

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 26th February, 2025

10.00 am

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





AGENDA

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 26th February, 2025, at 10.00 am
Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Ask for: **Anna Taylor**
Telephone: **03000 416478**

Membership

- Conservative (10): Mr A Booth (Chairman), Mr P V Barrington-King (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mr T Bond, Mr D L Brazier, Mrs L Game, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr O Richardson and Mr S Webb
- Labour (1): Mr A Brady
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mr A J Hook
- Green and Independent (1): Ms J Hawkins
- Independent: Mr M Whiting
- Church Representatives (3): Mr J Constanti, Mr M Reidy and Mr Q Roper
- Parent Governor (2): Ms R Ainslie-Malik and Ms H Carter

County Councillors who are not Members of the Committee but who wish to ask questions at the meeting are asked to notify the Chairman of their questions in advance.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

A - Required Items

- A1 Introduction/Webcast Announcement
- A2 Apologies and Substitutes
- A3 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this Meeting

B - Any items called-in

C - Any items placed on the agenda by any Member of the Council for discussion

- C1 Devolution and Local Government Reform (Pages 1 - 2)
- C2 Household Support Fund (Pages 3 - 22)
- C3 Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030 Decision - 24/00069 (Pages 23 - 64)
- C4 Transfer of the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service - Decision 24/00109 (Pages 65 - 126)

D - To Note

- D1 Work Programme (Pages 127 - 130)

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)

Benjamin Watts
General Counsel
03000 416814

Tuesday, 18 February 2025

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
To: Scrutiny Committee, 26 February 2025
Subject: Devolution and Local Government Reform.

Summary: The Chairman and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee have asked that this issue be placed on the agenda for discussion.

1. Introduction

- a) Following the Cabinet decision, on 9 January 2025 to proceed with a proposal for devolution the Scrutiny Committee met to discuss and note the urgent decision taken.
- b) On Wednesday 5 February 2025 the Leader was told by Government that Kent and Medway had not been selected as one of the areas that would be part of its Devolution Priority Programme.
- c) Despite Kent not currently being on the devolution propriety programme the Government has told the county's council leaders that they must press ahead with their proposals for local government reorganisation, and that all two-tier authorities should now make plans to merge to create single authorities, and make structures simpler and more efficient.
- d) By 21 March 2025, an interim proposal should be developed by the leaders of KCC, Medway Council and all twelve district and borough councils in the county. This should set out how Kent and Medway could be divided into unitary authorities, with full proposals expected by 28 November.

2. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss and comment on or note the update provided by the Leader of the Council.

3. Background documents

- a) [Agenda for Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday, 29th January, 2025, 10.00 am](#)
- b) [Agenda for County Council on Thursday, 9th January, 2025, 10.00 am](#)
- c) [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 9th January, 2025, 2.00 pm](#)
- d) [Devolution derailed in Kent but plans for major council shake up to go ahead - News & Features - Kent County Council](#)

- e) ["A totally incomprehensible decision" - KCC Leader reacts to Government's decision not to include Kent on its Devolution Priority Programme - News & Features - Kent County Council](#)
- f) [English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK](#)

Contact Details

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk 03000 416478

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
To: Scrutiny Committee, 26 February 2025
Subject: Delivery of the Household Support Fund (21/00107)

Summary: Following a request from Mr Hook, the Chairman and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee have agreed that the issue of the Household Support Fund be placed on the Committee agenda for discussion.

1. Introduction

- a) In September 2021 the Government announced that vulnerable households across the country would be able to access a new £500million support fund to help them with essentials over the winter. The Household Support Fund was distributed by Upper Tier councils in England to directly help those who needed it most. In October 2021 the Leader took an urgent decision to accept the grant and the decision also authorised the Corporate Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they were given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they could be appropriately managed under the funding/governance framework put in place by the decision.
- b) The Household Support Fund is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions on behalf of the UK government and the scheme supports vulnerable Kent households in need of help with significantly rising living costs.
- c) The following webpage sets out who is eligible, what is offered, how to apply and appeal, how you would receive and redeem your voucher along with other places to get help: [Household Support Fund - Kent County Council](#)
- d) Cabinet has received updates on the Financial Hardship Programme in March 2023, July 2024 and November 2024 – the links to these meetings are contained in the background documents below.
- e) This item is placed on the agenda for discussion following concerns about how the fund is being targeted and which groups of Kent residents are eligible.

2. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss and comment on the delivery of the Household Support Fund.

3. Attached documents

- a) [21/00107 Record of Decision](#)
- b) [21/00107 Decision Report](#)
- c) [Record of Officer Decision - Household Support Grant allocation to Water Companies](#)
- d) [Record of Officer Decision - Household Support Fund Extension](#)

4. Background documents

- a) [Household Support Fund - Kent County Council](#)
- b) [Update on Supporting Kent Residents with Financial Hardship - Cabinet, 30 March 2023 – Update on Supporting Kent Residents with Financial Hardship](#)
- c) [Financial Hardship Programme - Cabinet, 11 July 2024](#)
- d) [Financial Hardship Programme - Cabinet, 28 November 2024](#)

Contact Details

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk 03000 416478

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – URGENT RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough, Leader

DECISION NO:

21/00107

For Publication

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) *result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or*
- b) *be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:*
 - *the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;*
 - *significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.*

As Leader of the Council, I agree to:

- 1) Confirm and endorse the arrangements put in place via Officer Decision 21/0008, taken under delegated authority arising from Key Decision 21/00062 by the Corporate Director for Finance, to accept the Household Support Grant in full for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions.
- 2) Note that Officer Decision 21/0008 committed £750k of the accepted grant to the provision of supermarket vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the October 2021 school.
- 3) Approve use of the grant to support the provision of vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the Christmas 2021, February and Easter 2022 school holidays.
- 4) Approve the use of the remainder of the Household Support Grant over the winter period to the end of March 2022 as set out in section 3 of the associated Executive Decision Report.
- 5) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader to take any other actions, within the scope of the grant management framework, needed to ensure that the grant is spent in full by the date stipulated by the Department for Work and Pensions, including reviewing, revising and amending the funding allocations set out in the Executive Decision Report.
- 6) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader, to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.
- 7) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they are given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they can be appropriately managed under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Government announced in October the Household Support Grant, which is in line with previous grants issued (Covid Winter Grant and Covid Local Support Grant). While previous acceptance and management of related grants was possible via delegated authority arising from previous decisions, it is appropriate and necessary for these previous arrangements to be noted and the ongoing acceptance and deployment of the Grant to be subject to Executive Member decision-making.

