors in recovering from the experiences of abuse. Allowing space for people to grow and to input into the systems and services that they have been a part of should be prioritised.

Offering opportunities to contribute to peer support services, giving access to training and employment is empowering, builds confidence and supports recovery. It is also beneficial for the services and structures around individuals who can benefit from their expertise.

The Partnership recognises the invaluable knowledge of those with lived experience. The Partnership will:

- recognise the importance of peer-support programmes and interventions that work with the local community and informal networks;
- continue to be led by experts by experience in our services and governance structures, promoting greater service user involvement in service design, delivery and policy making.



Recognising the experts

The experts in domestic abuse are those people who are living or have lived through abusive experiences. The Partnership will continue to be led by the voices of those who have experienced abuse.

This strategy and the commitments in it have been grounded in the experiences of people affected by abuse. By sharing their experiences with the research programmes in both Kent and Medway, giving their ideas and their time, they have shaped the strategy.

How we will measure success

This is a five-year strategy which embodies our approach to tackling domestic abuse and our work to ‘reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly’.

Page 291

In 2027 a review of the strategy will take place to ensure that this approach is still appropriate and that we are achieving our ambitions. The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will oversee a delivery plan managed by the governance structure with regular updates on progress being made to the Partnership.

In addition to monitoring delivery of our plan we will use a number of activity indicators to monitor areas of activity within this strategy. Quantitative measurements in this complex area must always be applied with caution but paired with qualitative learnings can help us identify progress.



How we will measure success continued

Activity indicators

Early Intervention and Prevention

- Reach of domestic abuse awareness campaign and website traffic.
- Number of applications for Clare’s Law – ‘right to ask’.
- Number of disclosures made via Clare’s Law – ‘right to ask’.
- Number of disclosures made under the ‘right to know’ – Clare’s Law.
- Average length of time that a disclosure takes through Clare’s Law.

Immediate Needs

- The average time it takes to wait for children to gain a school place after moving to safe accommodation.
- Enforcement of non-molestation breaches.
- Number of notifications made to schools through Operation Encompass.
- Number of domestic abuse notifications made by Kent Police to services.
- Number of people who have been referred to safe accommodation.
- Number of people who have settled accommodation destinations from refuge.
- Number of people refused safe accommodation.
- Prosecution rates for coercive and controlling behaviour.
- Conviction rates for coercive and controlling behaviour.
- Number of people who are presenting themselves as homeless due to domestic abuse.

- Number of people owed a duty presenting themselves as homeless due to domestic abuse.
- Number of people who have been referred to and accessed sanctuary support schemes.
- Number of people presenting as homeless due to domestic abuse identified as intentionally homeless.
- Number of people accessing safe accommodation who have multiple barriers such as dependencies or mental health support needs.
- Number of people being offered housing through the Kent and Medway housing reciprocal agreement.
- Number of referrals being made to the multi-agency tasking and coordination meeting.
- Number of standard, medium and high-risk cases supported through the partnership commissioned services.
- Number of adults and children accessing commissioned community support.

Recovery

- Number of children and young people who access therapeutic support in safe accommodation.
- Number of people referred and accessing group work (both adults and children).
- Number of people being referred to commissioned perpetrator programmes.
- Number of people accessing and completing commissioned perpetrator programmes.

Appendices

Appendix A: Funding from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

Kent

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
£3,103,909	£3,112,501	£3,174,764	£3,234,633

Medway

2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
£592,126	£593,765	£605,643	£617,069

Tier two authorities have been allocated smaller amounts ranging between around £35,000 - £38,000 annually.

Appendices continued

Appendix B: Overview of Legislation

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 works within a wider legislative context. Other key legislation includes:

<i>Upcoming:</i> Online Safety Bill	This legislation is likely to introduce a new set of laws to protect children and adults online and make social media companies more responsible for their users’ safety on their platforms.
<i>Upcoming:</i> The Victims and Prisoners Bill	This Bill aims to establish measures to ‘better serve victims and the public through improving victims’ experience of the Criminal Justice System. ²⁶ The Bill will include statutory guidance and minimum expectations in relation to the role of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA), will require commissioners to consider child victims in the delivery of IDVA services and will introduce a statutory duty on Police and Crime Commissioners, health and local authorities around the joint commissioning of domestic abuse support services.
The Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022 (including the Serious Violence Duty)	The Police, Crime and Sentencing Courts Act 2022 ²⁷ received Royal Assent in April 2022. Part 2 of the Act creates a requirement for specified authorities to collaborate and plan to reduce or prevent serious violence. Specified authorities are required to work together and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence, including identifying the kinds of serious violence that occur in an area, the causes of that violence (so far as it is possible to do so), and to prepare and implement a shared strategy. In Kent and Medway the definition of ‘serious violence’ includes domestic and sexual abuse and the Partnership will be working closely with the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership Strategic Board to support this work.
The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	In 2017 a new law called the Homelessness Reduction Act ²⁸ was passed by Parliament. The introduction of the Act supports people who are homeless, to have access to accommodation. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 changed homelessness legislation to give priority need to people who have experienced domestic abuse. The changes to the legislation mean that, people made homeless due to domestic abuse are given priority need for homelessness assistance.

26. Gov.uk ‘Victims and Prisoners Bill ’ (Mar 2023), Updated: Apr 2023
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/victims-and-prisoners-bill>
 27. Gov.uk ‘Serious violence duty: Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022’ (November 2023), Updated: June 2023 Serious Violence Duty - GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/serious-violence-duty>)
 28. GOV.UK ‘Homelessness Reduction Act: policy factsheets ’ (Nov 2016), Updated: Feb 2018
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/homelessness-reduction-bill-policy-factsheets>

Appendices continued

Appendix B: Overview of Legislation

Modern Slavery Act 2015 ²⁹	The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidates previous offences relating to trafficking and slavery placing specific requirements on employers and businesses. Modern slavery is often hidden from view and may involve or take place alongside a wide range of abuses and other offences such as grievous bodily harm, assault, rape, or child sexual abuse.
The Serious Crime Act 2015 ³⁰	This Act introduced the offence of coercive or controlling behaviour against an intimate partner or family member and holds a maximum penalty of five years.
The Care Act 2014 ³¹	This legislation introduced the general duty on local authorities to promote an individual's 'wellbeing', which includes considering a person's domestic, family and personal relationships. The Care Act includes Section 42 which states that if an adult with care and support needs (such as a disability) is suspected to be at risk of any form of abuse or neglect, the local authority must make enquiries and take steps to protect them. This includes working with other agencies such as health and the Police and providing independent advocacy when it is needed.
The Protection of Freedom's Act 2012 ³²	This legislation makes stalking and harassment an offence.
The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 ³³	This legislation extends provisions to combat domestic violence and creates a new offence of 'causing or allowing the death of a child or vulnerable adult.
The Children Act 1989 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002 ³⁴	This legislation places a duty on local authorities to provide services to Children in Need and to investigate the circumstances of a child where they are informed that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. Section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act extends the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others, including in the home.

29. Gov.uk 'Modern Slavery Act 2015' (November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

30. Gov.uk 'The Serious Crime Act 2015'(November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/9/contents/enacted>

31. Gov.uk 'The Care Act 2014' (November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

32. Gov.uk 'The Protection of Freedom's Act 2012' (November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/9/contents/enacted>

33. Gov.uk 'The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004' (November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/28/contents>

34. Gov.uk 'The Children Act 1989 and the Adoption and Children Act 2002' (November 2023) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>

Appendices continued

Appendix C: Linked Boards

The Partnership has cross representation or updates the following groups:

- Kent Community Safety Board
 - Kent Housing Group
 - Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board
 - Kent Criminal Justice Board
 - Medway Community Safety Partnership
 - The Suicide Prevention Board
 - Serious Violence Reduction Partnership Board
 - Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board
 - Kent Safeguarding Children Multi - Agency Partnership Board
 - Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership
 - The Integrated Care Partnership
 - The Domestic Homicide Steering Group
-



Appendices continued

Appendix D: Linked Strategies

Page 297



Community Safety Agreement
 The Kent Community Safety Agreement sets out how partners will work together to address key community safety priorities for Kent, one of which is supporting vulnerable people.



Medway Adult Social Care Strategy
 The strategy sets out Medway's strategic priorities for action, identifies the improved outcomes for adult social care service users, and looks at how success will be measured.



Kent and Medway Interim Integrated Care Strategy
 The Kent and Medway Integrated Care strategy sets out the shared purpose and common aspiration of partners to work in increasingly joined up ways.



Making Kent Safer
 The making Kent Safer plan sets out the priorities and actions of the police and crime commissioner.



Kent and Medway Housing Strategy
 Sets out the strategic direction for housing across Kent and Medway based on the collective ambitions and aims of local authorities and their housing association partners.



Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy
 Sets out the strategic objectives and targets of Kent's approach to tackling neglect. The strategy also identifies key risk and contributing factors that can have an impact on neglect.



Medway Community Safety Partnership Plan
 The Medway Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSP) brings together a variety of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary organisations with a shared commitment to reduce crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Medway.

Appendices continued

Appendix D: Linked Strategies

Page 298



Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board – Strategic plan

The Kent Community Safety Agreement sets out how partners will work together to address key community safety priorities for Kent, one of which is supporting vulnerable people.



Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board

To safeguard adults who are at risk of sexual exploitation, modern slavery, and human trafficking. The protocol provides guidance to professionals and volunteers from all agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all trafficked and exploited adults.



Violence Against Women and Girls Enquiry

The Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy was set up to create a legacy of partnership working designed to make Kent safer for Women and Girls where ever they are.



Serious Violence Duty – Strategy (upcoming)

Kent and Medway has one of 18 Violence Reduction Units (VRU's) formed in 2019 under the Home Office Serious Violence Project's Programme, to drive a whole system, preventative approach to tackling the causes of serious youth violence. The VRU is in the process of developing a strategy based on a strategic needs assessment.

**Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy
2023-2028**

Better Prevention, Treatment & Recovery and Community Safety.
Kent's 'From Harm to Hope'

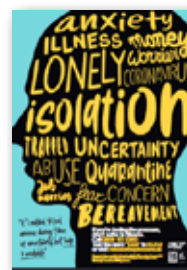
Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy

The Kent Drug and Alcohol Strategy is in draft format, aiming to be published in 2023. The new strategy aims to prioritise partnership and tackle the consequences of drug and alcohol harm. The Kent strategy will seek to implement a range of harm reduction strategies and ensure there are quality services for very high-risk families, vulnerable people and communities.



Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment Refresh 2022

Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires local authorities to assess the need for support for victims of domestic abuse and their children who may need access to safe accommodation. The key objectives of the Domestic Abuse 2022 needs assessment refresh were to update key metrics around the profile of domestic abuse in Kent and to develop an understanding of domestic abuse in relation to children and young people.



Suicide Prevention Strategy

This document aims to help readers understand the national picture and local prevalence of domestic abuse and identify current service provision within Medway.

Appendices continued

Appendix E

Within the strategy we have used language that reflects fairly the language people who have experienced abuse want us to use. The following outlines the meaning behind the language we have used:

Those who have experienced abusive behaviour - individuals who have experienced abuse may not identify as being either a 'victim' or a 'survivor' and we want to be respectful of this. We have therefore focused on the shared experience of abuse.

Those who perpetrate through abuse - we recognise that those who use abusive behaviours may have themselves experienced or witnessed abuse, and we seek to challenge and change these behaviours through prevention and early intervention, immediate need and recovery.

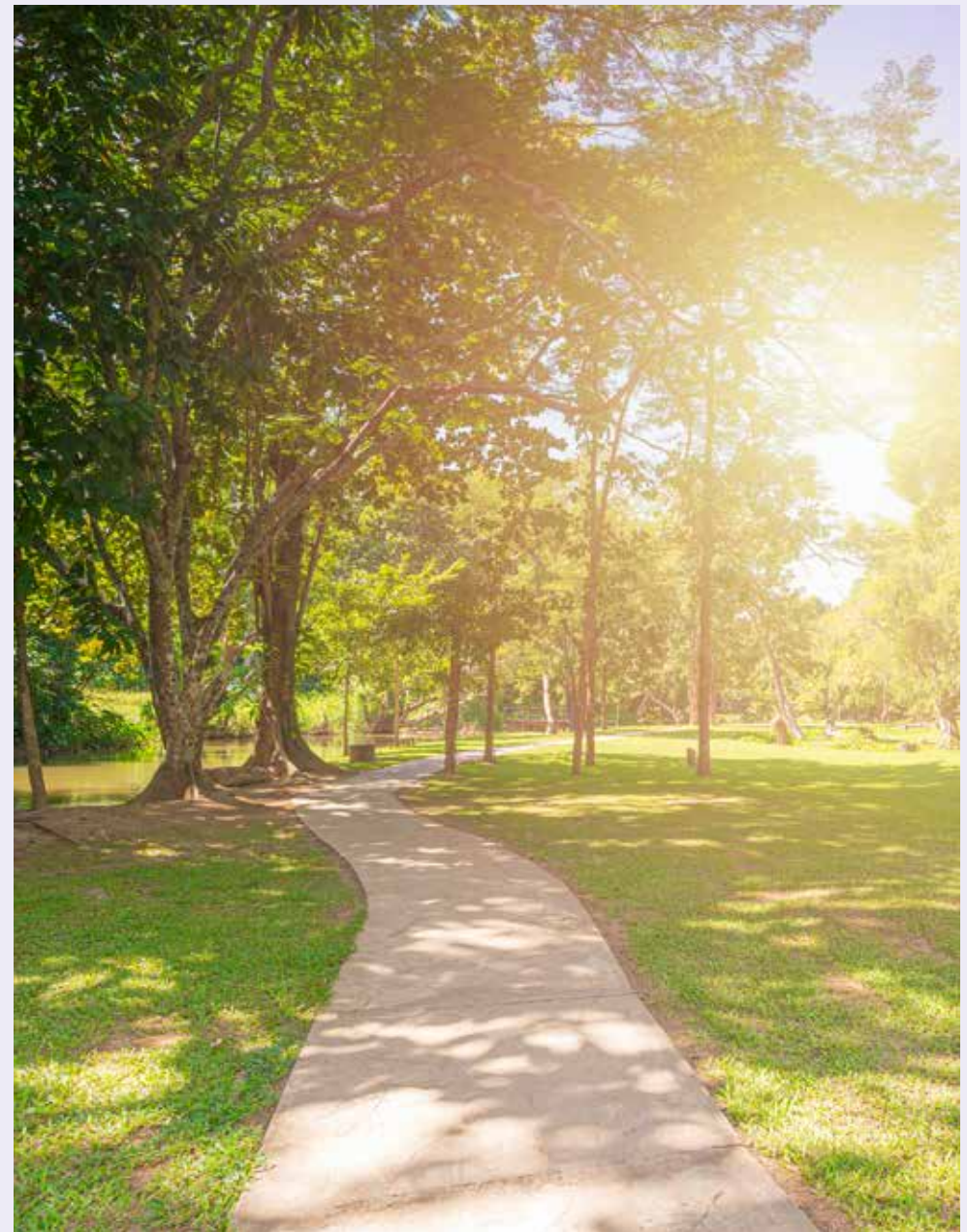
The first step in being able to challenge someone's behaviour is for them to self-identify as using abusive behaviours.

Children who experience abuse - the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognises children as victims of domestic abuse if they 'see, hear or otherwise experience the effects of abuse'.

However, this definition also links to that of child abuse (which includes intentional harm, abuse and neglect).

Although these forms of abuse are linked, the strategy is focused on the impact of domestic abuse, we have used the term 'children who experience abuse between their caregivers'.

'By and for' services - these are services that are run by the community that they are designed for.



Further information

For further information about any aspect of this strategy please contact:

Kent County Council


Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

An executive summary of this strategy has been produced. The executive summary is available in Easy Read and in British Sign Language.

Alternative formats

If you require any of the material in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call **03000 421553** (text relay service number: **18001 03000 421553**). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

A large, leafy tree stands on the left side of a vast, green field. The sun is shining brightly from behind the tree, creating a lens flare effect. The sky is a clear blue with scattered white clouds. In the background, a line of trees stretches across the horizon. The foreground is filled with green grass and small white flowers.

Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024 - 2029: Summary

Accessing support

This is a strategy document about how we want to develop and improve our services over the next 5 years.

You can access domestic abuse services by contacting Victim Support for assessment and referral to your local service by calling **0808 168 9111** or using the **Live Chat** facility. Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women’s Aid and Refuge on **0808 2000 247** or the Men’s’ Advice Line on **0808 801 0327**. If you are concerned about your use of abusive behaviour the Respect helpline is available on **0808 8024040**.

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

If you can’t speak out loud, you can press 55 so that the operator knows you need help. You can also video call 999 to communicate in BSL for free by visiting the 999 BSL website or downloading the app.

This is a document produced by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. The Executive group includes partners across Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Services, Kent Police, the National Probation Service, the NHS, the

Introduction

Department of Work and Pensions, the Police and Crime Commissioner and all Kent District, Borough and City Councils (referred to in this document as the Partnership).

This strategy works to achieve the Executives' joint collective aim to: **'reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly'**.

This is a summary of the full Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy. The full strategy includes further information on all areas within this summary.

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy identifies joint commitments across the Partnership for those impacted by domestic abuse and is inclusive of those who are or have been abused, those who perpetrate through abusive behaviour, and children who experience abuse between their caregivers, using the voice of people who have experienced abuse to identify areas of priority across the Partnership's collective service provision.

This strategy also supports Kent County Council and Medway Council's statutory duty to fulfil their responsibility to have a strategy which details aims and priorities for adults and children who have experienced domestic abuse in safe accommodation services.

This strategy and the commitments in it have been grounded in the experiences of people affected by abuse. By sharing their experiences with the research programmes in both Kent and Medway people with lived experience have supported the development of themes and priorities which are the focus of this strategy. We want to say thank you to those who have helped. Without your valuable insight this strategy could not be formed.



Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act received Royal Assent at the end of April 2021, creating a statutory definition of domestic abuse for the first time.¹ Behaviour is classed as domestic abuse when:

“two people are personally connected to each other, over the age of 16 and where the behaviour between each other is abusive”.

Behaviour is abusive if it consists of the following:

- physical or sexual behaviour;
- violent or threatening behaviour;
- controlling or coercive behaviour;
- financial or economic abuse;
- psychological or emotional control and abuse.

The definition includes children who experience abuse between their caregivers. Children are recognised as victims of abuse independently of the adult who experiences the abuse.

‘Honour-based’ abuse may include physical abuse, forced physical traumas such as breast flattening or female genital mutilation, psychological pressure or forced marriage. This is a violation of human rights and is a form of domestic abuse.

This strategy also seeks to coordinate aims and delivery on domestic abuse where this includes sexual abuse and to support coordinated working on sexual abuse and violence across Kent & Medway.

Kent County Council and Medway Council have a responsibility through the Domestic Abuse Act to assess the need for, and provide support for, those in safe accommodation for all those impacted by abuse and their children.

No recourse to public funds

“While I appreciate the help I received, I also feel I was grossly misguided. And I think my situation is very niche and they weren’t quite sure how to guide me... In cases like mine, where there’s the element of, you know the immigration aspect and financial abuse to the extent I’ve experienced...”

People experiencing abuse who may have limited access to public funding due to their immigration status may be highly vulnerable, their status may be an additional way for a person using abusive behaviour to control them.

Dependent on a person’s situation there may be opportunities to support them under various legislation which might include the Care Act (2014) and the Childrens Act (Section 17, 1989) and the Human Rights Act (1998).

The Partnership will work where possible to support those impacted by abuse where limits to public funds may be in place, supporting staff training on available routes to support.