This decision is necessary to confirm KCC's acceptance of the additional grant monies and clearly set out the approved use through to the grant spend end-date of 31 March 2022.

Financial Implications:

The Household Support Grant provides the Council £11.065m to support the most vulnerable residents in the County over the winter period without a direct impact on the Council's budget.

Reason for Urgency:

Final formal confirmation of the full funding scale, total spend deadline and activity timelines were not received from Government with sufficient notice to allow for appropriate KCC Governance processes to commence at an earlier stage. It is therefore not possible to comply with normal Executive Decision governance timescales while meeting government deadlines and the need to deliver the relevant funding support to residents. There is an urgent need to allocate and distribute the grant funding as quickly as possible to reach those residents and households most in need of financial support over the winter months. It is also important that schools are advised as early as possible that free school meal provision in school holidays will continue and include the Easter holidays. The grant is strictly time limited and needs to be spent in full by the end of March 2022 to avoid any unspent grant being clawed back by Government.

Member and other consultation:

No Cabinet Committee consultation possible due to urgency process.

The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee, in addition to agreeing that the decision could not be reasonably deferred, provided the following comments:

Mr Booth supported the decision.

The Group Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee provided the following comments:

No comments were received.

The Chair and Group Spokespeople of the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee provided the following comments:

No comments were received.

The Chair and Group Spokespeople of the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee provided the following comments:

Mr Dance supported the decision.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The option of turning down the grant was rejected as there are many Kent families in need who will benefit from receiving this support.

We considered providing all funding to Districts to deliver through localised solutions however there are some elements of support that would be best provided at a county level, for example Free School Meals.

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

None



22 November 2021

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signed

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date

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From: Zena Cooke – Corporate Director Finance

To: Roger Gough – Leader of the Council

Subject: **Household Support Grant**
Decision number: 21/00107

Key Decision: *Affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions and involves expenditure of over £1m*

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: **None**

Future Pathway of Paper: **Implementation of the decision**

Electoral Division: All

Summary: This report advises of the new Household Support Grant provided by Government, its intended purpose, and proposals for its spend. It provides background on similar previous grants received and how these were utilised.

Recommendations: The Leader is asked to:

- 1) Confirm and endorse the arrangements put in place via Officer Decision 21/0008, taken under delegated authority arising from Key Decision 21/00062 by the Corporate Director for Finance, to accept the Household Support Grant in full for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions.
- 2) Note that Officer Decision 21/0008 committed £750k of the accepted grant to the provision of supermarket vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the October 2021 school.
- 3) Approve use of the grant to support the provision of vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the Christmas 2021, February and Easter 2022 school holidays
- 4) Agree the proposed use of the remainder of the Household Support Grant over the winter period to the end of March 2022 as set out in section 3.
- 5) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader to take any other actions, within the scope of the grant management framework, needed to ensure that the grant is spent in full by the date stipulated by the Department for Work and Pensions, including reviewing, revising and amending the funding allocations set out in the Executive Decision Report.

6) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

7) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they are given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they can be appropriately managed under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision.

1. Introduction

1.1 Urgent Decision **20/00110** was taken in November to accept the Government's £4.5m Covid Winter Grant and allocate it as follows:

- £2.5m on providing vouchers during the Christmas and February school holidays to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School meals, and other low-income families
- £900k to be allocated to Districts, on the same funding formula used by DWP, to target vulnerable households in their areas
- £800k to be used by KCC services to distribute to families in financial hardship
- £500k to be earmarked for low-income families who need help with food and utilities bills

The grant had to be spent between early December 2020 and 31 March 2021.

1.2 On 2 March 2021, the Department of Works & Pensions (DWP) wrote to advise it was extending the period in which the COVID Grant should be spent from 31 March to 16 April and was awarding KCC a further £1.5m. A further Key decision (**21/00038**) was taken to accept the money in full and allocate it to the provision of supermarket vouchers for the families of children in receipt of benefits related free school meals during the Easter holidays 2021.

1.3 Just before the end of the grant extension period, on 14 April 2021, the DWP wrote again, to say it was renaming the grant to the Covid Local Support grant and awarding KCC a further £1.06m to be spent in the period 16th April to 20 June 2021.

1.4 The DWP issued a draft letter to LAs on 21 June 2021 informing them that the Covid Local Support grant will be extended for a final time over the summer break, awarding KCC a further £4.2m, with funding to be spent by 30 September 2021. The Leader took an urgent decision, **21/00062**, accepting the additional grant of £4.239m, confirming spend in accordance with key decision 21/00038, authorising the provision of free school meals support through the summer holidays, and delegating authority to the Corporate Director Finance to take the necessary actions to spend the grant money in line with the grant conditions and implement the decision, together with authority to accept any

future grant provided for similar purposes and to spend this in accordance with the governance framework put in place by the decision.

- 1.5 The week after the end of the grant period, the DWP issued draft grant determination letters and guidance relating to the new Household Support Grant. Kent County Council's allocated sum is £11.065m. The purpose of this grant is almost identical to those of the previous Winter and Covid Support Grants. Accordingly the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, approved accepting the grant and allocated £750k to the provision of support for benefits related free school meals families during the October half term (OD - **21/0008**). This paper proposes how the remainder of the grant will be used.

2. Household Support Grant

- 2.1 The purpose of the grant is *“to support households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs (in exceptional cases of genuine emergency) this winter as the economy recovers.”* Eligible spend includes:

- Food.
- Energy and water (including sewerage).
- Essentials linked to energy and water (including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.).
- Wider essentials including but are not limited to, support with other bills including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel.
- Housing Costs in exceptional cases of genuine emergency (eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments must first be considered and whether the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and therefore owed a duty of support through the Homelessness Prevention Grant).
- Reasonable administrative costs.

- 2.2 Councils have the ability to deliver the scheme through a variety of routes including providing vouchers to households, making direct provision of food, or issuing grants to third parties (with the exception of debt advice provision). County Councils are expected to work together with District Councils to provide support and ensure the funding meets its objectives by identifying those most in need. Funds should be spent or committed before 31 March 2022 and cannot be held over for future usage. All Councils are encouraged to ensure that any vouchers issued are redeemed before the end of the scheme, or shortly thereafter, or consider recycling unused vouchers.

- 2.3 At least 50% of the funding is for vulnerable households with children. The remainder of the funding (up to 50%) is available for vulnerable households without children (including individuals). There is no requirement for councils to undertake a means test or conduct a benefit check.

3. Proposals for Spend

- 3.1 The Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, made the decision to allocate £750k towards providing free school meals support during October half-term. This would have been the first school holiday for one year which did not have this financial support had this action not been taken. It coincided with the ending of the furlough scheme, the removal of the additional £20 per week universal credit payment, energy price rises, fuel shortages and general cost of living pressures.
- 3.2 It is proposed that benefits related free school meals (FSM) support, is provided during Christmas 2021, February half term and Easter 2022. This will commit a further £3.75m. Easter holidays 2022 commence 1 April 2022, but vouchers would be issued in advance and would be redeemed before or soon after the 31 March 2022 end date for grant spend and conform to the grant conditions set out in 2.2 above. Approving the provision of FSM support now will give families and schools reassurance and certainty.
- 3.3 It is proposed that £2.5m of the Household Support Grant is used by KCC services including the Kent Support and Assistance Service and other services to distribute to families in financial hardship.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the remaining £4.065m is allocated for households who need support with energy and water, and essentials linked to energy and water. In keeping with the strong partnership approach adopted by all partners throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, some of the funding may be devolved to District and Borough Councils based on the previously agreed methodology (the methodology previously used allocated 50% according to population, 25% for deprivation and 25% for the prevalence of covid) to ensure the most appropriate local method of delivery for this funding to residents in need.

Table 1 below provides the breakdown of the spend against the Winter Grant and the Covid Local Support Grant (CLSG) between food & utilities and other essential spend (such as white goods, furniture etc). There is an overspend against the CLSG which is to be funded from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF), which has also been included below.

Table 1

	Food & Utilities	Other	Total (excl admin)
Winter Grant	£5,425,707	£363,809	£5,789,516
Covid Local Support Grant	£5,252,867	£24,069	£5,276,936
COMF (CLSG overspend)	£549,649	£233,095	£782,744
Total	£11,228,223	£620,972	£11,849,195

Table 2 provides the numbers of households helped broken down between families with children and families without children/individuals.

Table 2

	Families with Children	Families without Children/ Individuals	Total
Winter Grant	167,166	11,073	178,239
Covid Local Support Grant	99,205	153	99,358
COMF (CLSG overspend)	2,567	1,536	4,103
Total	268,938	12,762	281,700

3.5 Over the last 18 months, the cohorts of people within the community most impacted by the pandemic, and the types of support most needed as a result, have evolved considerably and are anticipated to continue to do so. The future work programme therefore requires Kent County Council to maintain a degree of flexibility in how it manages and utilises resources such as the Household Support Fund and the Helping Hands scheme, to ensure the response effort is as efficient and as effective as possible to meet the rapidly changing needs and demands.

4. Monitoring impact, and adjusting allocations

4.1 The monitoring of this expenditure will take place as set out in the decision report for the first tranche of the Winter Grant Fund. It should also be noted that the final grant funding is still to be paid in arrears based on evidence of spend via the monitoring returns. Monitoring and compliance checks will be applied to all areas of spend, to allow for informed Officer decision-making as part of the ongoing implementation of this Key Decision. All spend will be monitored as part of compliance checks to ensure adherence to the DWP terms and conditions associated with the grant. Regular monitoring reports will be produced and shared with the Leader.

5. Eligibility

5.1 There is a balance to be struck between making it straightforward for those in genuine hardship to get the support they need, without generating unmanageable demand on the fund. Whilst the funding will not be widely advertised among the general public, the support available will be widely highlighted to relevant staff and partner organisations who are most likely to be in contact with the most vulnerable households as to how those households can be helped.

5.2 The fundamental eligibility requirement is current financial hardship. For the supermarket vouchers to families, the eligibility will be:

- children in receipt of benefits-related free school meals
- low income families whose children currently do not have a school place
- low income families whose children are home-educated

- low income families whose children are under five, but are known to the council via Early Help, Free for Two, or via Health Visitors.

5.3 For the remaining elements of the fund, recipients will:

- not have access to resources to meet the cost of essential goods or services in the event of crisis or exceptional pressure (whether or not caused by the pandemic)
- be in receipt of means-tested benefits OR can otherwise evidence current financial hardship (e.g. recent loss of income before benefits have been accessed, loss of employment) OR are fleeing domestic abuse

5.4 Information about individual households is not routinely shared between different organisations so it is not possible to definitively avoid households being helped via different routes of the Fund, and indeed sometimes this would be entirely warranted (e.g. a family in particular financial crisis receiving free school meals vouchers should still be able to receive further support with food and fuel costs). The way in which the different funding streams are targeting households in need should increase the prospect of those most in need being identified and supported, without there being inappropriate duplication.

6. Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)

6.1 This contributes to the strategic outcome of "Children & Young People in Kent get the best start in life", by helping to keep vulnerable families out of crisis.

7. Options considered but rejected

7.1 The option of turning down the grant was rejected as there are many Kent families in need who will benefit from receiving this support.

7.2 We considered providing all funding to Districts to deliver through localised solutions however there are some elements of support that would be best provided at a county level, for example Free School Meals.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 The Household Support Grant provides the Council £11.065m to support the most vulnerable residents in the County over the winter period without a direct impact on the Council's budget. There is a risk, however, that the costs slightly exceed the amount given, for example if the number of families entitled to free school meals and families in need has increased. In this event, the County Council may have to allocate some of its other Covid related grant funding to cover the additional cost.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 Funding must be used in accordance with the guidance set by government, and the terms and conditions of the grant. KCC will apply appropriate legal mechanisms as part of issuing or deploying any grant monies to ensure any partners or third parties in receipt of grant funding remain compliant.