¹. Domestic Abuse Act 2021
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

Domestic abuse
continued

Key Statistics

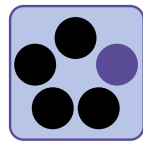
National statistics



An estimated 2.4 million adults aged 16 and over have experienced domestic abuse within the last year. This is a prevalence rate of around 5 in 100 adult.²



Between April 2018 and March 2021 there 269 women and 104 men were victims of a domestic homicide.³



Around 1 in 5 children have been exposed to domestic abuse in their household.⁴

Kent and Medway



1 in 5 recorded crimes (22%) in Kent and Medway are related to domestic abuse.⁵



Over 63,000 adults in Kent and Medway were projected to have experienced domestic abuse in 2021-2022.⁶



Over 24,000 children in Kent & Medway live in a household where an adult was experiencing domestic.⁷

Safe Accommodation – data from our refuges
Kent (2022/2023)

1. 208 people accessed Kent County Council commissioned refuge.
2. 51.9% of people in Kent refuges had accompanying children.
3. 6.3% of people in refuge identified as lesbian, gay, or pansexual.
4. Of those in refuge, 8.2% had a physical or sensory disability and 1.9% had a learning disability.
5. 42.3% of those in refuge identified as needing mental health support (as a secondary need).
6. 63.9% of individuals in refuge identified as “White – British” and 31.7% identified as other ethnic minority groups.
7. 52.4% of people in refuge came from outside Kent

Medway (2022/2023)

1. 59 people accessed safe accommodation services in Medway.
2. 47 children were supported whilst in safe accommodation.
3. 15 adults and children accessed counselling and play therapy in refuge.
4. 21% of people accessing refuge accommodation in Medway identified as black or from a minority ethnic group.
5. 13% of people were between 16 – 25 years old.
6. 51 % of people reported as having a mental health need.
7. 16% of people had a disability in refuge.
8. Over a year 113 people have benefited from Sanctuary Scheme adaptations to enable them to remain safely in their homes.

2. “Office of national Statistics, Domestic Abuse prevalence and trends, England and Wales: November 2023”
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabuseprevalenceandtrendsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022>

3. ‘Office of National Statistics: November 2023’
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022#domestic-homicide>

4. ‘NSPCC, Child abuse and neglect in the UK today, November 2023’
[Child abuse and neglect in the UK today | NSPCC Learning](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/learning-and-research/child-abuse-and-neglect-in-the-uk-today/)

5. Domestic Abuse Statistics Data Tool, Home Office, November 2022

6. “Childrens Commissioner, Local vulnerability profiles, November 2023”
<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/vulnerable-children/local-vulnerability-profiles/>

7. From Kent & Medway’s service reports 2022-23: Internal data

Domestic abuse
continued

The commitments of the Partnership are split across three key areas which have been informed by what people with lived experience have told us. These sections are early intervention and prevention, immediate need and recovery.

1. Early intervention and prevention

Increasing awareness of what abuse is and available support

Technology

Professional training

Preventing escalation of abusive behaviours

Clare's Law

2. Immediate Needs

Being responsive to individual needs

Reducing risk

Strengthening services

Highlighting civil options

Experience of justice

Supporting children and young people

Access to housing

3. Recovery

The Impact of abuse on Mental Health

Processing experiences and promoting connections

Prioritising family bonds

Reaching economic independence

Recognising the experts

1. Early intervention and prevention

Page 307

This theme aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, to stop domestic abuse occurring, to identify domestic abuse as early as possible and get support in place to stop the impacts from escalating.

“For me it’s like everyone just needs educating. What is domestic abuse? So, at school you go all the way through every organisation. You know, every judge, solicitor, whoever is involved in anything to do with domestic abuse should be trained... People would think differently. I think, courts would be different, the legal system will be different and other people’s perceptions. Even if it’s taught at school, young girls, boys, how they grow up and their perception of what abuse is [is] really important.”

“Domestic abuse training needs to be there for every professional and it should be a statutory thing that every professional needs to have, like health and safety. Because if people knew how to recognise the signs of it, I think people could help others to pick it up and to recognise it themselves, or at least be able to offer them a service that’s available in your area if you want to access it.”

Across the Partnership we will increase our capacity to respond to domestic abuse earlier and to prevent abuse from taking place.

Our commitments are summarised here, there is more detail in the full strategy.

1. Increasing awareness of what abuse is and available support

Understanding what a healthy relationship looks like, and what the tactics of abuse include, can support people to recognise what abuse is and the support options available. When a person is ready to reach out for help, they should be able to identify where to turn to for help quickly.

The Partnership will:

- work collaboratively to provide consistent messaging around domestic abuse, increasing awareness that domestic abuse includes coercive, financial or economic, emotional, physical, honour-based and sexual abuse and can impact anyone;
- increase awareness of the services available and that they are inclusive;

“Communication with different generations is key – different forms for different ages e.g. TV (awareness) for older people, social media and TikTok for younger generations - targeted messages for different generations”

“I feel like something needs to be taught in schools. That’s just my opinion. Because what I kind of uncovered with my counselling is that me personally, a lot of my issues stem from childhood trauma, and then you end up finding yourself in a relationship at a young age with a trauma bond... If I had been taught better about relationships and what gaslighting is and what manipulating someone looks like I would [have been] a lot more educated like now.”

1. Early intervention and prevention
continued

- provide educational resources and proactively reach out to groups currently not accessing services;
- increase awareness of technologies used to perpetrate abuse so it can be more easily recognised and prevented.

2. Professional training

We need to ensure that professionals working across our services have access to training and development opportunities that give them the skills they need to identify and respond to domestic abuse. Staff should feel confident and empowered to respond to disclosures.

The Partnership will:

- support professionals across our services to understand and identify the many forms of domestic abuse, and to feel confident in assessing risk and taking a trauma informed, healing centred response;
- ensure training is available for staff on areas such as options for support, the additional barriers experienced by different people and how to explore and challenge behaviour linked to interpretations of culture which put people at risk of harm, abuse or death;
- to support staff across our organisations to remain safe at work whilst taking a robust approach to any allegations of abusive behaviour made against our staff.

3. Preventing the escalation of abusive behaviours

People who perpetrate through abusive behaviours cause significant harm to others. They may themselves

have experienced or witnessed abuse and they can be at increased risk of suicide.

We need interventions in place to support the person while disrupting abusive behaviour.

Interventions should be in place to support people identify their harmful behaviour and make changes, whilst services work together to manage risk and prevent further harm.

The Partnership will:

- work with communities to promote positive behaviours and challenge harmful gendered stereotyping;
- support work on bystander interventions and seek opportunities to develop service provision for those showing signs of developing abusive behaviours working with the Violence Reduction Unit, and the Prevent team where appropriate.

4. Clare’s Law

Clare’s Law gives people the ‘right to ask’ if their current or ex-partner has previous history of domestic abuse, and the right for public sector Partners to proactively release information if someone is believed to be at significant risk.

By giving people the right information, we can support them to make informed choices about their safety;

The Partnership will:

- increase awareness of Clare’s Law, making this as accessible as possible so that people are able to make choices that increase their safety.

2. Immediate Needs

By immediate need we mean the services, interventions and support that people need whilst domestic abuse is occurring and in the immediate aftermath. These services may help with managing risk and increasing safety, but people may also need support with practical issues such as access to housing and school places.

"I was in such a bad place and didn't know where to go, who to talk to. It was hard to talk because of the kids around. It was hard to actually pick up the phone and physically try and call someone and talk to them. You know, some sort of service. So in the end, one evening I was just at a point where I really just wanted to end my life again and I found the Victim Support online and it had the online chat, so I started talking to somebody from there. That helped."

"It is the real loneliness. That is what for me probably was the hardest part in the beginning... I do believe for me the loneliness every time he would go was what made me take him back. I had nobody. I mean, normally you would have friends you can pick up the phone and call. I didn't have that. I had no friends anymore, not one."

"Even in diversity, there's still diversity that needs to happen, but here no one looks like me, so I think there's also that loneliness here where I want to go to staff, but you can't quite understand all the things that I may need because you don't know what it's like to be me. Constantly having to explain yourself and who you are is exhausting."

"My child had already taken so much time off school, just like every other kid [because of the pandemic]. But then to add another six months to that and then not have provisions in place for catch ups and stuff... They are doing OK, but they could do with extra support. That is one thing that I would have said and I did ask about, but, I was told that it could be looked into, but I just don't think it ever happened. Is that if the child's gonna be out of school longer than a month, if they could somehow implement a tutor to come into refuge, to teach them that would be amazing."

2. Immediate Needs

continued

“The IDVA service was amazing – I was so lonely; I didn’t know how to do anything- didn’t know how to use the TV because I wasn’t allowed to before. If someone was able to check in with a phone call more frequently would have been very helpful, every day or every few days after referral.”

1. Being responsive to individual needs

The Partnership must ensure that services can meet the needs of our diverse population, recognising that people’s experiences of abuse, their journeys, trauma, support needs, and recovery are different.

Some individuals and communities may face multiple and intersecting barriers to support, and our services need to have the knowledge and skills, as well as an understanding of experience to proactively engage and respond.

The Partnership will:

- recognise that people’s journeys, trauma and support needs are different and our individual characteristics affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need;

- provide safe accommodation and specialist support that meets the needs of anyone experiencing abuse, strengthening our responses to people facing multiple barriers and increasing service uptake for under-represented groups;
- strengthen links with community groups, faith groups and leaders to expand opportunities for collaborative working, develop needs led work across the specialist ‘by and for’ market and work to improve the response to those with multiple barriers to access.

2. Reducing risk

Domestic abuse takes multiple forms with risk impacted by a number of factors; this includes the abusive persons history and intent, whether there has been recent separation, whether they are pregnant or have a young child, the barriers they experience when working with services and other factors. In keeping people safe, risk must be managed and where possible reduced.

The Partnership will:

- strengthen the processes that enable us to jointly respond to the highest risk domestic abuse cases to increase safety and hold people perpetrating abusive behaviour to account;

2. Immediate Needs

continued

- recognise risks caused by the emotional and psychological impact of abuse and associated coping mechanisms;
- act on learnings when domestic abuse has been fatal or there have been failures in safeguarding adults and children.

3. Strengthening services

The Partnership will work collaboratively to utilise opportunities and commission where gaps in existing services are identified to ensure the strongest support is available for those impacted by domestic abuse.

The Partnership will:

- centralise and share information on commissioned services to increase awareness of available interventions and work to streamline referral pathways and identify opportunities to extend collaborative commissioning working with the marketplace.

4. Highlighting civil options

There are civil options available to people experiencing abuse, such as non-molestation orders, stalking protection orders, and occupation orders which can help to protect a person and their children, and disrupt the behaviour of the person perpetrating through abusive behaviours. For more information on all of the civil orders available please see the Crown Prosecution website.⁸

The Partnership will:

- grow awareness of civil options, ensure a victim centred approach and ensure that professionals are able to signpost to relevant services;
- work to strengthen the conditions and wording of orders and support the investigation of breaches of protective orders.

5. Experience of justice

For those experiencing domestic abuse the decision to report offences to the police or to seek help from services is not taken lightly and can be daunting.

The Partnership will:

- increase professional training on gathering evidence of coercive and controlling behaviour and advocate for greater specialist domestic abuse support for those who are going through the criminal justice system;
- promote training, policies and practice guides that are inclusive of identifying coercive behavior, recognising the typologies of abuse and responding safely to counter allegations.

8. <https://www.cps.gov.uk/legal-guidance/domestic-abuse>

2. Immediate Needs

continued

6. Supporting children and young people

Children who experience abuse between their caregivers are victims of abuse in their own right. As a Partnership, we will develop our response to children who have experienced abuse, including making sure services are available to support them.

The Partnership will:

- consistently fund support for children in safe accommodation, ensuring they have access to services that are age appropriate, and meets their needs. We will develop projects to minimise time outside of education;
- seek to support the family as a whole, ensuring information is shared appropriately where a child or young person experiences abuse between their caregivers, recognising the importance of children's lived experiences in designing services and influencing governance.

7. Access to housing

Domestic abuse may impact a persons ability to remain in their own home safely. As a Partnership we are committed to improving access to safe and stable accommodation for people experiencing abuse.

The Partnership will:

- explore projects which strengthen the housing response to those who are unsafe at home, including safety planning knowledge, trauma informed processes and options for specialised referral and support routes;
- recognise the importance of social and family networks and support people to find more permanent, settled accommodation;
- have the right safe accommodation and specialist support to meet the needs of those experiencing abuse and strengthen options for people facing multiple barriers when trying to access safe accommodation;
- offer age-appropriate support that meets the diverse needs of children in safe accommodation, minimise time out of education and support children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities having their needs considered when moving into safe accommodation.

3. Recovery

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. The process of recovery is personal and is not linear.

The Partnership want Kent & Medway to be a place where people have the opportunity to thrive, to recover from harm to support healing and resilience.

"I think for me [a group programme] would be really good to do because I don't think I totally accept or understand the level of abuse that I went through, because for me it was just a general normal day-to-day thing... I think it would really help me to have a better understanding of the abuse that I actually went through and the trauma that that caused and help me come to terms with that."

"I think with domestic abuse, it takes a very, very long time to process what's happened... It's something that's a long-term recovery I suppose. I think a lot of things are triggering me and that's bringing back a lot of emotions about what has happened and the way that I feel about myself and I feel like I need the support more now."

"You might have ended your support and feel like you are much better something can still trigger you and put you back there, then there is no support."

*"It's like the calm after the storm, where I've now gone, oh s**t - actually you're not OK. You are harbouring some real trauma that you've never said out loud, that you haven't had time or space to."*

1. The impact of abuse on mental health

Domestic abuse and the associated trauma can have a significant impact on the people affected. There can be damaging long and short-term physical, mental, emotional, and psychological health impacts on adults and children. Many of those affected have mental health support needs.

To ensure that people get the support they need, the Partnership will:

- promote better understanding of domestic abuse within mental health settings and support access to mental health services that are trauma informed and responsive to the needs of people who have been impacted by abuse.

3. Recovery continued

2. Processing experiences and promoting connections

Domestic abuse erodes self-esteem and creates feelings of shame, guilt, and loneliness. Supporting people to understand the abusive tactics that have been used in their relationships and process the effect that this has had is an important step in recovery, for both adults and children.

The Partnership will:

- work to ensure there is equitable and accessible access to group work programmes for adults and children in a wide range of settings to encourage participation;
- support initiatives to build confidence and grow social support networks.

3. Prioritising family bonds

Parenting and family relationships can be deeply affected by the experience of abuse. Abusive tactics are used to isolate and undermine relationships and can also impact on the space and energy to parent. The intergenerational transmission of risk can be mitigated by supporting parents and children to recover together. Giving parents and children coordinated support and new strategies after abuse is important in creating strong recovery journeys, which are themselves a form of prevention.

The Partnership will:

- promote integrated support for the child/ren and the non-abusive parent, investigating options for a whole family approach to support, exploring services which aid parenting after experiencing abuse;
- provide services that aim to increase the safety of children by working with the abusive parent to increase their insight into the impact of their behaviours, whilst holding them accountable for the abuse.

4. Reaching economic independence

Financial and economic abuse is a pattern of coercing and controlling behaviour that dominates a partner or family member's ability to acquire, use and maintain financial resources.

For many people affected by domestic abuse the impact of abuse can drastically alter their financial situation which may include losing homes or tenancies, property loss or damage. The effects of financial and economic abuse may include unemployment, diminished employment prospects, debt, or coerced debt. This can lead to long-term consequences and can severely limit long-term economic stability and financial and economic independence.

3. Recovery
continued

The Partnership will:

- raise awareness of financial and economic abuse and the impacts and consequences of this, both within our staff and within our communities;
- work to establish clear routes of support for people who experience financial and economic abuse.

5. Recognising the experts

The experts in domestic abuse are those people who are living or have lived through abusive experiences. The Partnership will continue to be led by the voices of those who have experienced abuse. The Partnership

also acknowledges the commitment and essential contribution of voluntary sector provision within this space.

The Partnership will:

- recognise the importance of peer-support programmes and interventions that work with the local community and informal networks;
- continue to be led by experts by experience in our services and governance structures, promoting greater service user involvement in service design, delivery and policy making.



Safe Accommodation

Here we outline the identified gaps in provision and how we will, or have met these gaps.

Kent

Gap identified	How we will meet or have met the gap
Support services for children and young people in safe accommodation.	We have commissioned support for children in safe accommodation which includes access to group support, one to one and peer support.
Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.	<p>Specialist independent domestic abuse advisors will continue to support access.</p> <p>Additional training with domestic abuse, mental health and drug and alcohol services will be developed.</p> <p>Enhanced therapeutic support for those 16 and over has been commissioned to improve access to refuge.</p>
Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of safe accommodation.	<p>Tenancy Support Officers have been introduced to increase support and advocacy for those moving from safe accommodation.</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation is being sought by all tier 2 authorities, supported by KCC.</p>
Sanctuary options (where a person is offered support and security to enable them to stay in their home).	We have commissioned a Sanctuary service which will extend the availability of services within Kent.
Access to refuge accommodation for men.	A pilot which will support men in safe accommodation has been commissioned.

Safe Accommodation
continued

Medway

Gap identified	How we will meet or have met the gap
Access to services for people with multiple barriers such as dependency and mental health support requirements.	We will continue to commission an Access Independent Domestic Violence Adviser to offer specialist support for those with barriers to access.
Access to secure secondary accommodation options when moving out of safe accommodation.	Medway have introduced a specialist Domestic Abuse Housing Options Officer, who is also a trained Independent Domestic Violence Advisor to support access to secondary accommodation.
Support in temporary accommodation.	An additional Independent Domestic Violence Advisor has been brought in to support people facing multiple barriers to access, where Sanctuary measures are installed in their property.
Mental Health support within safe accommodation.	The mental health needs of children and adults are supported through an in-house counselling service and play therapy, for people in both refuge and dispersed safe.
Access to refuge accommodation for men and others who cannot access refuge.	Medway has commissioned a dispersed accommodation scheme for those people where refuge is not suitable/accessible.

How we will measure success

The Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group will oversee a delivery plan with regular updates on progress being made across our governance structures.

In addition to monitoring delivery of our plan we will use a small number of focussed activity indicators to monitor our progress and to identify where we may need to make changes.

More details of how we will measure our performance are available in the full strategy.

In partnership with and supported by



Further information

For further information about any aspect of this executive summary please contact:

Kent County Council

Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

Alternative formats

If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call **03000 421553** (text relay service number: **18001 03000 421553**). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission Draft Working Template

If required, this template is for use prior to completing your EQIA Submission in the EQIA App. You can use it to understand what information is needed beforehand to complete an EQIA submission online, and also as a way to collaborate with others who may be involved with the EQIA. Note: You can upload this into the App when complete if it contains more detailed information than the App asks for and you wish to retain this detail.

Section A

1. Name of Activity (EQIA Title):

Kent & Medway Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-2029

2. Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

3. Responsible Service/Division

Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance (SPRCA)

Accountability and Responsibility

4. Officer completing EQIA

Note: This should be the name of the officer who will be submitting the EQIA onto the App.

Iona Hunter-Whitehouse, Senior Project Development Officer for Domestic Abuse

5. Head of Service

Note: This should be the Head of Service who will be approving your submitted EQIA.

Akua Agyepong – Assistant Director, Adults Services

6. Director of Service

Note: This should be the name of your responsible director.