10. Equality Implications

10.1 Funding will be allocated to pupils eligible for FSM, or who prior to becoming home educated or without a school place received FSMs, for which there is clear, unambiguous eligibility criteria. KSAS will allocate funds following referrals made by practitioners, working with families, who have assessed that family finances negatively impact on their ability to regularly and consistently provide nutritious meals for their children.

11. Governance

11.1 By approving the acceptance of the grant and the recommended deployment of the funds, the Corporate Director Finance confirms that the responsibility and accountability for management of the funds will sit with Kent County Council.

11.2 The delegations put in place confirm that authority for ongoing management of the grant funding will be vested in the Corporate Director, Finance, in accordance with the agreed funding framework, spend areas and eligibility criteria. This delegation includes reviewing the spend arrangements and approving changes after consultation with the Leader and Corporate Directors for Children Young People Education and Adult Social Care.

11.3 All spend will be monitored as part of compliance checks to ensure adherence to the DWP terms and conditions associated with the grant. Regular monitoring reports will be produced and shared with the Leader.

12. Recommendations

12.1 The Leader is asked to:

1) Confirm and endorse the arrangements put in place via Officer Decision 21/0008, taken under delegated authority arising from Key Decision 21/00062 by the Corporate Director for Finance, to accept the Household Support Grant in full for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions.

2) Note that Officer Decision 21/0008 committed £750k of the accepted grant to the provision of supermarket vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the October 2021 school.

3) Approve use of the grant to support the provision of vouchers to families with children in receipt of benefits-related Free School Meals or families in need of support through KSAS during the Christmas 2021, February and Easter 2022 school holidays

4) Agree the proposed use of the remainder of the Household Support Grant over the winter period to the end of March 2022 as set out in section 3.

5) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance, in consultation with the Leader to take any other actions, within the scope of the grant management framework, needed to ensure that the grant is spent in full by the date stipulated by the Department for Work and Pensions, including reviewing, revising and amending the funding allocations set out in the Executive Decision Report.

6) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to take other necessary actions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision.

7) Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they are given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they can be appropriately managed under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision.

13. Background Documents

COVID Winter Grant Scheme Extension Letters issued by Department for Work & Pensions

COVID Winter Grant Scheme: - Guidance for County Councils and Unitary Councils (issued by Department for Work & Pensions)

COVID Winter Grant Scheme monitoring form

Draft Household Support Grant Determination Letter issued by Department for Work & Pensions

Draft Household Support Grant: Guidance for County Councils and Unitary Councils (issued by Department for Work & Pensions)

Draft Household Support Grant monitoring form

14. Report Author

Lucy Alesbrook

Financial Hardship Programme Manager

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Relevant Director

Zena Cooke

Corporate Director Finance

03000 419205 Zena.Cooke@kent.gov.uk

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Zena Cooke – Corporate Director Finance

DECISION NO:

OD/22/0003

For Internal Records, Publication Not Required

Subject matter:

Household Support Grant allocation to Water Companies

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

Decision Number 21/00107

[Decision - 21/00107 - Household Support Grant \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

Decision:

To award a total of £540,000 of the Household Support Fund to water companies in order to support vulnerable Kent households with their water bills.

To be allocated as follows:

- South East Water - £250,000
- Affinity Water - £202,500
- Southern Water - £47,500
- Thames Water - £40,000

Reason(s) for decision:

As set out in the [Decision Report](#), £4.065m of the Household Support Fund is allocated for households who need support with food, energy and water, and essentials linked to food, energy and water. All water companies are required to have a hardship fund and the Household Support Grant will be used to support customers that fit the Household Support Fund's eligibility criteria. The amount awarded to water companies in Kent and the criteria is decided in discussion with the water companies, reflecting the geographical size of their customer base. This criteria is outlined in more detail below. All water companies agreed to take a similar 'back on track' approach, targeting funding to those customers in debt, that are actively engaged in the repayment process but whose financial situations mean that they are struggling to repay their arrears.

South East Water has its own ongoing 'Helping Hands Scheme' which awards funding to customers that are not in a position to clear the arrears on their account due to limited income, despite their efforts. South East Water's scheme has had an increased level of applications and this funding will provide them an opportunity to support new applications and revisit previous unsuccessful applications in order to make payments to those in need. The grant will be used to clear their arrears or a proportion of their arrears, with a £250 payment. South East Water will require £4,000 towards admin costs to ensure the payments are made quickly to their customers. A total of 984 Kent households will be supported with a total grant of £250,000.

Affinity Water has identified 810 households with arrears that will take more than 6 months to clear based on current payments. The £202,500 Household Support Fund grant will be used to clear their arrears or a proportion of their arrears, with each household identified receiving a £250 payment,

thereby giving the customers a fresh start and an opportunity to manage their ongoing water bills.

Southern Water has identified 190 households to whom it supplies freshwater services, with a significant debt balance that demonstrates significant financial difficulties. The £47,500 Household Support Fund grant will be used to clear their arrears or a proportion of their arrears, with a payment of £250 per household.

Thames Water has identified 160 households whose known circumstances would result in customers not being able to clear arrears in a reasonable amount of time due to limited income. A grant of £40,000 from the Household Support Fund would allow these households to receive a payment to clear their arrears or a proportion of their arrears with a payment of £250 per household.

In total, the £540,000 funding will support 2,144 Kent households.

Financial Implications:

£540,000.00 allocation of Household Support Fund.

There are no direct financial implications on the Council's revenue budget as the allocation is grant funding received from the government to support the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The activities and projects funded by the Household Support Fund are time limited and will not be a recurring cost to the Council. Any additional staff resourcing required as a result of activities and projects funded by the grant are eligible to be charged to the grant.

Legal implications:

A grant agreement setting out the conditions of the grant for each water company will be signed and sealed before any grant monies are awarded.

All funding awarded must be in line with the stipulations in the Decision Report.

Equality Implications:

This decision comes under the equality implications as set out in the Report for decision 21/00107. Efforts have been made to ensure that eligibility criteria are clearly defined and non-discriminatory.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

This decision relates to Decision 21/00107.

Roger Gough:

I support this project and look forward to receiving information on the outcomes and the future metrics.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Two alternate funding proposals were discussed with the water companies and rejected:

1. Expanding Social Tariff – widening eligibility for customers to access the Social Tariff scheme that the water companies already have in place. This was rejected due to high level of funding required and the need for data sharing agreements to be created, which would not be possible prior to the grant deadline.
2. A KSAS referral process wherein KSAS identify customers that are struggling with their water

bills and who would benefit from grant funded support. A process could be set up for KSAS to securely advise water companies of these customers, with a route for instructing a payment from the fund to be applied. This was rejected on the basis that fewer customers would be identified and supported in comparison to the chosen scheme and, as there are no suitable referral mechanisms and data sharing agreements in place, arranging the appropriate referral process would not be possible against the deadline of the grant.

The Council could have chosen not to allocate grants from the Household Support Fund to a range of water companies, instead working with just one provider but this was rejected on the basis that it would limit the number of households across Kent that would receive support based on their geographical location.

The Council could have chosen not to allocate grant funding to water companies but this was rejected on the basis that water is not a discretionary utility and therefore all residents are required to pay for their water provision; the Key Decision committed to using the Household Support Fund to support vulnerable households with their water bills.

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

No conflicts declared.



Signed: Zena Cooke

Date: 22 March 2022

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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF OFFICER DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

John Betts – Interim Corporate Director Finance

DECISION NO:

OD/22/0005

For Internal Records, Publication Not Required

Subject matter:

Household Support Fund Extension

Cabinet Member decision to which this action relates:

Decision Number 21/00107

Decision:

1. Accept the Household Support Fund Extension in full (£11.065m) for use in accordance with the guidance published by Department of Work and Pensions and relevant terms and conditions, and manage this grant money under the funding/governance framework put in place by decision 21/00107.
2. Approve the full funding of Free School Meals in the May half term and a £50 flat rate to families over the summer holidays (£3.555m).
3. Approve £4.74m to be issued to District and Borough Councils in Kent, with £3.6m ringfenced for pension age residents for energy bills, and the remaining funding allowed for local targeting of support in line with the government guidance.
4. Approve £1.22m for countywide initiatives to support households who need support with energy and water, and essentials linked to energy and water.
5. Approve £1.55m of the Household Support Fund Extension to be used by KCC services including the Kent Support and Assistance Service and other services to distribute to families in financial hardship.

Reason(s) for decision:

Government announced in March the Household Support Fund Extension, which is in line with previous Fund. It is appropriate and necessary for these previous arrangements to be noted and the ongoing acceptance and deployment of the Fund to be agreed in consultation with the Leader.

As set out in the ROD for decision 21/00107, the Leader agreed to:

“7. Authorise the Corporate Director Finance in consultation with the Leader, to accept and administer any further grant monies providing they are given by government on very similar terms of reference and that they can be appropriately managed under the funding / governance framework put in place by this decision.”

Government guidance for this fund states that at least one third of the total funding must be spent on families with children and at least one third must be spent on pensioners. The allocations listed above have been calculated to meet this requirement, and reflect the organisations partnered with to distribute the previous Household Support Fund.

Financial Implications:

The Household Support Grant provides the Council £11.065m to support the most vulnerable residents in the County over the winter period without a direct impact on the Council’s budget. There is a risk, however, that the costs slightly exceed the amount given, for example if the number of families entitled to free school meals and families in need has increased. In this event, the County Council may have to allocate some of its other Covid related grant funding to cover the additional cost.

Legal implications:

All funding awarded must be in line with the [Covid Winter Grant Scheme Policy Funding Framework](#)

This decision comes under the legal implications as set out in the Report for decision 21/00107.

Funding must be used in accordance with the guidance set by government, and the terms and conditions of the grant. KCC will apply appropriate legal mechanisms as part of issuing or deploying any grant monies to ensure any partners or third parties in receipt of grant funding remain compliant.

Equality Implications:

This decision comes under the equality implications as set out in the Report for decision 21/00107.

Comments received from any Members or Officers consulted:

This decision relates to Decision 21/00107. Member comments were sought at that stage and are available via the relevant Decision Report.

The Leader and Cabinet were consulted with the proposal and approved the allocations listed above.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The option of turning down the grant was rejected as there are many Kent families in need who will benefit from receiving this support.

We considered providing all funding to Districts to deliver through localised solutions however there are some elements of support that would be best provided at a county level, for example Free School Meals.

Any conflict of interest declared by any executive member consulted by the decision maker and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

No conflicts declared.

John Betts

17 May 2022

.....
signed

.....
date

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
To: Scrutiny Committee, 26 February 2025
Subject: 24/00069 - Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030

Summary: The Chairman and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee have asked that this key decision be placed on the Committee agenda for discussion.

1. Introduction

- a) The decision to adopt the new Asset Management Strategy was discussed by the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 17 January 2024 and 10 September 2024. Following endorsement of the decision by the Cabinet Committee the Cabinet Member took the decision to adopt the new Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030 on 6 January 2025.
 - b) The decision was not called-in to the Scrutiny Committee but the Chairman and Spokespeople have placed the decision on the agenda for discussion.
-

2. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss and comment on or note the decision taken in relation to the Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030.

3. Attached documents

- a) [24/00069 – Record of Decision](#)
- b) [24/00069 – Decision Report](#)
- c) [Appendix A – Asset Management Strategy 2024 – 30](#)
- d) [Appendix B - EQIA](#)

4. Background documents

- a) [Agenda for Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on Wednesday, 17th January, 2024, 10.00 am](#)
- b) [Agenda for Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on Tuesday, 10th September, 2024, 10.00 am](#)

Contact Details

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk 03000 416478

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

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

DECISION NO:

24/00069

For publication**Key decision: YES**

Key decision criteria. The decision will result in the adoption of a new strategy.