David Whittle, Director of Strategy Policy, Relationships & Corporate Assurance

The type of Activity you are undertaking

7. What type of activity are you undertaking?

Service Change – *operational changes in the way we deliver the service to people.* Answer Yes/No

No

Service Redesign – *restructure, new operating model or changes to ways of working.* Answer Yes/No

No

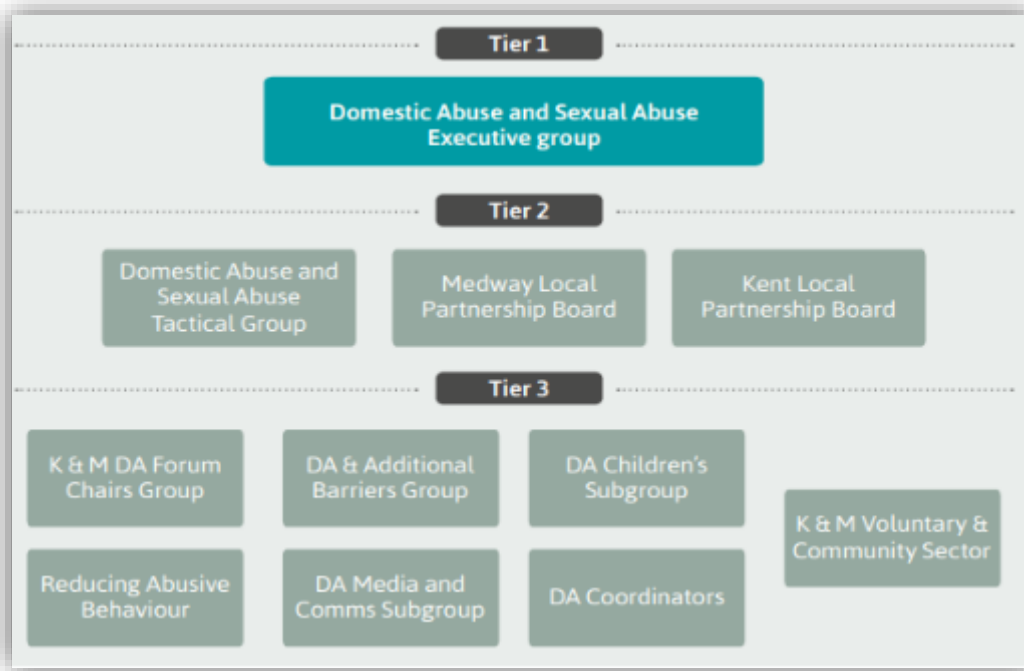
Project/Programme – *includes limited delivery of change activity, including partnership projects, external funding projects and capital projects.* Answer Yes/No

No

Commissioning/Procurement – *means commissioning activity which requires commercial judgement.* Answer Yes/No

No

Strategy /Policy – <i>includes review, refresh or creating a new document.</i> Answer Yes/No
Yes
Other – Please add details of any other activity type here.
No
8. Aims and Objectives and Equality Recommendations – Note: You will be asked to give a brief description of the aims and objectives of your activity in this section of the App, along with the Equality recommendations. You may use this section to also add any context you feel may be required.
<p>Kent and Medway’s Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2024-2029 has been developed using learnings from the previous 2020-2023 strategy, multiagency engagement and feedback from people who have experienced abuse. The objective of this activity was to develop a collaborative domestic abuse strategy that encompasses the vision of partners across Kent and Medway and holds the feedback that we have received from people who have experienced abuse central to its aims.</p> <p>The strategy has been developed with a multi-agency approach, bringing together a range of statutory agencies including Kent County Council, Medway Council, Kent Police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, NHS ICB, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service, DWP, and Kent’s district and borough councils.</p> <p>The strategy provides a joint statement across the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Executive.</p> <p>Domestic abuse works across the following structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. This group leads and sets the partnership’s Domestic Abuse Strategy, it’s priorities and oversees action to ensure their delivery. 2. The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical board delivers the joint action plans generated from the strategy and report back to the Executive Group. 3. The Kent Local Partnership Board is the only statutory body and works to ensure that Kent meets its requirements in relation to the Domestic Abuse Act. 4. Medway has a parallel Local Partnership Board which oversees the statutory requirements for Medway. <p>Supporting this are a number of groups including the Voluntary Sector Subgroup and local domestic abuse forums.</p>



The aims set out in the newly developed strategy will be managed by the Executive Group and taken forward through the Tier 2 and 3 structure.

This multiagency structure has been set out because we know that domestic abuse is a prolific and cross cutting issue. Approximately 10% of the calls (34,000) received by Kent Police relate to domestic abuse. Domestic abuse related crimes make up 21% of the total recorded crime in Kent, and around half of all non-crimes.¹

Nationally nearly half a million people experiencing domestic abuse seek assistance from medical professionals every year and the number of households in Kent owed prevention or relief duty due to domestic abuse has steadily increased since the pandemic and the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act. The people affected need to find the right response, whichever agency they approach for help.

The strategy sets out Kent and Medway's joint vision, priorities and commitments to reduce the levels of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse does take place, all those affected get the right support, quickly. The strategy supports agencies and partnerships to design and deliver the most appropriate responses to anyone affected by domestic abuse in Kent and Medway.

Summary of Key Findings: This equality impact assessment suggests that the strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics by highlighting different experiences of abuse and seeking an active outcome from partners to improve delivery of service to everyone.

Section B – Evidence

Note: For questions 9, 10 & 11 at least one of these must be a 'Yes'. You can continue working on the EQIA in the App, but you will not be able to submit it for approval without this information.

9. Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

¹ https://www.kpho.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/147134/Domestic-Abuse-Needs-Assessment-refresh-2022.pdf

<p>10. Is it possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way? Answer: Yes/No</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>11. Is there national evidence/data that you can use? Answer: Yes/No</p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>12. Have you consulted with Stakeholders? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>Stakeholders are those who have a stake or interest in your project which could be residents, service users, staff, members, statutory and other organisations, VCSE partners etc.</i></p> <p>Yes</p>
<p>13. Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with? <i>Please give details in the box provided. This may be details of those you have already involved, consulted and engaged with or who you intend to do so with in the future. If the answer to question 12 is 'No', please explain why.</i></p> <p>The development of the strategy has included engagement with a range of professionals involved in providing services to people who may be experiencing abuse. This has taking place via workshops, one to one meetings with partners and through feedback sought throughout the Domestic and Sexual Abuse governance structure. This includes but is not limited to the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical Group, the District DA Coordinators, the nine Domestic Abuse Forums, the Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs Group and Voluntary Sector Groups.</p> <p>Through this the following partners and teams have consulted at a number of levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KCC Adult Safeguarding • KCC Children’s Safeguarding • KCC Early Help • Medway Council • Kent Police • The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner • NHS ICB Safeguarding • Kent Fire and Rescue Service • the National Probation Service • Kent’s district and borough councils • The voluntary and community sector <p>We also want to ensure that people who have experienced abuse are able to input into the strategy in a meaningful way. Eleven in depth interviews with people who have experienced abuse took place via the Kent Domestic Abuse Research programme, with a further 43 responding to a survey to identify what worked well, and what didn’t, in their journeys and to identify their priority areas. These experiences have formed the basis of the strategy.</p> <p>An 11-week public consultation allowed for broad input and feedback on the draft strategy. Throughout this process the strategy team attended meetings and engaged community groups and forums. This included attending community groups such as Age UK, the Soroptimists, Tovil Community Event, DAWN event Maidstone and Rise4Disability. The team also attended meetings to gather feedback, this included Kent Suicide Prevention Network, Kent Community Safety Information Session, Medway Safeguarding Board, Kent Housing Options Group, Tunbridge Wells Members Briefing, KCC All Party Members Briefing, Single Parent Staff Group, Rainbow Staff Group, Health Visting Services (across Kent), Joint Kent Chiefs, Kent and Medway Women’s Forum & SPACE Matters. This was further supported by newsletters promoting engagement with the formal consultation, a section was included in the Adult Social Care – For You,</p>

Newsletter, the Kent and Medway Better Health and Suicide Prevention newsletter, an email to the Learning Disability Partnership Board, the Armed Forces Leads and Unit Welfare Officers, the Disability Assist October Newsletter the Kelsi e-bulletin for September and October, the Kent Association of Head Teachers newsletter, the Dad's Unlimited newsletter, Carers East Kent newsletter and East Kent Partnership Bulletin. The formal consultation was also featured on a number Parish Council websites, in a North Kent Mind news release, on the Kent and Surrey bylines, Stronger Kent Communities and Health Watch Kent website.

A video to support engagement with the consultation was shared widely, social media posts were shared via the Kent & Medway Media and Communications group and social channels to ensure the broadest possible response base.

Significant effort was made to reach out in a number of ways to a broad range of Kent and Medway residents from across protected characteristic groups. The consultation was sent to religious groups, organisations that work with children, to carers and those with care needs, to parenting groups, to diversity forums, disability action groups, to those supporting older people and older people themselves and to experts by experience, domestic abuse services and people who have experienced abuse themselves.

14. Has there been a previous equality analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

15. Do you have evidence/data that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

Uploading Evidence/Data/related information into the App

Note: At this point, you will be asked to upload the evidence/ data and related information that you feel should sit alongside the EQIA that can help understand the potential impact of your activity. Please ensure that you have this information to upload as the Equality analysis cannot be sent for approval without this.

Upload supplementary information document

Section C – Impact

16. Who may be impacted by the activity? Select all that apply.

Service users/clients - Answer: Yes/No

Yes

Residents/Communities/Citizens - Answer: Yes/No

Yes

Staff/Volunteers - Answer: Yes/No

Yes

17. Are there any positive impacts for all or any of the protected groups as a result of the activity that you are doing? Answer: Yes/No

Yes

18. Please give details of Positive Impacts

Age

Domestic abuse can affect anybody, but we know that the impact is different for different groups. Age affects the way domestic abuse is experienced and responded to. Children have now been recognised in law as victims of the abuse between care givers. At the other end of the spectrum, we know that older people are

disproportionately represented in Domestic Homicides and underrepresented in our commissioned services.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

Whilst developing the strategy, consideration was given to how people affected by abuse of all ages can be better supported in Kent and Medway.

The strategy recognises children who see, hear, or experience the effects of domestic abuse as victims in their own right, as stated in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The strategy has placed an emphasis on children's voices and experiences, recognising the importance of schools in supporting children and young people has commitments around comprehensive whole family support, in continuing to improve the process for sharing Domestic Abuse Notifications.

This strategy will not explore abuse directed to people under 16 years as, under the governmental definition of abuse, this would be determined as child abuse under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933. The strategy does aim to address concerns about the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people and how this impacts their own intimate relationships and family bonds.

It also considers domestic abuse experienced by older people, and how the underreporting of abuse from this group should be addressed. Early Intervention and Prevention recognises that anyone can be impacted by abuse at any age, and identifying opportunities to reduce the long-term impacts needs to happen across life stages. The Strategy also recognises that personal characteristics such as age can affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need. Commitments include increasing service uptake for under-represented groups and supporting collaboration to develop needs led work and support the specialist 'by and for' market. It also recognises that rural communities, where the average age is higher, need to be considered in service design and promotion.

Disability

Data collected by SafeLives suggests that people with a disability are more likely to experience domestic abuse than those who do not have a disability, experience it for longer before seeking help and are more likely to still be experiencing abuse at the end of service.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The strategy recognises the role of disability in people's experiences of abuse and its intersectionality with other protected characteristics.

The strategy seeks to address barriers to pursuing and accessing support as well as seeking to understand why outcomes for people with a disability fall below those of non disabled clients. The strategy seeks to promote collaboration between expert domestic abuse services and expert disability services, developing a particular focus on advancing a 'by and for' market in Kent & Medway.

During the strategy consultation consideration was given to how to make the strategy document as accessible as possible, producing BSL and Easy Read versions and eliciting feedback from disability forums, groups and organisations.

Sex

For the year ending March 2022, the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 1.7 million

women and 699,000 men aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the last year. This is a prevalence rate of approximately 7 in 100 women and 3 in 100 men.² However, we know that the majority of those experiencing high risk abuse are women. In the year ending March 2022, the victim was female in 74.1% of domestic abuse-related crimes. Between the year ending March 2019 and the year ending March 2021, 72.1% of victims of domestic homicide were female compared with 12.3% of victims of non-domestic homicide.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The strategy is gender informed, acknowledging that the majority of high harm abuse is perpetrated by men and experienced by women. However, the strategy also recognises that the numbers of men reporting domestic abuse are increasing, and that there are additional barriers to men reporting domestic abuse based on social expectations. Men's services were consulted with during the consultation to ensure their voices and experiences can help shape the strategy. The needs of both men and women should be catered to by a Domestic Abuse Strategy for Kent & Medway.

We also know that the harm caused by a perpetrator of abuse is felt widely in family networks, not just by the primary victim and children. The strategy supports the development of services which work to understand the needs of the whole family. The strategy will prioritise building services that are accessible and responsive to the broad range of need experienced for people of any gender.

Gender identity/Transgender

Although data is reasonably limited on the level of domestic abuse experienced by transgender people, it is known that transgender people experience additional barriers to reporting abuse and accessing services. It is essential that service provision recognises the needs of transgender people.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The Strategy recognises that personal characteristics such as gender and gender identity can affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need. Transgender people experience additional barriers to reporting abuse, and therefore have particular support needs. Commitments include promoting access for groups underrepresented in services and working to promote collaboration and development of specialist services.

Race

The Office of National Statistics has found that there is no significant difference in the prevalence of domestic abuse across different ethnic groups.³ However, statistical analysis (shown in attached evidence) suggests there may be significant under reporting of DA from those in minoritized communities.

² Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

³

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2022#ethnicity>

The largest ethnic group in Kent is White. 93.7% of all residents are of white ethnic origin, and 6.6% are from another ethnic group. The largest single minoritized community in Kent is Indian representing 1.2% of the total population.⁴

Very little information is available about gypsy and traveller communities and domestic abuse, however there is a need to work with this community to increase awareness of the services and support available to those experiencing domestic abuse.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

When creating the strategy, consideration was given to ensuring services are culturally sensitive and actively promote themselves to all groups. This includes working with services for people affected by abuse from a wide range of communities and organisations to ensure the strategy will have a positive impact on victims and survivors from minority groups.

The strategy recognises that our characteristics can influence the barriers we face in reporting abuse. The strategy promotes work to address the under reporting of domestic abuse within minoritized communities and will seek to develop opportunities to promote service provision by 'By & For' services that have culturally specific knowledge and can build trust within minoritized communities.

The strategy also includes developing domestic abuse knowledge within community networks, building confidence in talking about and addressing abuse. This work should ensure community networks from across the protected characteristics are proactively engaged in projects.

Religion, Belief & Culture

62.5% of Kent residents describe themselves as Christian, whilst the largest non-Christian religious group is Muslim (1%).⁵ We know that people's religion, culture and beliefs can be used by the abusive person to exert power and control. This can include honour based abuse and forced marriage as well as impacting on the tactics used within abusive relationships.

There are no Kent and Medway specific statistics available on forced marriage or honour based abuse (HBA). However, DHR lessons identified have highlighted the importance of understanding how abuse is impacted by culture to better equip staff to question and sensitively explore aspects of people's culture to ensure people experience consistently robust safeguarding.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The strategy aims to strengthen links with community groups, faith groups and leaders to expand on opportunities for partnership work, recognises that our characteristics impact the barriers we face in reaching out for help and aims to promote specialist collaboration and 'by and for' services.

It also recognises Honour Based Abuse as an intersecting issue between culture and religion and that

⁴ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/facts-and-figures-about-Kent/summary-of-kent-facts-and-figures#tab-2>

⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusevictimcharacteristicsenglandanddwales/yearendingmarch2020#ethnicity>

⁵ <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/facts-and-figures-about-Kent/summary-of-kent-facts-and-figures#tab-2>

increasing understanding of its root in each case can lead to better outcomes for individuals. The strategy draws attention to honour-based abuse (HBA) including forced marriage as part of domestic abuse as well as promoting culturally aware responses from across the partnership.

There is also commitment to ensure training is available for staff on areas such as options for support for those with no recourse to public funds & honour based abuse.

The strategy identifies the need to reach out to groups not currently accessing services, work with communities to better understand how best to increase awareness of support and work with local communities and with our partners to continue to challenge these behaviours.

Sexual Orientation

Statistics suggest that people in same sex relationships are more likely than those in heterosexual relationships to experience domestic abuse (please see attached additional information). Prevalence of Domestic Abuse by Orientation shows lowest prevalence for people identifying as heterosexual (5.2%) and higher prevalence for gay and lesbian people (8.4%) and higher still for those identifying as bisexual (15.2%).⁶

Gay, lesbian and bisexual people may experience additional barriers to reporting abuse, for example through fear of 'outing', fear of stigma from service providers or uncertainty around what provision is available. They may also have to challenge the view of domestic abuse as occurring only within heterosexual contexts. These contribute to the significant underreporting of abuse within LGBTQ relationships.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The strategy acknowledges the need to ensure that support is available for everyone experiencing abuse, and that support services can be tailored to the needs of people in the context of their protected characteristics, including sexual orientation. It recognises that characteristics such as our sexuality can affect the risk of experiencing domestic abuse, the abusive tactics used and sometimes, the support we need. There are commitments around having the right safe accommodation options available, whatever the person's sexual orientation and that we will support collaboration to ensure that the right expertise is available for anyone experiencing abuse.

Pregnancy & Maternity

Although there appears to be a lack of recent figures on domestic abuse, pregnancy and maternity, it has been established that pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse to commence or escalate and also a time when survivors may be at elevated risk.

Please see supplementary information for further information.

The strategy:

The NHS, and public health (health visiting service) are part of the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual

6

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/624422988fa8f527785ed11c/E02735263_Tackling_Domestic_Abuse_CP_639_Elay_002_.pdf

Abuse Executive Group and therefore part of the upcoming strategy's governance processes. The strategy considers how services that come into contact with pregnant people can improve their training and responses to domestic abuse. It also commits to continuing to improve the process for sharing Domestic Abuse Notifications (an alert sent from the police to another agency to alert them that a child or pregnant person was present at an incident) to ensure that it is equitable across the education and healthcare systems.

Negative Impacts and Mitigating Actions

The questions in this section help to think through positive and negative impacts for people affected by your activity. Please use the Evidence you have referred to in Section B and explain the data as part of your answer.

19. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

a) Are there negative impacts for Age? Answer: Yes/No
(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).

No

b) Details of Negative Impacts for Age

c) Mitigating Actions for Age

d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Age

20. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

a) Are there negative impacts for Disability? Answer: Yes/No
(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).

No

b) Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

c) Mitigating Actions for Disability

d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Disability

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
a) Are there negative impacts for Sex? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sex
c) Mitigating Actions for Sex
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sex
22. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
a) Are there negative impacts for Gender identity/transgender? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Gender identity/transgender
c) Mitigating actions for Gender identity/transgender
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Gender identity/transgender
23. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Race
a) Are there negative impacts for Race? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Race
c) Mitigating Actions for Race

d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Race
24. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Religion and belief
a) Are there negative impacts for Religion and Belief? <i>Answer: Yes/No (If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Religion and belief
c) Mitigating Actions for Religion and belief
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Religion and belief
25. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation
a) Are there negative impacts for sexual orientation. <i>Answer: Yes/No (If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Sexual Orientation
c) Mitigating Actions for Sexual Orientation
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Sexual Orientation
26. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
a) Are there negative impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity? <i>Answer: Yes/No (If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Pregnancy and Maternity

c) Mitigating Actions for Pregnancy and Maternity
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Pregnancy and Maternity
27. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for marriage and civil partnerships
a) Are there negative impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
c) Mitigating Actions for Marriage and Civil Partnerships
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Marriage and Civil Partnerships
28. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
a) Are there negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities? <i>Answer: Yes/No</i> <i>(If yes, please also complete sections b, c, and d).</i>
No
b) Details of Negative Impacts for Carer's Responsibilities
c) Mitigating Actions for Carer's responsibilities
d) Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions - Carer's Responsibilities

This page is intentionally left blank

Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020 - 2023: Progress made



Accessing support

This is an evaluation document supporting the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy.

If you need support **now** this can be accessed by telephoning Victim Support on **0808 168 9276**, or visiting **www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk**

If you are in immediate danger please do not be afraid to call 999, otherwise you can contact Kent Police on the non-emergency telephone number 101 or visit your local police station to speak with an officer in confidence.

Alternatively, you can contact the freephone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge on **0808 2000 247** or the Men's Advice Line on **0808 801 0327**.

Contents

1. Foreword.....	04
2. Our governance	05
3. Our priorities	06
Priority 1 Drive change together.....	07
Priority 2 Prevention and early intervention.....	10
Priority 3 Provision of community and safe accomodation services.....	14
Priority 4 Minimising harm	20
Priority 5 Justice, recovery and ongoing protection	23
4. Conclusion	26
Useful links	27

This report is necessarily an overview given the large amount of progress which has been achieved across the partnership. Many commitments from the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy are listed, but due to duplication and to support conciseness not all commitments and completed work is included.

Page 337

In partnership with and supported by





Foreword

Page 338



Our Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2020 – 2023) has coordinated our partnership vision. This vision has enabled us to bring together our approach and the delivery of services, ensuring that we are working to the same collective aim and commitments.

Domestic abuse is wide reaching and prolific, it is destructive and abhorrent and every minute, of every day it effects those that are subject of it. To ensure that people receive the best response we must continue to work together, both as a collective partnership and as individual organisations, to strengthen the delivery of services; working towards our aim; to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, hold to account those that commit such crimes, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support quickly.

We have measured our progress against the Kent and Medway domestic abuse delivery plan which has pushed forward projects that are linked to the commitments made within the strategy. We have achieved a lot over the last three years and in this progress report we celebrate some of the work which has been delivered through our partnership and look to the future to continue to work collaboratively to strengthen our response to those impacted by domestic abuse.

Thus, as we look to the development of the 2024 – 2029 strategy we need to not only assess the progress we have made, observing our achievements but also acknowledge areas where we need to retain our focus, continuing to identify opportunities for improvement. This progress report works to identify these areas.