Title of Decision: Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2030**Decision:**

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services to:

1. agree to the adoption of the new Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030; and
2. note that the new Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030 and its action plan will be set within the context of the financial constraints and resources of the Council.

Reason(s) for decision:

The existing Asset Management Strategy (AMS) is for the period 2018-2023 and so a new AMS is required. The intention is that the new strategy will cover a period of 6 years, from 2024 to 2030.

The AMS is a vital component of Kent County Council's (KCC) operational and strategic planning. It provides a comprehensive framework for managing KCC's diverse property assets, including those owned, leased, and tenanted. The strategy aligns with KCC's broader strategies and policies, ensuring that assets are optimally used, suitably located, and sustainably maintained.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

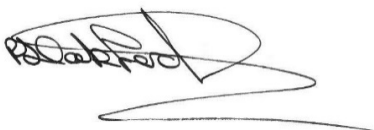
The proposal for the development of a new AMS was considered at the meeting of the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 17 January 2024, and again on 10 September 2024, where the decision was endorsed.

It was RESOLVED to endorse that the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services agree the adoption of the new AMS 2024-2030, subject to the inclusion of the wording 'where budgets allow' to more clearly indicate that the strategy was an aspirational document.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Do nothing – discarded.

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



.....
signed

6 January 2025

.....
date

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From: Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

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

Subject: Asset Management Strategy 2024 - 2030

Decision no: 24/00069

Key Decision: Yes - The decision will result in the adoption of a new strategy.

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee, 17 January 2024, 10th September 2024

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report provides an update on the new 2024-2030 Asset Management Strategy.

Recommendation(s):

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations on the proposed decision to agree to the adoption of the new Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The current Asset Management Strategy (AMS) ended in 2023, and a replacement AMS (2024 –2030) has been developed for adoption by the Council. The strategy has been developed alongside Kent County Council's (KCC's) core strategic objectives and seeks to build on the outcomes achieved and lessons learnt from the previous (2018-2023) AMS.
- 1.2 The previous AMS focused on six key themes in the management of the Council assets:
- 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 sessions have been undertaken to review the 2018-2023 AMS, which reflected on what had been achieved; lessons learnt; and areas for improvement. This also identified areas to be considered for the new strategy which included ambition, vision, and new themes.
- 1.4 These lessons learnt have been used to inform the new AMS.
- 1.5 An update of the progress of the new AMS was taken to the Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee on 17 January 2024.
- 1.6 To further develop and refine the AMS, along with feedback from the committee, engagement has been ongoing with services via Directorate Management Teams (DMT) since the end of 2023. Feedback from the various engagement sessions has been taken into consideration in the development of the Strategic Objectives of the new AMS.

2. Moving Forward with the New 2024-2030 Asset Management Strategy

- 1.7 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 Asset Management Plan and from feedback through stakeholder engagement.
- 1.8 This new AMS comes at a critical time as the Council faces significant financial pressures. It is, therefore, essential that our assets deliver maximum value for the Council throughout the asset lifecycle.

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 of our assets are essential to achieving the Council's Net Zero emissions targets.
- iii. Adherence to Legislative Framework, Health and Safety Compliance, and Delivery of Statutory Provision:
 - Compliance with the legislative framework and health and safety regulations is paramount.
- iv. 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 to support service delivery.
- 1.9 This strategy will seek to further develop strategies to ensure that KCC's property and assets portfolio are optimised; with enhanced collaboration with partners regarding **potential shared use to ensure efficiencies can be realised; and that KCC's statutory and essential services are delivered, fulfilling statutory obligations. Securing our short-term and medium-term position is crucial for effective future planning.**
 - 1.10 The new strategy will seek to transform the Council's asset portfolio to be leaner, greener, and more financially sustainable, with greater efficiencies and aligned to the Council needs.
 - 1.11 The new strategy will be for 6 years, taking us through to 2030, with a review at the midway point; to ensure that the AMS aligns with KCC's other key strategies and creates a framework within which policies can evolve and be developed as the context of the Council changes:
 - 1.12 Following the previous 2018-2023 strategy, the outcomes and lesson learnt will continue to be strengthened to ensure we have 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 **further develop the baseline information in relation to the Council's assets.**
 - 1.13 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 rather than reactive approach to its estate.**
 - 1.14 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 aligned to the future needs of the Council and those that access our buildings including residents, service users, partners and staff.
 - 1.15 We will actively seek to engage with stakeholders both internal and external to KCC to demonstrate how assets can enable new operating models and integrated delivery to shape service transformation and support the way that we want to work and operate in the future.
 - 1.16 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 by 2030, which may be achieved through seeking additional grant funding.
 - 1.17 Robust asset data will enhance KCC's strategic capital and revenue planning and 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.

- 1.18 We will seek to adopt smart building technologies, utilise intelligent building management systems, and automation, to provide flexibility and data-driven insights where possible. This will ensure there is a holistic approach to the management of KCC's estate, where efficiencies, economies of scale and the monitoring of **the estate will seek to be proactive where possible.**
- 1.19 By embracing smart technology, **where possible we will be able to focus on improving the management of KCC's assets and have reliable, effective systems in place, to ensure rent reviews, lease renewals, building maintenance, parts replacements etc. are undertaken in a timely and efficient manner.**
- 1.20 To ensure a holistic approach, we will prioritise sites with service users' requirements. Engagement with all stakeholders will be key to ensuring that assets enable excellent services and will allow focus on positive outcomes for Kent's residents and its staff through alignment with our people and technology strategies.
- 1.21 In light of the new requirements set out in Securing Kent's future, other potential considerations are being made for the AMS which are set out in Appendix A.

2. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 2.1 Do nothing – discarded - Since the current AMS ended in 2023, a replacement AMS is required to ensure that KCC obtains best value for money from its estate.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial cost implications in the development or establishing of this strategy.
- 3.2 Whilst there are no savings ascribed specifically to the strategy, it is anticipated the initiatives it supports will result in better value for money, by ensuring that our assets deliver maximum value for the Council and the whole impact of property decisions are fully considered.

4. Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) was completed. The implementation of this strategy does not present any impact on any of the nine areas specified by KCC.

7. Data Protection Implications

7.1 There are no expected data protection implications as a result of this strategy.

8. Other corporate implications

8.1 The implementation of the new AMS will have a positive impact, as it aims to optimise KCC's property portfolio to enhance service delivery, and to ensure that the property service provided in buildings meets the service need.

9. Governance

9.1 In line with the Council's governance process, as this will involve the adoption of a new strategy, not included on the Policy Framework, a key decision will be required.

10. Conclusions/Next Steps

10.1 The next steps are the adoption of the new AMS.

10.2 KCC to implement the new strategy, working closely and collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure this is a live active strategy and all future decisions relate back to the principles set out in the new AMS.

10.3 As a live strategy, it will be monitored to align with any changes to KCC's core strategies, policies and service objectives, as well as any political or statutory fluctuations.

Recommendation(s):

The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations on the proposed decision to agree to the adoption of the new Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030; and

11. Background documents

11.1 Asset Management Strategy – A Five-Year Plan 2018 -2023
https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/5545/Asset-management-strategy.pdf

11.2 Framing Kent's Future - Our Council Strategy 2022- 2026
https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/136431/Framing-Kents-Future-strategy-document.pdf

11.3 Securing Kent's Future – Budget Recovery Strategy & Financial Report
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s120272/Cabinet%20Report.pdf>

12. Appendices

12.1 Appendix A – The Asset Management Strategy 2024-2030

12.2 Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment

12.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision

13. Contact details

Report Author: Rebecca Anderson Job title: Head of Business Information, Strategy and Assurance Telephone number: 03000417731 Email address: rebecca.anderson2@kent.gov.uk	Director: Rebecca Spore Job title: Director of Infrastructure Telephone number: 03000416716 Email address: rebecca.spore@kent.gov.uk
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ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024 - 30



**KENT
COUNTY
COUNCIL**

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1. FOREWORD

The Council's asset base, its value, location and performance are key to the experience of our residents when accessing our services and the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Council. The estate and our property strategies also have a significant role to play in the future shape of Council Services.

This Asset Management Strategy sets out Kent County Council's approach to managing its property assets over the next 6 years to optimise its value and return to the Council.

Effective asset management is critical for KCC's financial sustainability and continues the journey of transformation started under the previous 2019-2023 strategy and lessons learned during that period.

Securing Kent's Assets



Kent County Council
Asset Management Strategy (AMS)
2024 -2030

2. INTRODUCTION

- ❑ The Asset Management Strategy (the 'AMS') is the overarching property strategy document which is aligned to the delivery of Kent County Council's (KCC) strategies, policies and services which will support Kent County Council's wider communities.
- ❑ The strategy provides a framework for the Council's management of its owned, tenanted, and leased assets. Within the constraints of the financial operating environment, it ensures that the assets used to deliver its services are fit for purpose. The strategy aims for optimal and flexible use of these assets, ensuring they are appropriately located and maintained sustainably. It also takes into account the future needs of KCC's services, with considerations for short, medium, and long-term planning. This approach ensures that the Council's assets are effectively utilised and future-proofed.
- ❑ This new Asset Management Strategy comes at a critical time for Kent County Council as it faces significant financial pressures and has launched Securing Kent's Future, the budget recovery plan to return the council to financial sustainability.
- ❑ It is therefore essential that our assets deliver the maximum value for the Council residents, and those that access our services including members of the public, service users and our staff.

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- ❑ The AMS will be for 6 years and is aligned with KCC's key strategies:
 - i) [The Kent Economic Strategy 2030](#)
 - ii) [The Kent Environmental Strategy](#)
 - iii) The Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2030
 - iv) [Framing & Securing Kents Future 2022-26 & 2023-25](#)
 - v) Kent & Medway Integrated Care Strategy
 - vi) [KCC's People Strategy 2022- 2027](#)
 - vii) [ICT Strategy 2020-2023](#)
- ❑ There will be a commitment to securing value for money in all spending decisions.
- ❑ This will involve a thorough business case process, rigorous procurement process, regular reviews of asset performance, and a focus on total cost of ownership rather than just initial implementation and operating costs. It will include a commitment to transparency, with clear documentation showing that best value considerations have been applied to all decisions.
- ❑ By integrating these elements, the AMS will support the delivery of "Securing Kent's Future" and "Framing Kent's Future", providing a clear and comprehensive strategy for managing KCC's assets.
- ❑ This approach will aim to achieve financial sustainability and demonstrate compliance with the Strategic Statement.

- ❑ This will ensure that the AMS 2024-2030 is aligned with the Council's priority objectives and that it will build upon the principles set out within the previous AMS 2019-2023.
- ❑ It will ensure the management of the Council's Property Assets, within the financial context of the authority, will be fit for purpose to deliver the services required for those that access our buildings whilst maximising their potential and usage.
- ❑ The previous 2019-2023 Asset Management Strategy delivered several key outcomes including rationalisation of KCC's assets, capital receipts, and energy / sustainability targets.
- ❑ The council still faces a significant backlog maintenance liability. This is intended to start to be addressed through the effective implementation of the new AMS, which is designed to align with and support the objectives and priorities within 'Securing Kent's Future'. However, it's important to note that the progress and effectiveness of this initiative is contingent upon the resources that are made available.
- ❑ We will look at the optimisation of assets to ensure it has the potential to provide economic and environmental sustainability for the budget and communities we serve, to ensure short, medium, and long-term best value, for services run by KCC over the next 6 years.