Our progress has been supported through collaborative working across the public sector, this work would not have been possible without the invaluable support and aid of the voluntary sector organisations which work within this space. We are also extremely grateful for those people impacted by abuse who have and continue to give their feedback on experiences, and these experiences shape our strategies and commissioning decisions. Your insight and contribution is invaluable to the development of our work.

Simon Wilson, Assistant Chief Constable, Kent Police

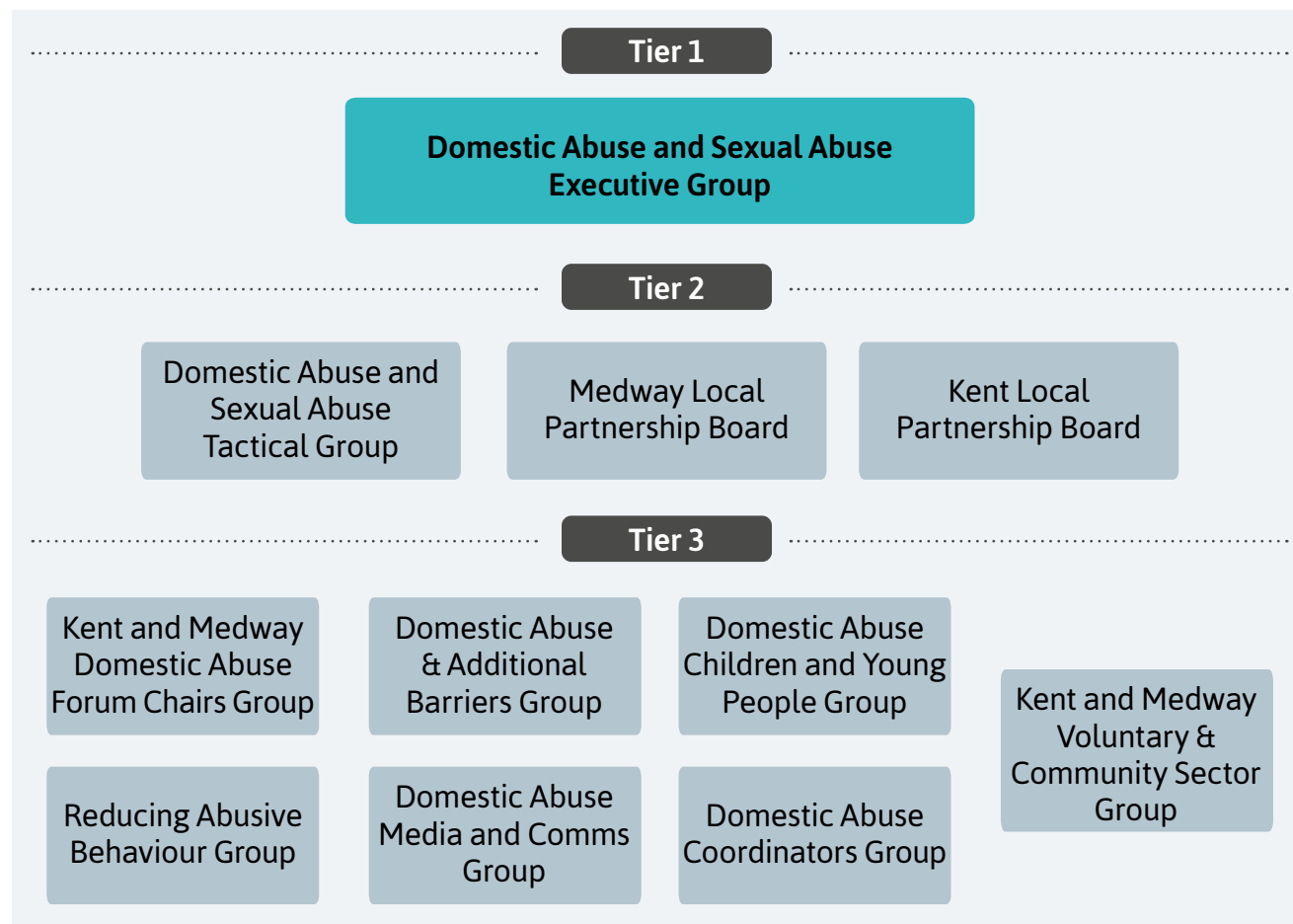


Our governance

The Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group is the overarching partnership group which works to ensure progress against the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse strategy.

Group which has a focus on community-based support, and the statutory Local Partnership Boards across Kent and Medway which oversee work linked to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

There are a number of subgroups which support the delivery of the strategy, including the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical





Our priorities

The Kent and Medway domestic abuse delivery plan is a project-based plan. Projects sit under 5 priorities.

As we move to the 2024 – 2029 strategy we will maintain a project-based monitoring process but will also work to include quantitative key performance indicators into our measurements of achievement.





Priority 1 Drive change together

The priority of driving change together recognises the adverse impact of domestic abuse on society, and that working together across agencies will support greater progress and stronger outcomes.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working to challenge societal attitudes that allow domestic abuse to occur, so it is unacceptable in any form, and increase awareness of how to better prevent and respond to domestic abuse,
- working to collectively bring together comparable, accurate and consistent data on areas such as commissioning, provision and gap analysis,
- ensuring strong participation in safeguarding review processes for both adults and children, making sure that key learning is proactively shared with the wider workforce.

Increasing awareness

The ‘Domestic Abuse Aware’ campaign is entering its third year.

This campaign is commissioned via the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services (KIDAS) and supported by a group that includes representatives from across the partnership.

The creation of coordinated, impactful social media content works to amplify messages whilst content calendars and toolkits have steadily increased the campaigns reach.

One of the focuses of this work is to ensure that the campaign is inclusive, promoting the understanding that domestic abuse happens to everyone irrespective of age, gender, orientation, ethnicity or disability. Images and content themes have been chosen to increase representation and the campaign has built relationships with community groups to increase the audiences.

By proactively delivering public facing campaigns this work has raised awareness of abuse in all its forms, promoted domestic abuse as everybody’s business and educated people on how to get support from local and national services.

1. Drive change together continued

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) was commissioned by Kent County Council to create an events programme that would provide free information, advice and resources to educate people across all areas of the community about the impact of domestic abuse.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service created a free virtual conference with sessions for all knowledge and expertise levels.

The conference was designed to promote understanding of the barriers to reporting, and how best to reach and engage minoritised groups. Workshops included how domestic abuse affects older adults, responding to forced marriage, LGBTQ+ perspectives on domestic abuse support, domestic abuse and learning disabilities among many other topics.

There was a total of 10,301 registrations across the 16 events with over 1000 people watching the post event recordings. This conference content is still available for people to learn from and listed within useful links at the end of this document.

Standardised training modules have been developed by the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and Medway Domestic Abuse Services (MDAS) and are available to all. This includes information on safe enquiry and sign posting, impacts on adults and children and safety planning.

Championing the Needs of People Affected by Abuse

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Champions project is being developed by the Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs and is delivered through the nine local forums across Kent & Medway.

There are two project streams under the Champions umbrella – Professional Champions & Employer Champions.

These schemes promote a joined-up approach to providing the best support to those impacted by domestic abuse by increasing the knowledge and competency of key people throughout formal and informal networks.



Working together to support White Ribbon accreditation

Kent County Council, Medway Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Tonbridge and Malling District Council, Dartford Borough Council, Sevenoaks Borough Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire and Rescue Service have worked to gain White Ribbon accreditation.

While we know that anyone can be impacted by domestic abuse, we also know that women have a higher risk of being impacted by violent and sexual behaviour. By supporting the White Ribbon campaign, we are standing against violence and supporting dialogue around harmful behaviours.

Each organisation who has committed to becoming White Ribbon accredited has signed up to a three-year action plan, which demonstrates how core criteria are met across the organisations in relation to violence against women and girls (VAWG). The action plan offers achievable goals for the organisation to bring about genuine change.



Using an evidenced based approach to support our work

Since 2020, Kent County Council (KCC) in collaboration with partners have published an annual domestic abuse needs assessment.

1. Drive change together continued

The partnership is committed to revising the needs assessments yearly (with a full local needs assessment being completed every three years). The needs assessment supports us to ensure that we are making the most of data collected across the partnership, bringing this together and strengthening information year on year. It supports the identification of gaps in provision, helping us to understand where we need to focus work.

The partnership has completed additional qualitative work including specific projects looking at the experiences of male survivors, work with professionals to better understand barriers of access to refuge, and work with children, young people, parents and professionals to understand how services should be shaped and improved. This work has supported the development of commissioned services.

In line with KCC, Medway aims to update its needs assessment annually with a full review every three years. Medway uses data collated from providers to identify gaps in provision. It also relies on the work from its Survivor Voice Group, a subgroup and project collating ongoing quantitative and qualitative feedback from those with lived experience and partner agencies who provide front line support to those who have experienced abuse. Medway uses focus groups with young people, and input from stakeholders to feed into the needs assessment and shape commissioning decisions.

Community Safety Partnership Team and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs)

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) are published on both the Kent and Medway council websites. The publication process is vital in ensuring the dissemination of the lessons identified and as part of this process, the Kent Community Safety team also inform a wide variety of professionals and groups.

In addition, the Kent Community Safety team produces a short briefing document for completed DHRs which provides a short narrative, themed lessons to be learned and reflective questions to support the reader in applying the lessons to their own practice. These documents have been very well received, enabling partners who utilise them to cascade a consistent and succinct message to the professionals in their agencies.

The Kent Community Safety Team also hold 'Lessons to be Learnt' seminars with Independent Chairs, agency representatives, expert and bereaved family speakers. Six DHRs were published in 21/22 and a further two in 22/23. In 2022, five themed webinars were delivered to present these recent publications. 615 frontline professionals from multi-agency partners attended across the events. All webinars were recorded, edited and made available on the Safer Communities Portal.

The Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board developed a joint learning document with the Kent Community Safety Team on successfully engaging with service users, which was published to the KMSAB website and shared widely to partners.

Opportunities for improvement

As we look to the development of future priorities, we would like to continue to develop work on;

- continuing to strengthen collaborative commissioning, using data available to identify gaps and need,
- continuing to strengthen available information to front line services, so that referral options are clear to those working with people impacted by abuse,
- continue to strengthen the support we offer to our collective workforce, aiming to ensure that any person within the workforce who is experiencing domestic abuse is supported well,
- to continue to work with businesses to ensure that they have access to information on how to support staff members who may disclose abuse.

2

Prevention and early intervention

Priority 2 Prevention and early intervention

This priority aims to increase the focus on early intervention and prevention, this is not only about stopping domestic abuse but also preventing escalation of abuse.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working to identify and support families at risk of domestic abuse,
- challenging gender inequality, sexual stereotyping and domestic abuse normalisation where it exists,
- working with partners to promote safety where children are displaying harmful behaviours,
- expanding Operation Encompass,
- the early identification of abuse of adults at risk.

Working to reduce risk

In KCC the Domestic Abuse Development Programme was designed in response to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, to ensure an appropriate staff response to domestic abuse across Integrated Children’s Services.

Kent’s multi-agency domestic abuse forums developed a set of practice principles for staff working with people impacted by domestic abuse, aiming to align with the Kent Practice Framework.

This training was rolled out between September 2022 and January 2023 and supports staff to address domestic abuse complexities which they deal with every day. Four sessions have been completed with 40 practitioners from across Integrated Childrens Services attending each session, there are plans to formally evaluate this programme.

KIDAS work with Integrated Children’s Services in providing joint supervisions for complex cases which involve domestic abuse. Staff within Early Help and social work teams can access specialised domestic abuse expertise through KIDAS to support understandings of trauma and best responses.

Healthy relationship education in schools

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a new early intervention programme which is available to schools and youth settings in Kent and Medway designed to examine healthy relationships, online harms as well as cyber safety and cyber bullying.

This programme will offer an interactive media workshop to discuss healthy relationships and online safety. The multi-media experience uses compelling video, creative thinking, data analysis and mind-mapping to explain and explore healthy relationships and online safety. Young people are encouraged to create their own scripts, produce podcasts, dance, rap, poems, or videos on these topics. Time is given for reflection and to actively demonstrate understanding and empathy.

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust have created resources available to schools to enable the inclusion of domestic abuse and healthy relationships within the curriculum. The Kent school health team deliver free training opportunities and resources to support schools in this process.

2. Prevention and early intervention continued

Brighter Worlds Animation and package

The Brighter Worlds project was developed by the Local Children’s Partnership Group in West Kent as a direct response to the increasing number of schools and partners highlighting concerns around the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on children and young people pre and post pandemic.

Each animation involves an ‘alien spacecraft’ looking into a child’s world through a range of different scenarios and then encouraging the children watching to review and analyse the presented scenes. Animation can be a strong preventative resource that can support the sustainability of ACEs and trauma awareness amongst primary school age children.

KCC and partners are seeking opportunities to expand access to this animation across Kent.

Medway Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) Network

Medway has created a networking forum for PSHE leads or equivalent, and teachers to obtain information, share good practice and resources and make links with other schools and organisations.

There are resources available to Medway schools accessed via Google drive and the PSHE Association. These include primary and secondary work packages and lesson packs on abusive relationships and managing family conflict. Medway provide training to teachers to support the delivery of high-quality relationship and sex education.

Currently Kent is looking at joining this network as a collaboration and to support even stronger partnership working.

Bystander Training and Prevent

Violence which happens in a public place can significantly overlap with violence and abuse that happens or occurs in the home or as part of a relationship.

A key part of the work to tackle violence, including domestic abuse, is active bystander training. The active bystander approach equips professionals with the knowledge and skills to discuss with young people about the importance of intervention whenever they see something which they feel is

unacceptable. This may be when a friend is carrying a knife, or when they witness misogynistic or homophobic behaviour.

The Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) have trained 20 trainers and run workshops for approximately 250 professionals to learn about the approach and how it can be incorporated into their practice. Further training sessions are being planned for 2023 – 24, and work is underway with Kent County Council’s marketing team to create resources to support the development of the approach across the County.

Over the last 3 years the Kent and Medway Prevent team who deal with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation have seen a presence of domestic abuse in referrals coming through to the Channel panel (a multi-agency panel that assesses the risk of radicalisation).

The Prevent Team have noticed an overrepresentation of males between ages of 16+ as having a presence of domestic abuse as a factor in their referrals. This includes an individual who has either experienced domestic abuse, shown abusive behaviours, or witnessed domestic abuse. Funding has been provided by the Home Office to commission a project exploring the link between domestic abuse and extremism, and the team are starting to assess the results. These results will be shared widely with organisations.



2. Prevention and early intervention continued

Over the last two years the Prevent Education Officers (PEO) and Prevent Coordinator include Incels and extreme misogyny in their training. The PEOs have seen an increase in schools requesting materials during this time to assist them in challenging students' curiosity into misogynistic narratives. This is addressed by a whole school approach to healthy relationships through the PHSE curriculum, and relevant resources are shared with the schools. Misogynist comments and aggressive behaviours towards female staff and peers should be addressed robustly, as part of a school's wider approach to sex and relationships. Following the tragic Plymouth shootings, training in relation to Incels has been delivered by the Prevent Coordinator to domestic abuse charities and partner organisations across Kent and Medway.

Adolescent to parent violence

The Police and Crime Commissioner commissions support for adolescents who are displaying violent or abusive behaviour or conflict towards their parents. This service provides a restorative led intervention to reduce family conflict and abuse within homes, aiming to help families communicate more effectively and agree how to better manage conflict.

Working to expand Operation Encompass

Kent Police continues to be a proud participant of Operation Encompass supporting children when they are experiencing domestic abuse.

When Covid-19 and lockdown took hold back in Spring 2020, Kent Police made a renewed commitment to continue to share notifications with schools. Since then, Police have strived to improve and develop this early information sharing with schools further. One way this has been achieved is through the development of the 'Operation Encompass PLUS' notification and where appropriate information on non-domestic abuse safeguarding concerns are shared with schools. In addition, the Health Visitor service now receive Domestic Abuse Notifications.

Kent Police have launched a new child AWARE risk assessment in January 2023. These risk assessments are now completed by Officers and staff who deal with safeguarding concerns for children including at domestic abuse incidents. Use of the *AWARE* mnemonic; *Appearance, Words, Activity, Relationships and Dynamics and Environment* now helps to accurately identify and prioritise risk.

Identification of the abuse of adults

While domestic abuse can affect anyone, data collection shows that older people may be underrepresented in service use. We also know that those who are older are more likely to be impacted by a disability.

Media content has been developed and scheduled with domestic abuse partners, to raise awareness with professionals and the public on the abuse of

adults including those with learning disabilities, older people and intergenerational abuse. Awareness of this has been raised through the 16 days campaign and National Safeguarding Week.

Kent Safeguarding teams support early identification of abuse of adults including those with learning disabilities and abuse affecting older people. The 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk – Financial Abuse Toolkit' now makes appropriate links to domestic abuse and identifying coercive and controlling behaviour. The toolkit was reviewed to ensure it makes links to the definition of domestic abuse and how to offer support where domestic abuse is suspected. It also highlights referral pathways to domestic abuse agencies.

Domestic abuse is considered as a factor within the Kent Adult Carers strategy. Ensuring that the links and distinction between carer burn out and coercive controlling behaviour are made with clear risk information and referral pathways available to staff.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned specialist Independent Domestic Violence Advisor support for older people impacted by domestic abuse. The commissioned service provides tailored support from the point of crisis and beyond recovery.

2. Prevention and early intervention continued

The Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (HIDVAs)

Hospital Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (HIDVAs) have been in place at Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley, Medway Maritime Hospital and East Kent Hospital Foundation NHS Trust acute sites since 2018.

HIDVAs are based at the hospital sites and raise awareness of domestic abuse, providing specialist support to staff and patients around disclosures of domestic abuse. The hospital IDVA services have found that health-based support will often identify survivors who are otherwise missed by services such as the older population and men, offering people the chance to engage and receive specialist support. The Integrated Care Board have achieved further funding to provide this service across Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust acute sites.

To recognise the significant impact of domestic abuse on a person's mental health, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) have appointed a Health IDVA. The HIDVA works with KMPT healthcare staff and patients to improve the identification of domestic violence and abuse, and make sure people are referred to the right support. This has been supported by funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner.

Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to prevention and early intervention which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- continuing to work to improve content and the promotion of uptake of more consistent domestic abuse curriculum content as part of relationship and sex education,
- ensure that all relevant people especially schools are aware of resources available,
- work to closely align Operation Encompass with the midwifery service,
- explore ways to promote learning and development on issues of complexity - particularly intersections between mental capacity, coercive control behaviour and vulnerability,
- and continuing the work on understanding trauma reactions and how these impact practice and practical ways to apply learning.



3

Provision of services

Priority 3 Provision of community and safe accommodation services

This priority recognises people’s experiences of domestic abuse as individual and that people will need different types of support and solutions based on their experiences. Support must be holistic, trauma informed and with an awareness that healing can be complex and take time.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- working together to ensure staff understand the landscape of provision, using and referring to services effectively,
- ensuring we use an evidence-based approach to commission services,
- building on trauma informed approaches to support individuals and families.

Referral pathways

Domestic abuse is prolific and impacts many of the services delivered by partner organisations. Because domestic abuse is linked to many other areas of business, commissioning happens across different partnerships and agencies.

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) and the Medway Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS) has greatly increased coordinated delivery.

Comprehensive Domestic Abuse Services

Kent

The Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) was commissioned in April 2017. This contract is supported by Kent County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, Thanet District Council, Dover District Council, Swale Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Maidstone Borough Council, Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Ashford Borough Council and Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

This service covers both safe accommodation and community-based support. The service includes;

- a single county wide point of access, creating dedicated referral, triage and response pathway for people affected by domestic abuse,
- creating clear pathways of support which can be stepped up and down,
- specialist support delivered across a variety of accommodation settings and in the community,
- qualified Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA).

- training provided to professionals, those impacted by abuse, and communities around domestic abuse to educate and raise awareness.

Medway

In 2019 budgets were pooled from Housing, Children’s Services, Public Health and Medway NHS Clinical Commissioning Group to commission an integrated domestic abuse service in Medway (MDAS).

The contract offered support for medium and high-risk victims and survivors in Medway for the first time (previously only high-risk clients had access to support).

MDAS works with children and adults who have experienced abuse, offering educational services including workshops to young people and professionals, support services for those experiencing abuse and project and programme work.

3. Provision of services continued

The partnership structure has greatly supported information sharing between commissioners. Monthly meetings are being held between the Police and Crime Commissioner’s Office, Kent County Council and Medway Council to share commissioned service information. The Domestic Abuse Coordinator and Domestic Abuse Forum Chairs meetings offer opportunities to share information across local and countywide spaces.

Childrens Commissioning within KCC have brought together and are maintaining a directory of services offered to young people impacted by abuse. This is being made available to Early Help and social workers.

Evidence led commissioning

Our approach to strategy, commissioning and service provision is evidence led and based on findings from our needs assessments.

The Kent Domestic Abuse Research programme collates and triangulates research to provide evidence to decision-makers across the full range of organisations represented by the cross-agency domestic abuse partnership. This includes literature reviews, qualitative and quantitative projects and bringing together data and other information across the partnership.

Two learning events have been hosted by the partnership to support shared learning and development.

The first event focused on understanding the narratives and experiences of children and young people impacted by domestic abuse, and the second focused on life threatening illness and domestic abuse.

Both events have been attended by organisations across the partnership, supporting organisational learning and the sharing of experience across sectors.

Medway Public Health conducted focus groups on healthy relationships and support needs with primary, secondary and college students.

The feedback has been included in the Medway Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment and will inform commissioning decisions. Medway’s Survivor Voice Group has collated feedback directly from the voluntary sector via the One Stop Shop, Refuges and Advisory Groups, which are fed into the Local Partnership Board, and needs assessment.

Building on trauma informed approaches to support individuals and families

Trauma informed practice supports practitioners to respond effectively to the different ways trauma

can impact a person. The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Ambassador programme (Kent) launched in May 2022. Ambassadors support practitioners by working with them to build knowledge, to help develop initiatives to reduce the impact of ACEs and seek to support a trauma informed approach to care. As of March 2023, over 300 people had completed the programme of training.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned services to upskill professionals to deliver the Healing Together programme which is a trauma informed programme for children aged 6-16 years old who are impacted by domestic abuse. The majority of professionals trained have been from educational establishments.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also funded a Young Women’s Trauma Informed Mentor, and Children & Young People Trauma Informed Worker. One-to-one psychoeducational mentoring and emotional support is available for young women and girls aged 16-24 years who have experienced, are at risk of, or are currently experiencing domestic abuse within their intimate relationships.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned trauma focussed therapeutic services for children impacted by physical and emotional abuse, sexual abuse or domestic abuse.

3. Provision of services continued

Farm based activities provide children and their family members with a quiet and peaceful setting to visit during their recovery.

Medway refuges, have trauma informed counselling for adults and play therapy sessions for children and young people. Due to feedback from the Survivor Voice Group work, additional provision has been commissioned to expand this service, and it has now been commissioned to provide support to clients within the dispersed accommodation scheme in Medway.

Provision of services, safe accommodation

In response to the Domestic Abuse Act, the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Executive Group added an addition to the original strategy, this was published in January 2022. The addition focussed on safe accommodation services.

Housing options, flexibility and access

Journey mapping

In wanting to take a trauma-aware approach to the housing journey for those impacted by domestic abuse, Maidstone Borough Council overhauled the previous housing operational mechanism.

Maidstone Borough Council were aware that the housing process for people who have experienced domestic abuse could be difficult to navigate and

wanted to improve the language and system being used to support equity, empathy, and to be trauma informed.

The system itself changed to include safe enquiry as the first priority. Maidstone Borough Council also eliminated several steps when someone discloses abuse before they receive an assessment. This change sought to reduce the need for a survivor to re-tell their circumstances and to reduce the risk of re-traumatisation. Maidstone Borough Council created a visual flowchart to share with both those who have experienced abuse and professionals to support understanding of processes.

Maidstone Borough Council have committed to work with Kent Police in sourcing temporary accommodation for those using abusive behaviours who have been issued a Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) to reduce rates of further domestic abuse and prevent them returning to the property.

Tenancy Support

Tenancy support Officers have been recruited as part of the Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Services (KIDAS) contract. These posts support those in safe accommodation to find permanent housing, and also support clients to maintain their tenancies if this is their chosen outcome. The officers act as a broker with other agencies such as landlords in both the private and public sector.



3. Provision of services continued

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation

The Domestic Abuse Coordinators group includes representation from all District, Borough and City Councils, Kent County Council and Medway Council. This group is working to create a local network of support to strengthen housing responses through collectively working towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) Accreditation.

Working collaboratively across areas this work will be pioneering as the group works together to share progress, resources and best practice to strengthen responses.



Swale Borough Council support DAHA and are working to improve the housing response to domestic abuse. They have signed up for membership and finished their self-assessment and will now be looking at changes to be made to improve services.

Training has been revised and Swale Borough Council will be rolling out refreshers on trauma informed practice, non-judgemental language and risk assessment. The training incorporates input

from 'by and for' services available locally to deliver inputs to staff.

Staying Close By:

Safe Access for Eligible Residents (SAFER), KCC

SAFER is a scheme which has been developed by Kent County Council (KCC) with engagement from all partner agencies and those with lived experience of domestic abuse. The contract is due to be procured and in place by 1st October 2023.

The scheme looks to extend the availability of sanctuary services within Kent (additional security within a home) and the availability of support for those residing in properties where sanctuary has been applied.

A countywide single point of access will receive the referral and notify the organisation/s responsible for delivering the property security element who will conduct a property assessment and install the

required security measures. A support package for the adult survivor will also be offered. Support for children residing in the home will be offered through the Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS).

Safe Accommodation Support Service (SASS), KCC

A support service has been designed and procured for children living in safe accommodation. This service has been developed through survivor engagement and co-production.

The service supports access to group, one-to-one and peer support, and (based on feedback) has extended the length of provision available for therapeutic support for young people.

Feedback recommended training and development of the wider workforce in relation to supporting children and young people and this has been incorporated in SASS which will support the development of knowledge and skills of our inhouse Integrated Childrens Service.

Safe in Medway

Medway has the dispersed accommodation offer which is known as Safe in Medway (SiM). Within this project is the family practitioner who provides support for young people and families, with accessing schools and general well-being. Medway also commissions counselling and play therapy to children within their refuge accommodation. This offer has recently been extended to include SiM.



3. Provision of services continued

Kent Fire and Rescue Service supporting more people affected by abuse:

Kent Fire and Rescue Service have been developing their policies to ensure people experiencing abuse are consistently supported to stay safe, this includes staff experiencing domestic abuse, ensuring that where threats of arson are made against a person impacted by abuse everyone in the house is supported including children.

There has also been an increase in the Out of Hours Team to ensure that all safeguarding concerns can be acted on, no matter what time they come in, ensuring that people impacted by domestic abuse can get the right safety support 24/7. These changes are backed by an increased level of training across teams.

Homelessness and recognising multiple need

The Blue Light Project

In Medway, there is the Blue Light Project, which is formed of professionals such as mental health services, probation, rough-sleepers initiative, substance misuse services and the core domestic abuse support provider. The project aims to discuss cases where the clients are facing multiple-disadvantage and can struggle to have meaningful engagement with services, many of whom are street homeless.

The reciprocal agreement

Kent and Medway Councils, District, City and Borough Councils, Kent Housing Group and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), have established a Kent and Medway wide domestic abuse reciprocal scheme.

The managed reciprocal scheme will enable individuals and families at risk of domestic abuse and who have a social tenancy, to move to a safe area whilst retaining their tenancy, aiming to make it faster and easier for people to find properties while retaining the benefits of their current tenancy.

The scheme is a formal collaboration between social housing landlords. Benefits include supporting increased housing options for people experiencing abuse, providing a supportive framework to both people impacted by abuse and social landlords, and making the best use of housing stock across Kent and Medway.

Access of services to all

Our protected characteristics such as our ethnicity, gender, sexuality and age can impact our risk of domestic abuse. Our demography may also influence the forms that abuse might take. 'By and for' services can offer specialist support, holding understanding of experience, and of power dynamics within and outside the domestic space and how this may impact abuse.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a dedicated male Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service and a support service providing British Sign Language for Deaf people impacted by domestic abuse and sexual violence. There is also a child and young persons' advocate providing support for 8 -18-year-olds county-wide.

Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) have worked with the KCC Sensory Services team to help improve access for Deaf people experiencing abuse. The working group has implemented access to a video relay service, for all the teams to enable effective communication with Deaf people who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their first or preferred method of communication and voice-over relay.

Posters, websites and social media comms have been created to highlight and reflect the use of SignLive to spread the word so that Deaf people can access services and support.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned a mentoring support service for men affected by emotional, financial and domestic abuse. This service includes some support for children and young people.

Kent County Council is currently developing a training offer to domestic and sexual abuse service providers, in supporting people who face additional barriers and vulnerabilities. This training will support knowledge and skills to aid those supporting people who may have mental health support needs or be impacted by substance dependencies.

Medway 'We Hear You' (W.H.Y) is a project which has been set up by those with lived experience of substance misuse. The service also includes those with lived experience of various types of trauma including domestic abuse, and is working to represent the voice of service users and bridge gaps between support services. Medway Council is linking in with the project to ensure that the work being carried out by W.H.Y is forming part of the Survivor Feedback Group and feeding into the domestic abuse Local Partnership Board.

Kent and Medway Councils are currently scoping work to expand support of 'by and for' service provision.



Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to the provision of services which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- further collaborative, needs led, work by commissioners across the market of by and for services,
- building additional support mechanisms for those with barriers to access such as drug or alcohol dependencies or mental health support needs, and those who may be unable to access refuge due to high level needs.

4

Minimising harm

Priority 4 Minimising harm

This priority is about supporting positive outcomes and promoting equality of access for anyone who experiences domestic abuse.

This outcome recognises the longer-term impact of domestic abuse and the importance of working collaboratively to support people in their recovery.

Commitments identified within the 2020 – 2023 strategy include:

- recognising that domestic abuse may impact children, young people and the whole family in the longer term,
- understanding that for many children and young people the experience of managing parental conflict can be traumatic and difficult,
- working to increase understanding of abuse that happens in family relationships so that victims & survivors of adult family violence and 'honour' based violence are identified and supported,
- local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) will be used effectively to reduce repeat victimisation.

Understanding longer term impacts

Research was commissioned by KCC to better understand the impact of abuse on children, young people and the whole family, and to understand what children and young people view as good interventions.

Themes that came out strongly included:

- the importance of having someone trusted to talk to,
- young people wanted to make sure that the non-abusive parent had access to support, they also talked about having support together as a family,
- the importance of having friends or peers who may have had similar experiences and therefore a better understanding your experience,
- the importance of schools in supporting an understanding of healthy relationships.

For young people experiencing abuse the Young Person's Independent Domestic Violence Advisor service helps people aged between 16 and 25. This service aims to support young people to stay safe and process experiences as well as helping with practical aspects such as employment and housing.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned online therapeutic counselling support for children, young people and where appropriate their parents and families. Case studies have shown that clients with complex needs feel overwhelmed and emotional at the start of their

counselling journey, but at the end are better able to cope with life and show improvements in their mental health.

'Honour-based' violence

Kent and Medway was the 9th highest Police Force Area for residents contacting Karma Nirvana, the specialist 'honour-based' abuse organisation helpline in 2020/21.

For the day of memory for those lost to 'honour-based' abuse, a campaign led by Karma Nirvana, created social media posts for partners to share to help spread awareness.

The Know, See, Speak Out Domestic Abuse awareness campaign created social media posts for partners to share. There was also a new page created for the Kent & Medway Domestic Abuse website to help people to identify 'honour-based' abuse and reach out for help.

Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS) providers have commissioned training for staff from Southall Black Sisters to further develop their awareness, knowledge and support to those impacted by this form of abuse.

The Kent Community Safety Team also held lessons learnt seminars after Domestic Homicide Reviews, with Independent Chairs, agency representatives, expert and bereaved family speakers.

4. Minimising harm continued

The final webinar of 2022 was themed around cultural competency and focussed on the DHRs of Simran and Tamana, both of which highlighted learning in relation to ‘honour-based’ violence. All webinars were recorded, edited and made available on the Safer Communities Portal.

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

Kent Council Council (KCC) have been leading on work to better understand options for support for those experiencing domestic abuse who have No Recourse to Public Funds. Working across the partnership, we have pulled together information around experience and how professionals may be able to support this group.

This included talking to our frontline professionals, exploring internal and external training offers, discourse across our voluntary sector partners, working with other local authorities through our regional group and seeking ways to develop the work.

We have presented this work in various partnership forums, with plans to support a cross partnership workshop and training development.

Local Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

MARAC is a safeguarding forum to discuss how to help people experiencing domestic abuse at high

risk of murder or serious harm. A series of reviews had shown that the MARAC system in Kent & Medway needed additional resource to help professionals effectively support those who need it most.

Steering and working groups brought together professionals from across the county, with a breadth of safeguarding expertise, to address the issues and enable in-depth risk management.

The MARAC review has resulted in a new hub model which is partnership funded, doubling the coordinating staff available to fulfil this crucial function, with new technology creating more efficient information sharing and action planning.

Due to launch this year (2023) the new model should deliver innovative ways to reduce the risk posed by people using abuse to gain power and control.

Highlighting the link between domestic abuse and suicide

Following discussions with the KCC Community Safety team, the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention Programme worked with Kent Police to show that 30% of all suicides in Kent and Medway between 2019 & 2021 were impacted by domestic abuse. This work has been nationally recognised and continues to shape national discussions.

The work of the Kent and Medway Suicide Prevention programme has supported:

- inclusion of domestic abuse as a priority within our local Suicide Prevention Strategy,
- funded local partner pilots into trauma impact workshops for people who have experienced domestic abuse where the abuse has stopped,
- investment in qualitative research with those who have been impacted by domestic abuse, who have previously attempted suicide or have self-harmed,
- funding for six community level projects with a specific focus on reducing the risk of domestic abuse related suicides,
- targeted local mental health campaigns.

The Kent & Medway Suicide Prevention Team have also commissioned domestic abuse & suicide prevention training.

This was developed in October 2022, test run and is now being rolled out for free across all Kent & Medway partnerships. The aim of this training is to highlight risk and protective factors related to suicide and domestic abuse, navigate emotionally sensitive conversations and to assess and de-escalate risk.

The Police and Crime Commissioner have commissioned a specialist 1:1 advocacy service and peer support for families who have been bereaved by suicide or unexplained death following domestic abuse.

4. Minimising harm continued

Opportunities for improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to minimising harm which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes to:

- promote access to mental health support that is trauma informed,
- recognising the importance of strengthening the relationship between the non-abusive parent/caregiver and child by giving them spaces to discuss their experiences and tools to grow together,
- acknowledging the non-linear process of recovery, enabling, where possible support to be accessed longer term and for historic cases of abuse.





Priority 5 Justice, recovery and ongoing protection

This priority focuses on reducing the impact of domestic abuse on the family and reducing the likelihood of future incidents, whether through pursuing those showing abusive behaviours through the criminal justice system, via civil outcomes, through working with families to change behaviour or through rehabilitation.

Our commitments included:

- working with partners to support assessment of the criminal justice response to current, new and emerging issues in relation to the protection of people who have experienced abuse,
- all agencies working together to ensure that there is a robust approach to those showing abusive behaviours,
- accessible information about protection orders, disclosure schemes and what people who have experienced abuse can expect from the criminal justice system.

Kent Police Domestic Abuse Hub

The Domestic Abuse Hub was launched in May 2022, and provides innovative support for those being impacted by abuse via technology. This enables people to immediately speak with an officer via video, allowing for fast-time crime recording, statement taking and capture of evidence including the scene of the incident and any visible injuries.

The Hub will contact people reporting standard risk domestic abuse where it is recent and the person using abusive behaviour is not at the scene using rapid video response. This is recorded and can then be used as the first account, to formulate a statement to save the person retelling their story and to evidence fear and emotional impact where it would be appropriate to consider an evidence led prosecution.

By having instant contact with the person experiencing abuse an officer can also implement immediate safeguarding and referrals to partner agencies to provide protection to people, where needed.

The Police and Crime Commissioner led a detailed analysis of Kent Police offender data to build a perpetrator profile in Kent. This found that 10% of offenders are responsible for 63% of harm.

The Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination Panels (MATACs) are a multiagency panel managing the highest harm repeat perpetrators of domestic abuse. The Panel brings together agencies to produce an action plan bespoke to each offender.

These include education, prevention, diversion, disruption and enforcement tactics. Perpetrators are contacted and told that they are a priority offender, to explain the seriousness of their offending and determine whether they will engage in the MATAC process. The approach is designed to get to the root of the problem - to challenge offender behaviour and either influence behavioural change or engage in disruption and enforcement.

This system has resulted in a 65% average reduction in all offending after MATAC intervention and a 63% reduction in domestic abuse offending.

Preventing unwanted contact from prisoners

To stop unwanted contact while a person is in prison and protect those being impacted by abuse, a new Victims' Helpline has been set up to prevent unwanted contact.

5. Justice, recovery and ongoing protection continued

This Justice Department project is especially important if the person impacted by abuse is subject to controlling, coercive behaviour, exploitation, harassment or intimidation. Preventing contact is critical in stopping further harm, maintaining confidence and supporting prosecutions.

A robust approach to those showing abusive behaviours

In 2021 the Home Office made funding available to Police and Crime Commissioners to support the delivery of domestic abuse perpetrator focussed programmes. A pilot programme was successfully secured for the delivery of both domestic and stalking perpetrator programmes in Kent & Medway, alongside support for those impacted by abuse and their children. Programmes are delivered in both one to one and group settings.

The programme focuses on building an individuals' skills to cope with challenging situations, overwhelming feelings, and difficult emotions. The work is strengths based, drawing on the perpetrators (non-abusive) strengths to develop changes, whilst robustly holding them to account for their abusive behaviour. A dedicated Victims Link Worker works in conjunction with Kent Police, and existing victim support services.

Local access to programmes to reduce abusive behaviours

Domestic Abuse Forums and Community Safety Partnerships have ensured that residents of Tunbridge Wells, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Swale, Medway, Folkestone & Hythe and Ashford are able to access a 27-week programme designed to help those who acknowledge that their behaviour to their partner has been, or is still, abusive. The programme seeks to support respectful relationships between partners or ex-partners and any children who may be witnessing abuse.

Domestic abuse training for family lawyers

Invicta Law and Kent County Council (KCC) were successful in their bid to host a Safe Lives pilot training programme for those working in Family Law. This specialist training spanned the whole family justice system, delivering a cultural-change training programme to create systemic transformations within the family justice system and strengthen practitioner capacity to respond well to domestic abuse.

Three training sessions were delivered to staff across a number of organisations. There was significant appetite for further training, information and networking with local services.



5. Justice, recovery and ongoing protection continued

In response Kent Integrated Domestic Abuse Service (KIDAS), Medway Domestic Abuse Service (MDAS) & Invicta Law have been collaborating to design a further session to explore the use of court as a tactic of abuse, avoiding victim blaming language, using safety planning and the orders available to protect those affected by abuse.

In addition, it has been identified that those who are affected by domestic abuse are often facing court without legal representation or with no eligibility for legal aid. A legal support project has been developed by KCC and KIDAS to provide legal support and advice to assist people impacted by abuse through court processes.

The Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a legal advice service for those impacted by domestic abuse. This service supports documentation for special measures in court, non-molestation orders and child related orders. The providers have their own legal team consisting of experienced, qualified, and fully regulated barristers and solicitors.

Integrating Research into Practice

To support social work staff confidence and knowledge around domestic abuse in family court, a workshop was run on the ways the court needs to protect the safety and wellbeing of both children affected by abuse and their non-abusive parents, as well as how The Children and Family

Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass) and social workers have an important role to play in assisting the court to do so.

This formed part of Integrated Children’s Services 2021’s Communities of Practice spotlight on domestic abuse. This included workshops on local services, typologies of abuse, domestic abuse and suicide, assessment tools as well as providing a reflective space for staff.

Coming together to tackle abusive behaviour The Reducing Abusive Behaviour Group helps to coordinate the approaches to tackling abusive behaviour across Kent and Medway and to promote a greater focus on holding the individual causing harm to account and changing their behaviour.

As part of this work the group has explored ways to increase the confidence of organisations to respond to people using abusive behaviour. Tools being developed to achieve this include template policies, designed to be used and adapted to help a range of organisations to respond appropriately to clients and staff members who may be causing harm through their behaviour.

To ensure clear information is available to help people navigate the criminal justice process the Police and Crime Commissioner has created an easy-to-use Victim Voice guide to support confidence in reporting crimes.

This process aims to enable the individual to access the information and support they need and are legally entitled to. The guide takes people through each stage of the criminal justice system - from how to report a crime, the protective orders available to what happens if the case goes to court.

Opportunities for Improvement

There are a number of areas of work linked to justice, recovery and ongoing protection which we would like to continue to focus on as we move into the development of the next iteration of the strategy. This includes:

- pressure on court systems has led to long lags in between charge and prosecution, strategies should seek to increase the capacity within the system and keep people informed of progress against their case,
- currently only a small proportion of those using abusive behaviour are accessing support services or being heard at Multi Agency Tasking and Coordination Panels (MATAC),
- Domestic Abuse Protection Notices and Orders will come into force, strategies should encourage uptake.

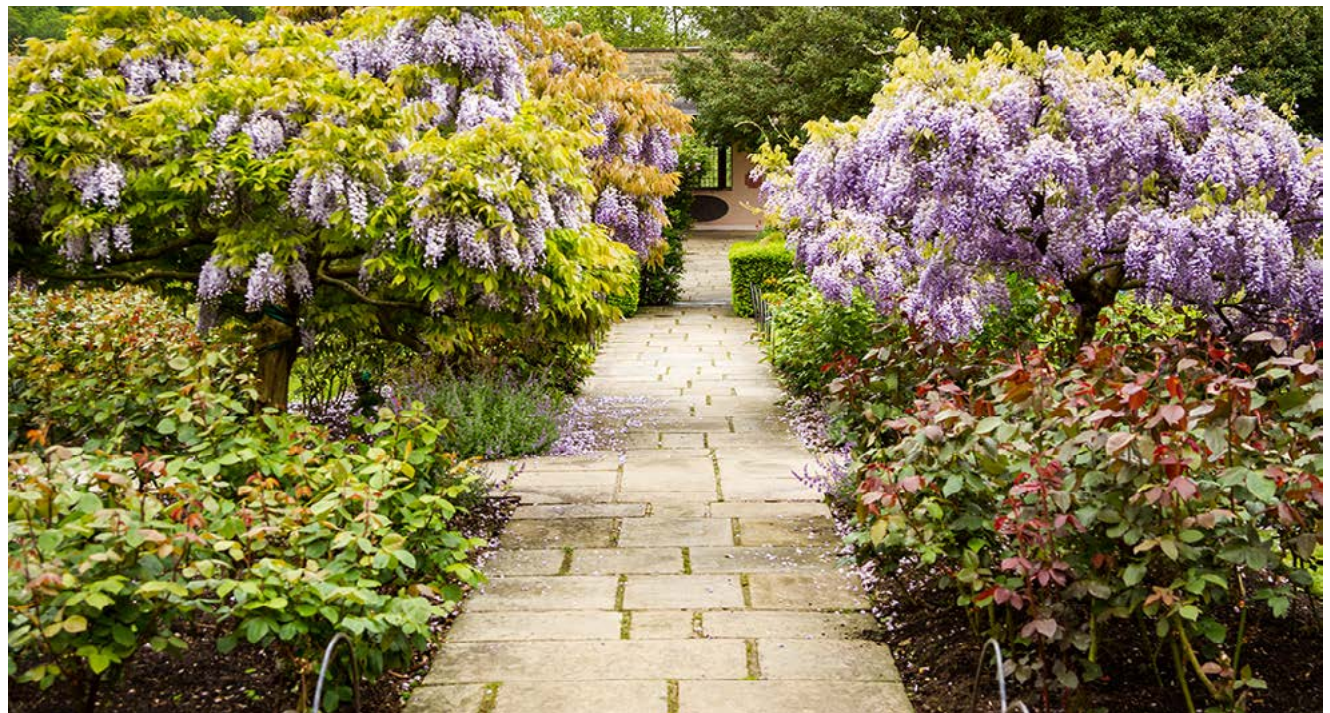
4

Conclusion

Across the partnership significant work has taken place over the three-year life of the strategy. Many areas of work have been significantly pushed forward, with collaborative working supporting stronger project development, better links between services and ultimately a stronger response.

The strategy and many of the commitments set within it were rightly challenging goals. We must be visionary and continue to push boundaries to support change.

This document explores the progress which we have made, but has also identified opportunities for improvement, and, as we develop our new strategy we will seek to integrate these learnings, working to understand how we can do better, seeking to continue to push work forward which will lead to meeting our aim; *to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly.*



Useful links

Domestic Abuse: It's Everybody's Business (2020)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiiBcbpVr7s&list=PLphMV3M-GI_R8xpBrrS-OmwlszEyGNWcU

Domestic Abuse Support Services in Kent and Medway

<https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/service.page?id=Kf8cT9ubi50>

Domestic Abuse Needs Assessment (2020)

Domestic abuse – Kent Public Health Observatory
(kpho.org.uk)

The Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy (2020) - Domestic-abuse-strategy-2020-2023.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Office of Police Crime Commissioner Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy (2021) Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy 2021 to 2024: call for evidence – GOV.UK

(www.gov.uk)

Office of Police Crime Commissioner, Violence Against Women and Girls Report (2021) – vawg-paper_september-2021.pdf

(kent-pcc.gov.uk)

Office of Police and Crime Commissioner, The Victim Voice guide is available here

<https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/projects-and-campaigns/victim-voice/>

Kent Community Safety Agreement (2022)

[Kent Community Safety Agreement April 2022](https://www.kent-pcc.gov.uk/what-we-do/projects-and-campaigns/victim-voice/)

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust, Relationship and sex education | Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

(kentcht.nhs.uk)

Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Website

<https://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk>

Kent Adult Carers Strategy (2022) Appendix B – Adult Carers Strategy Engagement and Consultation Outcome Report March 2022.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board Kent & Medway SAB website

(kmsab.org.uk)

Kent Safeguarding Children Multiagency Partnership Home – Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership

(kscmp.org.uk)

Kent Practice Framework kcc-practice-framework.pdf

(proceduresonline.com)

Medway safeguarding Children Partnership Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership

(medwayscp.org.uk)

Safeguarding Adults at Risk: Financial abuse tool kit Financial-abuse-toolkit.pdf

(kent.gov.uk)

Further information

For further information about any aspect of this progress report please contact:

Kent County Council

Strategy, Policy and Relationships

PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk

Alternative formats

If you require this strategy in an alternative format or language please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk

From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services
Lisa Gannon, Director of Technology

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 17 January 2024

Subject: Digital Strategy 2024-27

Decision no: 23/00120

Key Decision: Yes - New Strategy or Policy outside of the Policy Framework

Classification: UNRESTRICTED

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member decision

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary:

The report summarises the reasons and approach taken for developing Kent County Council's (KCC) Digital Strategy 2024-2027.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to adopt the Kent County Council Digital Strategy 2024-2027.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In recent years the Council has made substantial investments in our technology, establishing robust architecture, and implementing modern internal tools such as the enterprise-level Microsoft 365 environments. We have also seen pockets of digital transformation across the organisation, however thus far there has been a fragmented approach, driven by divisional aspirations rather than corporate strategy. The negative consequences of this have been the emergence of a divergent and duplicative technology landscape, increased infrastructure/technology costs and resource cost to support these, diluted council branding, missed opportunities to make the most of our data and importantly, inconsistent digital experiences for our residents.
- 1.2 The Council committed to the Local Digital Declaration in July 2019. This commits to “design services that best meet the needs of citizens, challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services we need to protect citizens’ privacy and security, and deliver better value for money”.

- 1.3 Consequently, it has been deemed timely that KCC develop a strategy which coordinates digital transformation activity and provides a blueprint linking all strategies that contain a digital element.

2 Developing the strategy

- 2.1 This strategy is very much a digital strategy written for staff, by staff. Successful digital transformation cannot be achieved without the buy-in of staff across the organisation and it is important that it addresses the disbenefits of past activity, aligning existing activity and providing the foundations to futureproof new activities.
- 2.2 Throughout development over 2,700 staff were invited to contribute and challenge the purpose, structure, and content, via a range of forums including staff groups, digital champions network, T200 network, bespoke innovation labs and key stakeholder groups such as directorate technology/system groups.
- 2.3 An iterative approach was taken to address any concerns and ensure that the content reflected the requirements of services across the organisation.

3 Digital Strategy

- 3.1 The Digital Strategy outlines our plans to bring about Digital Transformation within KCC. It serves as an overarching framework that encompasses our current and emerging digitally focused strategies and policies, acting as a cornerstone for future digital initiatives to ensure efforts are coordinated and aligned enabling us to drive positive change within the council. It is not the Technology Strategy, which focuses on our technical infrastructure, it is intentionally distinct, focusing instead on how we exploit technology to support and facilitate better digital experiences. The shared digital vision emerged from the extensive resident research that was conducted as part of the Resident and User Experience programmes; "People's digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered, and respected".

- 3.2 The strategy is structured in the following way:

- Introduction
- Where we need to be – Our digital design principles and ambitions.
 - Ambition 1: Improve residents' digital experience.
 - Ambition 2: Simple, secure, and sharable
 - Ambition 3: Well used and used well
 - Ambition 4: Data led.
- Delivering the change
- Resourcing the delivery
- Monitoring and reporting progress
- Glossary
- Appendix 1 – Strategic context
- Appendix 2 – Digital Roadmap

- 3.3 Under each ambition we articulate what this means in practice, why it is important to us, which of the digital design principles it aligns to, how we will achieve it and what success would look like.
- 3.4 The Digital Roadmap is a live article which we expect to evolve dynamically over the lifetime of the strategy.

4 Strategic context: Framing Kent's Future

- 4.1 The four strategic ambitions within the Digital Strategy are built upon Framing Kent's Future, with the links to these documents made explicit within the appendices.
- 4.2 The Digital Strategy compliments the Council's Framing Kent's Future Strategy, which states: *"The most significant opportunity to reduce cost but also improve user experience is from further digitalisation of our service offer. This will support a greater shift for users online, which is the way most Kent residents prefer to access services, but critically, also underpins greater ability to automate more of the processes and interactions our residents have with the council."*

5 Strategic context: Securing Kent's Future

- 5.1 The Digital Strategy supports the Council's Securing Kent's Future Strategy, which states *"The Digital Strategy sets out how the council can accelerate digital change to drive further efficiencies whilst also improving service quality and responsiveness."*
- 5.2 Objective Four of Securing Kent's Future Strategy identifies the requirement for *"Further transforming the operating model of the Council"* and that *"almost certainly, KCC will need to be a leaner organisation"* and *"drive new ICT and digital capabilities into its core service offer"*.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications in the development or establishing of this strategy. Individual digital projects will undoubtedly have cost implications that will be built into their respective business cases and project plans and be subject to normal governance processes.
- 6.2 The emergence of a divergent and duplicative technology landscape, increased infrastructure/technology costs and resource cost to support these, threatens our ability as an organisation to dispense our Best Value Duty.
- 6.3 Whilst there are no savings ascribed specifically to the strategy, it is anticipated the initiatives it supports and connects will result in better value for money.

7 Legal implications

There are no legal implications. However, the council has statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) to prevent discrimination towards people with different protected characteristics, therefore

digital inclusion and accessibility have been embedded within the strategy.

8 Equalities implications

- 8.1 As mentioned in section 7 above, the council has statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010 to fulfil the requirements of the PSED, meaning that, as with any other project, any digital activity must first consider the potential impact upon people with protected characteristics.
- 8.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been conducted (appendix B), which concluded that there are no potential negative impacts for the protected characteristics as a result of the strategy itself. Instead, it is anticipated that the strategy should have a positive impact in guiding services/digital projects to anticipate, consider and act upon any equality risks associated with digital transformation within the delivery of a service. This equality impact assessment suggests that the adoption of the strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics by taking a user-centred approach and maximising accessibility and inclusion. Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.
- 8.3 It should be noted that specific digital initiatives/projects will be required to complete project specific EqIAs in order to understand and mitigate any potential impacts. Officers will be able to utilise the resources and evidence contained within the strategy EqIA where appropriate.

9 Data Protection Implications

There are no data protection implications as a result of this strategy itself. Data Protection Impact Assessments will be completed at project level.

10 Other corporate implications

The Digital strategy will have a positive impact on other areas of work, due to the nature of Digital being integral to much of what is delivered.

11 Governance

- 11.1 Robust internal governance is in place in the form of a Digital steering group and working group, which interacts with Strategic Technology Board and Corporate Management Team as appropriate.
- 11.2 In line with the Council's governance process, as decision will involve the adoption of a new strategy, not included on the Policy Framework, a key decision will be required to adopt the new strategy.

12 Conclusions

The Digital strategy has been coproduced with staff to provide a shared direction and vision of what KCC's approach to Digital Transformation needs to be for the future. The adoption of the Digital Strategy is critical to enabling effective digital transformation.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to adopt the Kent County Council Digital Strategy 2024-2027.

13. Background Documents

14.1 Appendix A - KCC Digital Strategy 2024-27

14.2 Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment

14.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision

14 Contact details

Report Author: Dave Lindsay Job title: Chief Digital Officer Telephone number: 03000 41 39 22 Email address: dave.lindsay2@kent.gov.uk	Director: Lisa Gannon Job title: Director of Technology Telephone number: 03000 41 43 41 Email address: lisa.gannon@kent.gov.uk
--	---

This page is intentionally left blank

Kent County Council
Digital Strategy
2024 - 2027





Digital - how we use technology to achieve our strategic ambitions

Welcome to our Digital Strategy, which outlines our plans to bring about Digital Transformation within Kent County Council. This strategy serves as an overarching framework that encompasses our current and future digitally focused strategies and policies.

This strategy acts as a cornerstone for future digital initiatives within the council to ensure that our efforts are coordinated and aligned, promoting synergy across our directorates, divisions, and teams, enabling us to drive positive and meaningful change within Kent County Council. It is not the Technology strategy, which focuses on our technical infrastructure and future direction of our technology estate; the Digital strategy is intentionally distinct, focusing instead on how we exploit technology to support and facilitate better digital experiences and deliver our Digital ambitions.

Our vision is to ensure that *“People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered, and respected.”*

Our mission is to securely and ethically utilise technology, tools, and information to enhance our services, making them faster, more cost-effective, more environmentally friendly, and ultimately providing our staff with the means to deliver a better, more streamlined experience for our residents and Kent businesses that we support. We will do this by integrating technology, in a user centred way, into our operations, revolutionising the way our staff work and present services to our residents. To do this will require a significant culture shift, everything we do should be guided by the KCC values and our aspirational cultural attributes as set out within the People Strategy (2022-2027).

This strategy directly supports our response within our council strategy, "Framing Kent's Future, 2022-26". Within this, we emphasise the importance of further digitising our services to improve the experiences of both our staff and our residents. We understand the significance of investing in our ICT infrastructure and harnessing digital technologies. We have already made substantial investments in our technology, establishing robust architecture and implementing modern internal tools such as the enterprise-level Microsoft 365 environment.

These advancements have significantly improved our technological foundations, providing a strong basis for the next phase of our digital transformation, which will empower our staff to excel in their roles. This is further demonstrated through our commitment to the *Local Digital Declaration*.

We recognise that Digital Transformation is an ongoing journey, and the technology landscape is ever-evolving, therefore we will actively learn from evidence and feedback, allowing us to quickly adjust our plans to accommodate changes or address service pressures. Our annual delivery plan provides the necessary agility to support these adjustments effectively.

“When digital transformation is done right, it's like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, but when done wrong, all you have is a really fast caterpillar.”



Where do we need to be?

Contributing to the objectives of the council's strategy, and delivering our digital vision, requires both a culture shift and a digital technology shift, and we have established overarching digital design principles that will help us do this.

The application of digital design principles is underpinned by our service expertise.

Digital design principle 1

Start with users needs, design services around the service users,

Digital design principle 2

Buy once, use many times,

Digital design principle 3

Design with data insight & analytics built in,

Digital design principle 4

Keep it simple, share and iterate,

Digital design principle 5

Consistent, not uniform,

Digital design principle 6

Support and upskill staff to embrace digital.

We have identified 4 strategic ambitions.

- Improve residents' digital experience.**
We will design our services around the residents needs,
- Simple, secure and shareable.**
We will repeatedly use the technology we have, making full use of capabilities and features,
- Well used and used well.**
We will support users in getting the most out of our technology,
- Data led.**
We will make better use of data, to inform better decision making.

○ Improve residents' digital experience

Provide easier digital access to council services that are designed around the resident, taking a user-centred approach and maximising accessibility and inclusion.

Why?

We need our services to meet residents' expectations, target our resources to where they are needed most, and provide services digitally where most appropriate. Whilst many services are already accessible digitally, there is opportunity to widen this and further improve these services. It is not only about providing digitalised services, but ensuring these are as good as they can be so that residents want to use our digital services. We want to ensure consistency in the quality and the look so as not to dilute our brand.

Digital design principle 1

Start with user needs, design services around the service user

Digital design principle 5

Consistent, not uniform

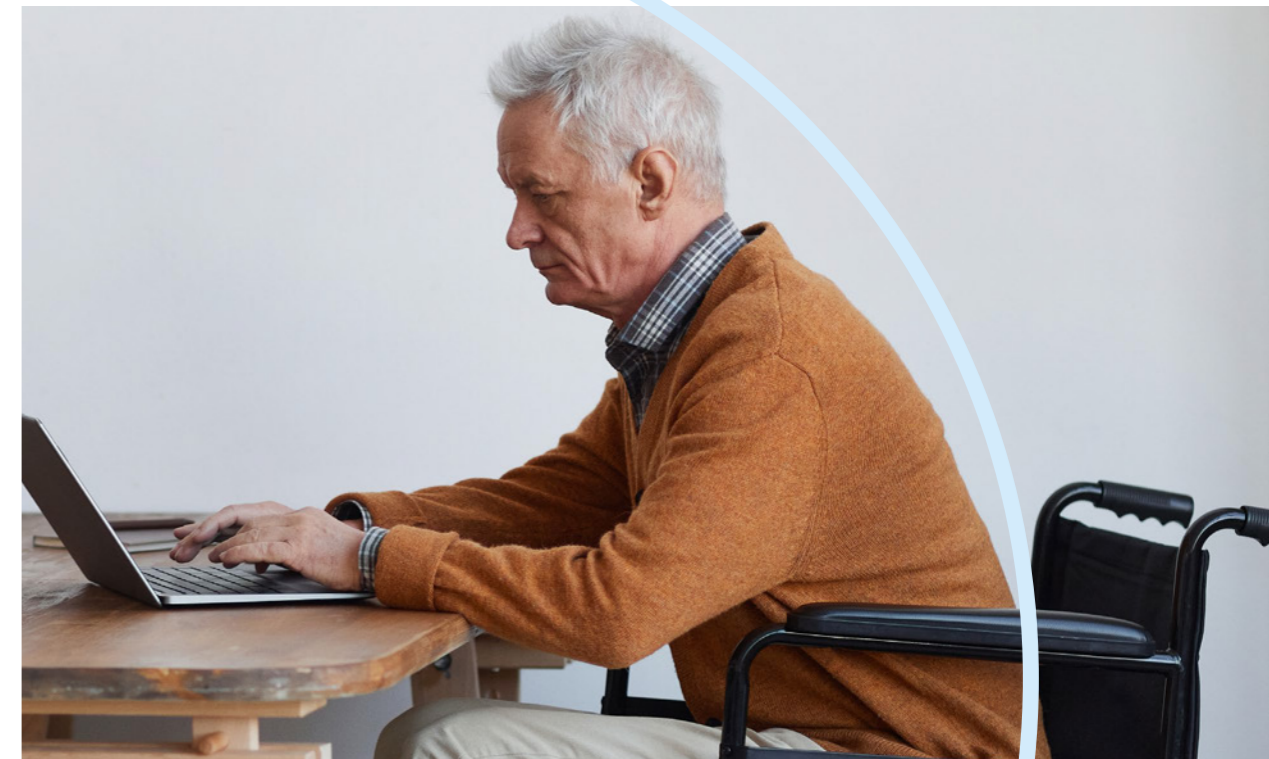
How?

- Through developing our cultural attributes; 'Be compassionate and inclusive', 'Externally focused – residents, families and communities at the heart of decision-making' and 'Flexible/agile – willing to take (calculated) risks,'
- Develop a consistent approach to user research, supporting tool kit (and development offer) to be adopted across the organisation, and supporting framework to share insights making use of the persona archetypes established through the recent large-scale resident research,
- Adopting a product-oriented approach for sustained and continuous improvement of digital products, supported by a development offer and community of practice,
- Developing a more robust approach to enforcing our digital accessibility guidelines so that we can meet and exceed our accessibility standards across both our resident facing platforms and the systems our staff engage with,
- Proactively conducting 'digital discoveries' across the organisation, seeking opportunities for end-to-end digital processes, and improving existing digital experiences for those delivering and accessing our services,
- Creation of a resident experience playbook,

- Explore the use of social media channels as ways for residents to interact and build a different kind of relationship with KCC and to access certain services,
- Making the best use of our Power Platform to build in automation where appropriate and reduce processing time and improve efficiency.

What would success look like?

- 1) User research/user centred design built into all digital service design and an active knowledge sharing forum,
- 2) Digital services have built in feedback tools that are collectively monitored, with lessons learned and continual improvement incorporated into the product/processes,
- 3) Digital services that both consistently meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines dependably,
- 4) An embedded product management approach where 'digital products' are owned by services and are sustained, and continuously improved and digital components are shared across services,
- 5) A rolling cycle of digital discoveries which identify opportunities and feed digital product backlogs,
- 6) Designing end-to-end digital services (including those that connect with our partners), not just digitalising part of the process.



○ Simple, secure and shareable

We want to keep it simple and use one secure tool for the job. We will rationalise our technology and use the technology we have repeatedly.

Why?

We want to buy once and use many times so that we avoid procuring multiple platforms that perform the same function (such as booking, reporting, paying, enquiring) because the benefits are huge. Simplifying our approach and leveraging existing investments makes financial sense. Moreover, it enables us to share and iterate on tried and tested methods for digital delivery, allowing us to expand our offering to residents without duplicating effort. Taking this approach, iterating throughout our journey, means we fail small and continuously improve. This will reduce cyber risk, help us be compliant with information governance and data protection, lower support costs, enhance the compatibility of our systems, and streamline the skillsets we need to deliver Digital. Most importantly, it will ensure simplicity for residents to access our services.

Digital design principle 2

Buy once, use many times

Digital design principle 4

Keep it simple, share and iterate

How?

- Through developing our cultural attribute 'Working together – building and delivering for the best interests of KCC',
- Introduce a streamlined process for commissioning digital products, establish architecture principles, prioritising problem-solving over technical solutions, and enabling faster delivery,
- Implement robust governance measures to prevent independent commissioning of digital services,
- Establish our technology blueprint (including a maintenance process to ensure it is kept up to date and current) for all KCC systems, identifying duplication with a view to rationalise the number of systems (through Enterprise Architecture) considering the scalability of the products we have and reusing existing technologies rather than commissioning additional platforms,
- Establish architecture principles for newly commissioned platforms and in the way we manage and develop these platforms, ensuring they are robustly assessed to meet architecture principles and data protection standards,

- Development of a "Digital toolbox", identifying our preferred digital tools and supporting us to make use of existing and corporately assured technical solutions when implementing directorate digital roadmaps,
- Continuous review of the "Digital toolbox" to ensure that the tools continue to be the best investment and meet our collective needs,
- Creation of new interoperability standards to ensure our systems talk to each other seamlessly and therefore reduce the dependency on suppliers for complex integration and promote automation and data sharing,
- Refine the digital front doors to Kent services, streamlining channels for resident engagement, for example, standalone websites, apps and social media channels.

What would success look like?

- 1) A clear and cohesive commissioning and governance process that is understood by the organisation and underpinned by the digital design principles,
- 2) A complete and thorough catalogue of digital software already commissioned which is effectively used when specifying digital requirements, to avoid duplicate commissioning of technologies,
- 3) Lines of business systems that seamlessly exchange information,
- 4) Reduction in: number of systems/platforms, spend on software and hardware, number of suppliers, shadow IT & training and cyber risk,
- 5) Kent.gov.uk is the single front door to Kent's digital services.



Well used and used well

Support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, developing high levels of digitally skilled collaboration.

Why?

Our strategy will only be realised if our culture fully supports it. This entails providing adequate support to colleagues to leverage tools, technology, and applications to their maximum potential. Our aim is to empower and enhance the digital capabilities of our staff, thereby improving adoption. We will collaborate with colleagues responsible for delivering the People Strategy as well as subject matter experts within our services to provide the necessary support and upskilling.

Digital design principle 6 Support and upskill staff to embrace digital

How?

- Through developing our cultural attributes; 'Empowering – our people take accountability for their decisions and actions' and 'Curious – constantly learning and evolving',
- Continue to invest in digital skills, leveraging our existing investments, both for council wide technologies as well as our line of business systems and ensuring that digital skill development is embedded within our complete development offer and existing programmes,
- Sustaining, supporting, and developing the digital champions network and build digital advocacy through engagement,
- Encourage innovation and enthusiasm for digital by showcasing the art of the possible and promoting our technology through digital events and communications,
- Demystifying digital so that staff understand its relevance to their roles and building this into the way we manage performance, so that digital ways of working and innovation are shared, recognised, and rewarded,
- Development of digital protocols to support staff to use tool to ensure consistency in how we use the tools available to get best value from technology,
- Proactively evaluate our usage of core technology platforms (e.g. M365) and use this data to target developmental interventions across the organisation,
- Supporting policies are developed in line with KCC's value to be brave, aiding the adoption of emerging functionality, including but not limited to the use of automated algorithms and AI (Artificial Intelligence).

What would success look like?

- 1) An actively used digital skills learning hub and knowledge sharing forum, where staff feel supported and have digital built into personal development plans,
- 2) Self-reported staff confidence in using digital tools available to them,
- 3) Staff make the best use of M365 (including citizen development using the Power Platform) ,
- 4) Documented application of the digital design principles for new, existing, and decommissioned systems,
- 5) Our leaders and staff are educated in the impact of digital technologies and are ambassadors for technology innovation.



○ Data led

We want our data to be embedded, accessible and reliable so that we can maximise the use of the data we collect to better inform our decision making and efficiency.

Why?

As our technology evolves, we collect and store more data than ever before, and this growth will accelerate as services transform and embrace digital. Data provides the essential insight necessary to address increasing financial and social pressures, understand and improve the efficiency of services, and provide the backbone needed for stable secure digital services, including automation.

Digital design principle 3: Design with data insight and analytics built in

How?

- Learn lessons from the Data Strategy use-cases and use these to inform the implementation plan of the council's data strategy,
- Align the renewed digital commissioning and governance processes with the Data Governance Framework,
- Apply the Governments FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) principles (National Data Strategy),
- Digital services are designed with data protection by default, ensuring we are safely following existing processes from the point of discovery,
- Create a data catalogue to make data assets discoverable and available, including a repository of reference data, ensuring it is regularly updated and readily available for use,
- Develop and implement a data framework (including roles and responsibilities) underpinned by a bespoke training offer based on clearly defined levels of skills and capabilities, and creating a community of practice to support staff to better use data,
- Develop and implement data quality standards and guidelines and data quality assurance processes,
- Continue development of federated data platform(s) capable of providing access to internal business reference and GIS data and external datasets using common software tools which are not tied to proprietary systems.

What would success look like?

- 1) Our Data and GIS Platforms are integral to our ways of working where these are the best tool for the job,
- 2) How we collect, use, share and dispose of data is understood and trusted by staff, residents, and businesses, who are therefore willing to share their personal data,
- 3) A community of staff sharing common and transferable skills which maximise use of the data and GIS platforms who access a robust learning and development offer,
- 4) We use data to create information and generate insights to better inform decision making and are confident in the quality of the data we hold and use,
- 5) Leadership consistently challenges how data has informed our policies, practices and planning and driver a data led culture.

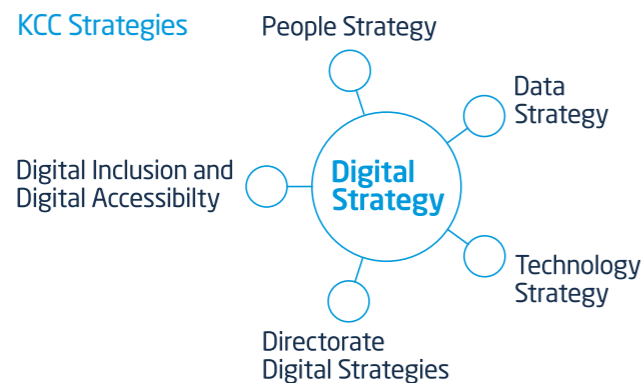
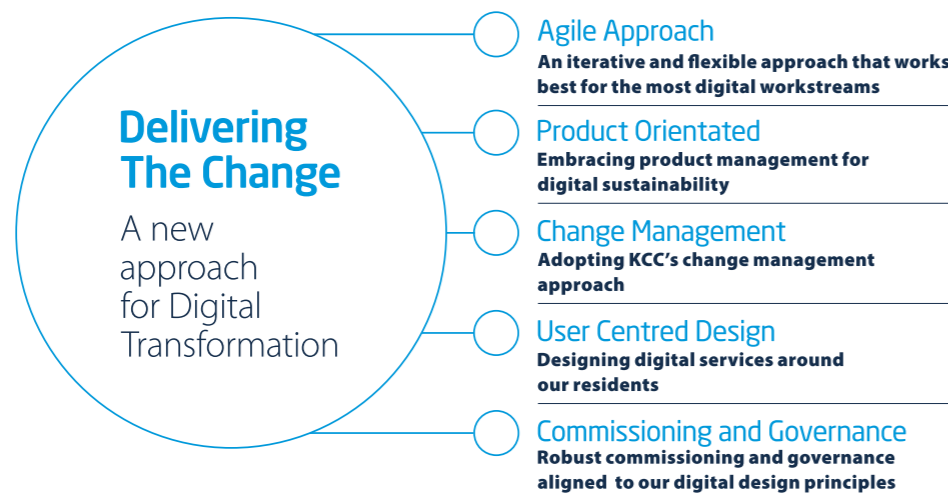


Delivering the change

The delivery of this strategy will be co-ordinated and supported by the Digital Transformation Working Group and the Digital Steering Group. The actions identified throughout this strategy will be prioritised within a roadmap covering the Year 1 of implementation, and Years 2 to 3, sequencing the actions we need to take in the right order ensuring alignment. The roadmap will contain details of the accountable owner and target delivery dates. Much of the identified activity will be dependent on collaborative working in delivering the aligning strategies, particularly the People, Data and Technology strategies.

Above we outlined what specific actions would be needed to deliver against each of the 4 strategic ambitions, emphasising activity planned from the supporting strategies, but how we deliver these ambitions collectively will require a shift in the way in the work. In addition to embedding the digital design principles, embedding a consistent approach and methodologies to digital transformation across the organisation is critical to ensure a successful and unified transformation journey. The critical areas for embedding consistency are; Promoting an agile approach to digital projects, Product orientated delivery, Change management, User-centred design and Robust commissioning and governance.

How we will Deliver the Change.



Resourcing the delivery

It is acknowledged that resourcing the delivery of a complex Digital Transformation within the challenging financial context could be a concern. However, through the below steps we are committed to delivering the change through existing resource, which is shared across the organisation.

- We have already established a permanent core Digital team to lead the co-ordination of activity and are working with a delivery partner in the short term to build capacity,
- We have established a Digital Steering Group who hold responsibility for prioritising Digital transformation projects and programmes, ensuring they are sufficiently resourced in this process,
- Through adopting an agile approach, focused on product management, we can be flexible and adapt to changing resource requirements and make the most of cross-functional teams can also optimise resource allocation based on the evolving needs, promoting longer term digital sustainability,
- Promoting collaboration across the organisation and building a digital community,
- A phased approach as outlined in the annual roadmap, alongside a more robust commissioning and governance model will also allow us to prioritise our digital activity,
- We will leverage our partnerships and proactively seek the external funding opportunities available for us to access and actively engage with national Digital opportunities,
- Our capacity will be regularly reviewed in line with the Digital roadmap and detailed programme plan.

Monitoring and reporting progress

It is essential that we can monitor progress to ensure that the work we are doing is delivering tangible difference to our staff, members and most importantly, our residents. Our roadmap outlines how key deliverables have been prioritised over the lifetime of this 3-year strategy and what specifically will be delivered within year 1. We will report on key performance indicators on a quarterly basis.

Glossary

Data platform(s)

Data platform(s) refers to software which will enable KCC services to bring together operational data - currently stored in separate systems - to support staff to access the information they need in one safe and secure environment.

Digital discoveries

A 10 week discovery phase using consistent methodology which identifies digital opportunities within services, or organisation wide.

Digital product

A digital product is a service offered (rather than the technology platform or function) designed to meet the needs of users. It will comprise a number of digital components.

Digital product backlogs

A prioritized list of digital developments for a particular product.

End to end digital services

Fully digitised processes, from initial front-end data capture and input, to communication and synchronisation in back-office systems. An end-to-end digital service will successfully handle a task digitally from start to completion.

Federated data platform

A federated data platform means that every whilst different services will have their own platform, they will be able to connect and collaborate with other data platforms across the council, making it easier for us to work together internally and externally.

GIS platforms

A Geographic Information System (GIS) platform is a computer system that analyses and displays geographically referenced information.

Interoperability standards

Standards that ensure different systems and products can seamlessly interact, making use of data and information across system and organisational boundaries.

Product-orientated approach

Taking a product-orientated approach means building self-sufficient and self-sustainable agile teams that have the autonomy to build and run its product or service, along with complete accountability for its performance.

Use case approach

Data Strategy use cases are specific pieces of activity which have the goal of generating evidence to answer specific questions relating to the strategy. Taken together, the use cases provide a comprehensive evidence base which leads to the development of a full implementation plan.

Appendix 1: Strategic context

Key

- Framing Kent's Future: Our Response
- Strategic Reset Ambitions
- Framing Kent's Future: Equality Objectives



Appendix 2: Digital Strategy Roadmap



Year one

Years two to three

<p>Ambition One: Improve residents' digital experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital maturity current state assessment. Create guidance for website best practice include design and maintenance. Create user research toolkit and development offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Resident experience playbook. Pilot Digital transformation approach including Agile, User centred design and Product Management . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a pipeline of Digital Transformations using the approaches that work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardise feedback tools and user research practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and test user research toolkit.
<p>Ambition Two: Simple, Secure and shareable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferred website technology agreed. Agree our Digital Architecture principles. Baseline assessment of existing technology. Test digital solutions through Microsoft Sandbox. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decommission redundant and risky websites. Governance process for digital. Agree interoperability principles. Write business case for rationalization of technology infrastructure. Digital post service engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iterative rationalization of technology onboarding services to core solutions. Adoption of principles, processes and preferred tools. Monitoring compliance and impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our digital toolbox against value for money and business needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamline platforms for resident engagement.
<p>Ambition Three: Well used and used well</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment to Digital Champion network. Pilot a Digital Festival to showcase current digital maturity. Reward Digital Champions for engagement with Transformation. Develop L&D offer to target adoption core technology e.g. M365. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-production of Digital Protocols so there are clear ways of digital working. Adopt an Artificial Intelligence (Ai) Policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor adoption of M365. Embed expanded digital development offer into core offer, including EBC provider. Iterate and respond to new functionality. Consistent relationship with digital champions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support managers to build digital into recruitment and retention practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress against policy framework.
<p>Ambition Four: Data led</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report findings of use case studies to develop implementation plan. Re-baseline corporate digital experience metrics. Onboard more services to our Data Platform. Utilise existing data to support automation and streamline business processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise data strategy. Pilot a development offer to support data literacy. Digital strategy measurement framework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor adoption of centralised Data Platform. Assess effectiveness of our data management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standardise data cataloguing and reference within decision making. Embed data framework, training, governance and quality standards that respond to our assessment. 	



This page is intentionally left blank

EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Kent County Council Digital Strategy 2024-27

Responsible Officer

Sylvia Holman - DCED T

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

Strategy/Policy

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Strategic and Corporate Services

Responsible Service

Digital Transformation/Technology

Responsible Head of Service

Dave Lindsay - DCED T

Responsible Director

Lisa Gannon - DCED T

Aims and Objectives

Aims and objectives

The Digital Strategy 2024-27 is being developed to serve as an overarching framework that encompasses our current and future digitally focused strategies and policies. These include the Digital Accessibility Strategy, the Digital Skills Strategy, the Technology Strategy, the Data Strategy and various directorate level digital strategies. The Digital Strategy focuses on how we can exploit technology to support and facilitate better digital experiences.

It is intended that this EqlA will cover all these strategies, although specific EqlAs will still be required for specific activities.

Our vision is to ensure that “People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered and respected.”

Our mission is to securely and ethically utilise technology, tools, and information to enhance our services, making them faster, more cost-effective, more environmentally friendly and ultimately providing our staff with the means to deliver a better, more streamlined experience for our residents and Kent businesses that we support. We will do this by integrating technology, in a user centred way, into our operations, revolutionising the way our staff work and presenting it to our residents.

The strategy has four strategic ambitions (SA):

- (SA1) Improve residents' digital experience: Provide easier digital access to council services that are designed around the resident, taking a user-centred approach and maximising accessibility and inclusion.
- (SA2) Simple secure and sharable: We want to keep it simple and use one secure tool for the job. We will rationalise our technology and use the technology we have over and over again.
- (SA3) Well used and used well: Support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, developing high levels of digitally skilled collaboration.
- (SA4) Data led: We want our data to be embedded, accessible and reliable so that we can maximise the use of the data we collect to better inform our decision making and efficiency.

The strategy is being co-produced with staff across KCC.

Summary of key findings:

This equality impact assessment suggests that overall, the implementation of the strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics by taking a user-centred approach and maximising accessibility and inclusion. Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.

Whilst our Digital Strategy should ensure that our digital channels are as accessible as possible, there may be individuals who are still unable to benefit from improvement to our digital channels due to digital exclusion.

Staff will be supported, helping them to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them. The Digital Accessibility Team will be consulted.

Equality recommendations:

- The Digital Strategy document is an accessible document
- Images and language used in the document are representative and inclusive
- Further equality analysis be conducted on specific digital transformation activity

Section B – Evidence

Do you have data related to the protected groups of the people impacted by this activity?

Yes

It is possible to get the data in a timely and cost effective way?

Yes

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

The strategy has been co—produced with KCC staff, with 2,700 colleagues being invited to contribute.

Extensive stakeholder engagement inviting contribution from across the organisation has taken place, including but not limited to:

- Digital steering group and working group
- Key stakeholders identified by members of the Digital Steering Group
- Directorate digital and systems/tech groups/boards (e.g. GET Directorate Tech Board, ASCH Digital Group, CYPE Systems board)
- Directorate PMOs (who will be essential in helping us deliver our ambitions)
- Digital champions networks (100+ people on call inviting contribution, 300+ on Teams site directly contacted)
- Corporate colleagues (e.g. HR/OD, SPRCA etc.)
- External (free of charge) consultancy – Gartner, SOCITM
- EQIA advice
- Leadership group T200
- Staff Group Chairs who then invited contributions from their groups

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

No

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

Residents/communities/citizens

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

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

Age

Older people are more likely to be digitally excluded through choice and can be less confident in using the internet (see p3 Digital Exclusion in Kent, June 2021). It is also important to bear in mind that disability and age are closely related, with older people more likely to have a disability, long term illness or impairment.

Regarding young people, it is often presumed that as digital natives, they won't be digitally excluded but many younger people lack the necessary skills for employment. Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are also "less likely to have access to digital devices and to share devices between people in the household and use mobile data instead of a broadband connection" (see p10 Digital Exclusion in Kent, June 2021)

There is also evidence that young LGBTQ+ people experience higher levels of homelessness and poverty than heterosexual, cisgender people. This has a significant effect on digital inclusion, particularly during Covid-19 when many public facilities – like libraries or community centres – were closed due to lockdown (see How do LGBTQ+ people experience the digital divide(s) - Good Things Foundation).

See supplementary information for data on breakdown by age for Kent population and KCC workforce.

The strategy:

(SA1) Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital

exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign. Developing a more robust approach to enforcing the digital accessibility guidelines will help those older struggling to access our services say, through the inability to control the font size through their browser or use custom screen magnification software due to our websites or apps not being built to the required digital accessibility standards.

As stated in Framing Kents Future (p11): “We recognise that a digital-first approach will not be suitable for everyone, and we will continue to provide other options where these are needed, while supporting people who cannot access digital options, for example due to lack of skills and confidence or due to digital poverty, to be able to use digital options if possible.”

Disability

According to the 2021 census, 17.6% of people in Kent consider that they have a long-term health problem or disability (p 3, Kent Analytics- Disability in Kent May 2022). People with certain disabilities are more likely to be digitally excluded if websites and apps are not built to required accessibility standards or if they don't have access to the necessary software or digital tools to help them access online services.

For example, where websites or systems are not correctly configured:

- a user with a visual impairment may not be able to use screen reader software to read aloud content,
- a user who struggles to use their fingers may not be able to use voice controls to complete an online form,
- users with sensory processing difficulties may not be able to adjust how content is displayed so that they can engage with it more easily (e.g. turning off any animations, changing the background colour behind text),
- and a user who is Deaf may not be able to understand the content of a video posted on our Twitter account if there are no captions or British Sign Language interpretation.

In terms of staff members, 4.5% have declared that they have a disability (see Table 1, KCC Annual Equality and Diversity Report 2021-22). Insight about the specific nature of any barriers to accessibility is more limited but this figure (4.5%) shows that pro-active consideration of accessibility and how this is embedded in our digital tools and systems is likely to be significant.

We also need to take into consideration that some staff may have an undisclosed disability, underlying the importance of our core digital offering being accessible by design.

The strategy:

(SA1) We will develop a more robust approach to enforcing our digital accessibility guidelines so that we can meet and exceed our accessibility standards across both our resident facing platforms and the systems our staff engage with

(SA3) Well used and used well: Support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, developing high levels of digitally skilled collaboration. The Digital Accessibility Team will be consulted.

Sex

ONS data suggests that men as a group are slightly less likely to be digitally excluded than women (Men: Women ratio on digital exclusion is 0.92 - see Table 5 Digital exclusion and equality in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)), where digital exclusion means someone has not used the internet in the past three months.

See supplementary information for data on breakdown by sex for Kent population and KCC workforce.

The strategy:

(SA1) Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.

Our vision is to ensure that “People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered and respected.”

Sexual orientation

The digital divides that LGBTQ+ people experience are relatively under-researched, partly due to insufficient data collection.

See supplementary information for data on breakdown by gender identity, transgender and sexual orientation for Kent population and KCC workforce.

Gender identity/Transgender

By creating consistency across our digital estate, the needs of the transgender community best practice can proliferate whereby wherever possible, online forms utilise the same template that allows a range of titles and gender identities to be used such as Mr, Miss, Mrs, Mx or enter their own title and for gender identity can select from female, male or non-binary or enter a different gender identity.

The strategy:

(SA1) Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.

Our vision is to ensure that “People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered and respected.”

Race

Across the ethnic groups for which breakdowns were available, the proportion of people who have either never used the internet or have not used it in the last three months came down between 2011 and 2018. In 2011, there were wide disparities in recent internet use among the different ethnic groups, however, in 2018, this gap had narrowed. This is particularly the case for adults of Bangladeshi ethnicity. In 2011, 31.4% of them were internet non-users, higher than the figure for UK adults overall (20.3%). In 2018, the figure for Bangladeshi internet non-users had dropped to 8.0%.

Adults of Bangladeshi ethnicity are still 4.76 times more likely to be digitally excluded than those of White ethnicity, followed by adults of Pakistani ethnicity (3.81 times more likely to be digitally excluded) than those of Indian ethnicity (1.59 times more likely to be digitally excluded).

Those of Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicity are 1.36 times more likely to be digitally excluded than adults of White ethnicity, and for those of Chinese or other Asian ethnicity, the ratio is 1.11. Adults of mixed or multiple ethnic groups are less likely to be digital excluded than those of White ethnicity

(ratio is 0.54), as are adults of any other ethnic group (0.90) (see Digital exclusion and equality in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk) - January 2023).

There are also economic and financial barriers to digital inclusion that disproportionately affect some minority ethnic groups. “The UK Office for National Statistics has shown that, on entering the pandemic, minority ethnic groups (particularly Black African and other Black ethnic groups) had lower financial resilience than people identifying as White British and White other; Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups were more likely than White British individuals to report a worsening financial situation between 2019, and April, 2020” (see Digital first during the COVID-19 pandemic: does ethnicity matter? - The Lancet Public Health- August 2021)

Digital connectivity is a major challenge faced by refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. Many organisations that once offered a mixture of online and in-person access have moved entirely online. These developments have created a ‘digital gap’. A lack of proper devices and digital literacy, combined with language barriers and internet access costs, exacerbates isolation and social and economic exclusion (see Reducing Digital Exclusion For Refugees And People Seeking Asylum In The UK - Refugee Action (refugee-action.org.uk) August 2022).

See supplementary information for data on breakdown by ethnic group for Kent population and KCC workforce.

The strategy:

(SA1) Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.

Our vision is to ensure that “People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered and respected.”

Carer’s responsibilities

According to the Kent Adult Carers’ Strategy 2022 to 2027, an estimated 148,341 adults aged 16 and over provide unpaid care each week, with just under a quarter of these providing 50 hours of care or more a week.

The Digital Strategy aims to increase the availability and accessibility of services, which should provide increased flexibility for carers. However, some studies show that carers (in particular full-time carers) are less likely to be comfortable using digital services and more likely to say they don’t have any or enough digital devices.

Research by Carers UK shows that older carers are more likely to be digital excluded as are those who are not in employment. When asked what the main barriers are that prevent older people from using online support services, the most reported barrier was having a lack of confidence about how to use technology (88%), followed by a preference for face-to-face, telephone or postal contact (87%) and a lack of knowledge about how to use technology (83%) (see Supporting older carers who are digitally excluded – Carers UK (August 2023)).

See supplementary information for more data on the provision of unpaid care in the Kent population.

The strategy:

(SA1) Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign.

Our vision is to ensure that “People’s digital experiences of KCC are accessible, inclusive, clear, trusted and designed with the user in mind to make their experience as positive as possible. They leave feeling confident, empowered, and respected.”

Other relevant characteristics:

Research suggests that the following groups are also more likely to be digital excluded than others (see p6 digitalkent.uk/resources/detail/kent-digital-exclusion-reports-june-2021-537) :

- People without a job
- People in social housing
- People with fewer educational qualifications
- People living in rural areas
- People whose first language is not English

Socioeconomic (deprivation)

Affordability limits many people’s access to the Internet and digital technology. From a survey conducted by Kent County Council, the top reason for people having limited access to the Internet and digital devices was due to affordability (56%). In addition, many people were sharing devices (24%). (see p5 digitalkent.uk/resources/detail/kent-digital-exclusion-reports-june-2021-537)

General commentary:

The delivery of the strategy document itself is not expected to have a direct impact on people, however it will be used to give a steer to upcoming projects/strategies with a digital element within its 2024-27 lifespan which could have an impact. Each of these projects/strategies would be expected to have their own Equalities Impact Assessment as required.

S.A1. Improve residents’ digital experience

It is important to ensure that online content including language and images used is engaging, appropriate and representative of all groups using a particular service.

In addition, KCC web content standards includes guidance on language usage e.g. using simple language and no jargon, so that it can be understood by people:

- with a low reading age (the average UK reading age is about 9 years old)
- whose first language is not English
- using screen reading devices

(SA4) Data Led

The strategy: We want our data to be embedded, accessible and reliable so that we can maximise the use of the data we collect to better inform our decision making and efficiency.

There is the potential positive impact on all protected groups to being Data Led.

If data on protected groups (i.e. special category data) is used sensibly and responsibly, then key trends can

be observed, and insights derived, which enable better service design and improved outcomes for people.

As an example, the EHRC is currently producing a case study on how Kent's use of AI actually supports the Public Sector Equality Duty. The takeaway is that when used properly, data can be a force for good for protected groups.

Negative impacts and Mitigating Actions

19.Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Age

Are there negative impacts for age?

Yes

Details of negative impacts for Age

(SA1 & SA2) Whilst our Digital Strategy should ensure that our digital channels are as accessible as possible, there may be individuals who are still unable to benefit from improvement to our digital channels due to digital exclusion.

Older people are more likely to be digitally excluded through choice and can be less confident in using the internet.

Regarding young people, it is often presumed that as digital natives, they won't be digitally excluded but many younger people lack the necessary skills for employment. Those who are digitally excluded may also be excluded from some of the benefits of digital service transformation.

There is evidence that young LGBTQ+ people experience higher levels of homelessness and poverty than heterosexual, cisgender people. This has a significant effect on digital inclusion, particularly during Covid-19 when many public facilities – like libraries or community centres – were closed due to lockdown (see How do LGBTQ+ people experience the digital divide(s) - Good Things Foundation).

(SA4) Modern data analytics often use digital tools which older people may have less experience of and may be less confident to use. This could impact service user's confidence and ability to communicate with us about how their data is used, and for staff who are required to work differently to gain the benefits of these new digital tools.

Mitigating Actions for Age

SA1 Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign. Any learning will be passed on to service teams to inform planning for offline channels.

SA2 By utilising the same technologies for different parts of the council, those at risk of digital exclusion will find it easier to transfer any digital skills they gain from one part of the council to another, rather than need to learn how to navigate multiple platforms and technologies.

SA3 & SA4 Internally within KCC, training and development will be provided to support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, including using modernising our use of data. Communication will be tailored to support all individuals to understand how we use their data and what their rights are in relation to this.

We will work closely with Digital Kent to decrease digital exclusion across the county by removing the barriers faced by those experiencing digital exclusion.

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Dave Lindsay

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability
Are there negative impacts for Disability?
Yes
Details of Negative Impacts for Disability
<p>Whilst our Digital Strategy should ensure that our digital channels are as accessible as possible, there may be individuals who are still unable to benefit from improvement to our digital channels due to digital exclusion.</p> <p>People with certain disabilities are more likely to be digitally excluded if websites and apps are not built to required accessibility standards or if they don't have access to the necessary software or digital tools to help them access online services. Those who are digitally excluded may also be excluded from some of the benefits of digital service transformation.</p>
Mitigating actions for Disability
<p>SA1 Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign. Any learning will be passed on to service teams to inform planning for offline channels.</p> <p>SA1 We will develop a more robust approach to enforcing our digital accessibility guidelines so that we can meet and exceed our accessibility standards across both our resident facing platforms and the systems our staff engage with</p> <p>SA3 Well used and used well: Support colleagues to make the best, fullest use of the tools and technologies available to them, developing high levels of digitally skilled collaboration. The Digital Accessibility Team will be consulted.</p> <p>We will work closely with Digital Kent to decrease digital exclusion across the county by removing the barriers faced by those experiencing digital exclusion.</p>
Responsible Officer for Disability
Dave Lindsay
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
Yes
Negative impacts for Race
<p>(SA1 & SA2) Whilst our Digital Strategy should ensure that our digital channels are as accessible as possible, there may be individuals who are still unable to benefit from improvement to our digital channels due to digital exclusion.</p> <p>Adults of Bangladeshi ethnicity are still 4.76 times more likely to be digitally excluded than those of White ethnicity, followed by adults of Pakistani ethnicity (3.81 times more likely to be digitally excluded) than those of Indian ethnicity (1.59 times more likely to be digitally excluded).</p> <p>Those of Black, African, Caribbean or Black British ethnicity are 1.36 times more likely to be digitally excluded than adults of White ethnicity, and for those of Chinese or other Asian ethnicity, the ratio is 1.11. Adults of mixed or multiple ethnic groups are less likely to be digital excluded than those of White ethnicity (ratio is 0.54), as are adults of any other ethnic group (0.90).</p> <p>Digital connectivity is a major challenge faced by refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. A lack of proper devices and digital literacy, combined with language barriers and internet access costs, exacerbates isolation and social and economic exclusion.</p> <p>Those who are digitally excluded may also be excluded from some of the benefits of digital service transformation.</p> <p>(SA4) In terms of data, use of poor quality data could lead to poor outcomes and building unconscious bias into the analysis we undertake and the decisions we make. This is particularly pertinent to those from ethnically diverse communities as facial recognition systems such as those developed by Microsoft have shown to be up to 19% less accurate at recognising images of Black men and women compared to White individuals.</p>
Mitigating actions for Race
<p>SA1 Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign. Any learning will be passed on to service teams to inform planning for offline channels.</p> <p>We will work closely with Digital Kent to decrease digital exclusion across the county by removing the barriers faced by those experiencing digital exclusion.</p> <p>SA2 By utilising the same technologies for different parts of the council, those at risk of digital exclusion will find it easier to transfer any digital skills they gain from one part of the council to another, rather than need to learn how to navigate multiple platforms and technologies.</p> <p>SA4 We will properly interrogate the how representative the data being used to generate analysis and support decision making and any automated (or supported) decision making should be taken in line with our Artificial Intelligence Policy. We will also robustly challenge the ethics principles behind our use of data which will be aligned with our statutory requirements and the Government's Data Ethics Framework.</p>
Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race
Dave Lindsay
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
Yes
Negative impacts for Carer's responsibilities
Some studies show that carers (in particular full-time carers) are less likely to be comfortable using digital services and more likely to say they don't have any or enough digital devices.
Research by Carers UK shows that older carers are more likely to be digital excluded as are those who are not in employment. When asked what the main barriers are that prevent older people from using online support services, the most reported barrier was having a lack of confidence about how to use technology (88%), followed by a preference for face-to-face, telephone or postal contact (87%) and a lack of knowledge about how to use technology (83%) (see Supporting older carers who are digitally excluded – Carers UK (August 2023)).
Those who are digitally excluded may also be excluded from some of the benefits of digital service transformation.
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
SA1 Adopting user-centred design methodologies when designing digital services will help combat digital

exclusion by engaging with and involving groups at risk of digital exclusion in service redesign. Any learning will be passed on to service teams to inform planning for offline channels.

SA2 By utilising the same technologies for different parts of the council, those at risk of digital exclusion will find it easier to transfer any digital skills they gain from one part of the council to another, rather than need to learn how to navigate multiple platforms and technologies.

We will work closely with Digital Kent to decrease digital exclusion across the county by removing the barriers faced by those experiencing digital exclusion.

Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities

Dave Lindsay

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services

DECISION NO:

23/00120

For publication Yes

Key decision: Yes

This decision will result in a new Strategy or Policy outside of the Policy Framework

Title of Decision: The Kent County Council Digital Strategy 2024 - 2027

Decision:

As Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, I agree to the adoption of the Kent County Council Digital Strategy 2024-2027.

Reason(s) for decision:

Kent County Council (KCC) requires a Digital Strategy to coordinate and drive digital transformation activity and to provide the overarching framework that encompasses KCC's current and future digitally focused strategies and policies.

KCC has a Technology Strategy but has never had a Digital Strategy. The Digital strategy will focus on how KCC exploit technology to support and facilitate better digital experiences.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

No public consultation has been undertaken nor is planned.

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee will consider this on 17 January 2024

Endorsed at Strategic Reset Programme Programme Board, September 2023

Endorsed at Strategic Technology Board, July 2023

Throughout development over 2,700 staff were invited to contribute and challenge the purpose, structure, and content, via a range of forums including staff groups, digital champions network, T200 network, bespoke innovation labs and key stakeholder groups such as directorate technology/system groups.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing, which was discarded.

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

.....
signed

.....
date

This page is intentionally left blank

From: Ben Watts, General Counsel

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 17 January 2024

Subject: **Work Programme 2023**

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: Standard item

Summary: This report gives details of the proposed work programme for the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee.

Recommendation: The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note its planned work programme for 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The proposed Work Programme has been compiled from items on the Forthcoming Executive Decision List, from actions arising from previous meetings and from topics identified at agenda setting meetings, held 6 weeks before each Cabinet Committee meeting, in accordance with the Constitution, and attended by the Chair, Vice-Chair and group spokesmen.
- 1.2 Whilst the Chair, in consultation with the Cabinet Members, is responsible for the final selection of items for the agenda, this item gives all Members of the Cabinet Committee the opportunity to suggest amendments and additional agenda items where appropriate.

2. Terms of Reference

- 2.1 At its meeting held on 27 March 2014, the County Council agreed the following terms of reference for the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee “To be responsible for those functions that fall within the Strategic and Corporate Services Directorate” and these should also inform the suggestions made by Members for appropriate matters for consideration.

3. Work Programme 2023

- 3.1 The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider and note the items within the proposed Work Programme, set out in the appendix to this report, and to suggest any additional topics to be considered for inclusion on agendas of future meetings.
- 3.2 The schedule of commissioning activity that falls within the remit of this Cabinet Committee will be included in the Work Programme and is considered at agenda setting meetings to support more effective forward agenda planning and allow Members to have oversight of significant services delivery decisions in advance.

3.3 When selecting future items, the Cabinet Committee should consider performance monitoring reports. Any 'for information' or briefing items will be sent to Members of the Cabinet Committee separately to the agenda or separate member briefings will be arranged where appropriate.

4. Conclusion

4.1 It is important for the Cabinet Committee process that the Committee takes ownership of its work programme to help the Cabinet Members to deliver informed and considered decisions. A regular report will be submitted to each meeting of the Cabinet Committee to give updates on requested topics and to seek suggestions for future items to be considered. This does not preclude Members making requests to the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer between meetings for consideration.

5. Recommendation: The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note its planned work programme for 2024

6. Background Documents

None.

7. Contact details

Report Author:
Katy Reynolds
Democratic Services Officer
03000 422252
katy.reynolds@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:
Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814
benjamin.watts@kent.gov.uk

POLICY AND RESOURCES CABINET COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

13 March 2024 – 10am agenda setting 29 January at 2.00pm (online)		
• Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 2030	Rebecca Spore Rebecca Anderson	
• Risk Management (Including RAG ratings)	David Whittle Mark Scrivener	Annual item
• Cyber Security	Lisa Gannon	Annual item
• Contract Management Review Group update	Clare Maynard	Six-monthly item
• Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton	Regular item
• Facilities Management update (bi-annual)	Rebecca Spore	Moved to 2024 due to new Facilities Management arrangements. (frequency thereafter to be confirmed)
• Disposal of Former Rosemary Centre, High Road, Dartford, DA2 7DP	Rebecca Spore Mark Cheverton Hugh D’Alton	Key Decision TBC
• Work Programme 2023		
15 May 2024 – 10am – agenda setting 20 March at 2.00 pm (online)		
• Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department	David Whittle Matt Wagner	Regular item
• Kent Partnerships Update - Kent Estates Partnership (KEP) and Kent Connects	Rebecca Spore Phil Murphy Julie Johnson	Regular item
• Facilities Management update (bi-annual)	Rebecca Spore	Regular item
• Proposals regarding the Afghan Resettlement and United Kingdom Resettlement Schemes	David Whittle Michael Thomas-Sam	Key Decision

	Chris Grosskopf	
• Work Programme 2023		
10 July 2024 – 2pm – agenda setting 22 May at 11.00am (online)		
• Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Zena Cooke	<i>Regular item</i>
• Work Programme 2023		
September 2024 – 2pm – agenda setting TBC		
• Facilities Management update (bi-annual)	Rebecca Spore	<i>Regular item</i>
• Work Programme 2023		

PATTERN OF REGULAR ITEMS

JANUARY	Annual	Draft Revenue and Capital Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
	Annual	Implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Kent	Tim Woolmer
	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
	Annual	Cyber Security	Lisa Gannon
	Six-monthly	Contract Management Review Group update	Clare Maynard
	Every other meeting	Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
MAY	Annual	Kent Partnerships Update - Kent Estates Partnership (KEP) and Kent Connects	Rebecca Spore Phil Murphy Julie Johnson
	Six-monthly	Facilities Management update	Rebecca Spore
	Every other meeting	Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and Deputy Chief Executive's Department	David Whittle Matt Wagner
JULY	Every other meeting	Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
SEPTEMBER	Six-monthly	Contract Management Review Group update	Clare Maynard
	Every other	Performance Dashboard for the Chief Executive's Department and	David Whittle

	meeting	Deputy Chief Executive's Department	Matt Wagner
NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER	Annual	Annual Equality and Diversity Report (in 2022 moved to January)	David Whittle
	Six-monthly	Facilities Management update	Rebecca Spore
	Every other meeting	Regular Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) update	Zena Cooke Dave Shipton
TBC	TBC	Enterprise Business Capabilities - Update	Lisa Gannon