3. CONTEXT OF THE KCC ESTATE

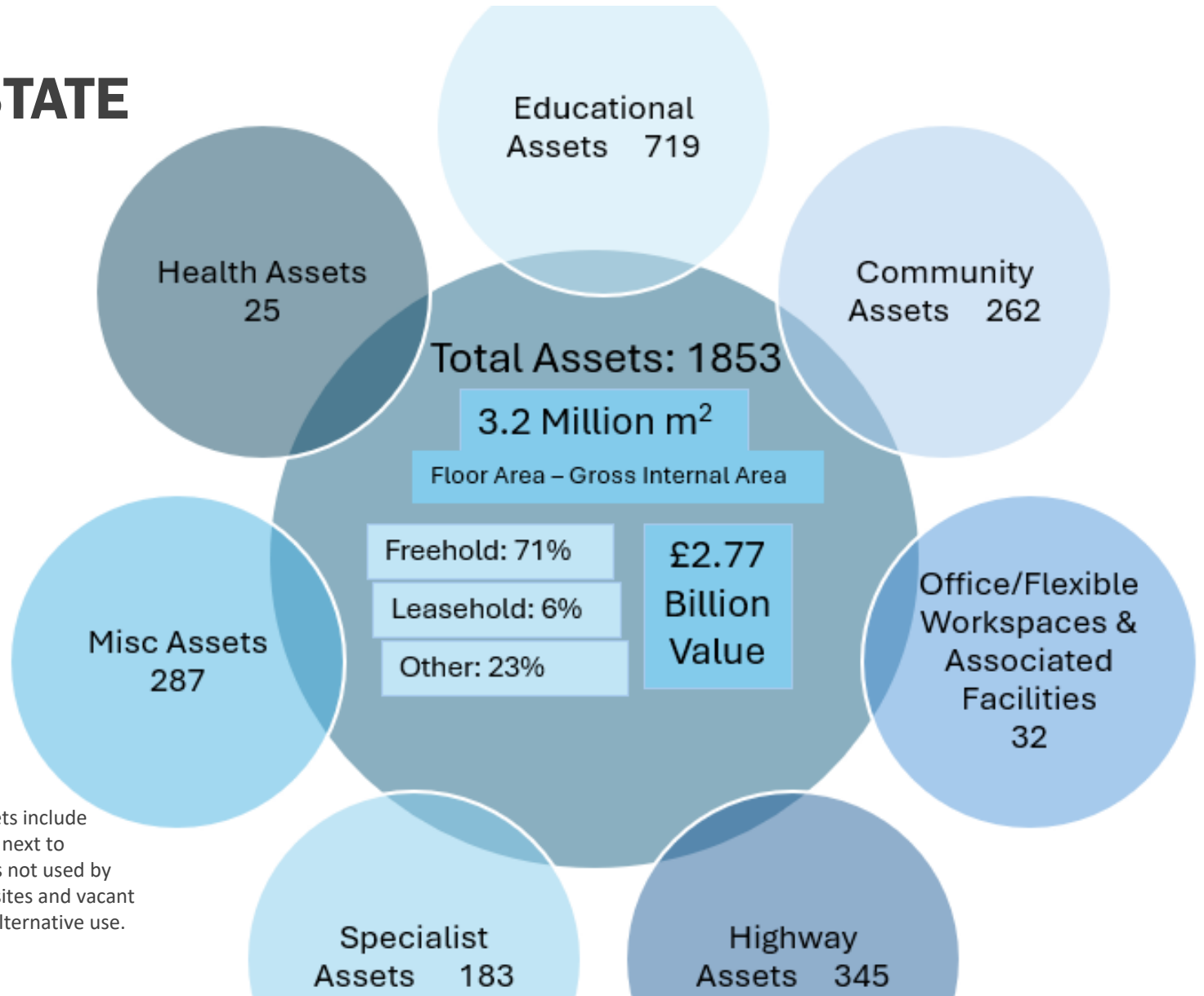
Overview of KCC's Asset Portfolio

- ❑ Kent County Council owns an extensive and diverse property portfolio supporting frontline service delivery as well as generating significant rental income.
- ❑ Assets range from office buildings, libraries, youth centres, care homes and schools to commercial units, agricultural land, and development sites. The Council also holds various heritage properties and community facilities.
- ❑ Effective asset management is critical to optimising financial, social, and environmental value from this portfolio, whilst ensuring assets remain suitable for meeting service delivery needs.

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Miscellaneous Assets include assets such as land next to highways, buildings not used by KCC, specialist PFI sites and vacant sites for disposal/Alternative use.



4. THE PREVIOUS AMS

Introduction:

- ❑ In the first two years of KCC's 2018-2023 AMS, the Global Covid 19 Pandemic flipped everyone's plans virtually overnight.
- ❑ All organisations, including KCC, had to stop what they were doing and implement emergency protocols immediately, which meant that the AMS did not fully progress as planned.



Lessons Learnt

- ❑ The previous 2018-2023 Strategy, the outcomes and lessons learnt, will continue to be strengthened to ensure we have 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.
- ❑ We will ensure that the new AMS is a live and active document and that there is effective communication, so all council members and staff have easy access to the details of the AMS and understand its importance, and relevance, in all decisions affecting council assets and property utilisation.



Key Achievements of the Last AMS:

- Rationalised property portfolio by 10%, from 2,230 assets down to 1,816 through disposals and mergers. This released underutilised properties and generated £70.2 million in capital receipts.
- Improved quality of asset data by undertaking a full data validation exercise. Property attributes captured increased from 60% to over 90% completeness. This enables more informed asset management.
- The success of our COVID emergency implementation plans stands as a testament to our agility and commitment. Swiftly adapting to the pandemic, we ensured the safety of our staff, customers, and occupiers while maintaining essential services. These plans allowed us to navigate unprecedented challenges seamlessly.
- Embracing new technology, such as Microsoft Teams, revolutionised our communication and productivity. We leveraged collaboration tools to enhance remote work, streamline processes, and foster cross-team collaboration. Simultaneously, our ambitious zero-carbon target for 2025, supported by solar panel installations and energy-efficient LED lighting, aligns with global sustainability efforts. Our strategic investment decisions, shared spaces for collaboration, and successful project completions demonstrate our resilience, adaptability, and commitment to creating a better future.
- Positive outcomes related to the Six Key Themes – a total of 145 key achievements relating to (with examples):
 1. Future Assets Strategic Reset Programme: Specialist asset reviews & Kent Communities Programme.
 2. Estate Development: Dover Discover redevelopment and Oakwood House redevelopment.
 3. Capital Delivery Programmes: Basic Needs programme and Gypsy & Traveller Site levelling up programme.
 4. Reduction in KCC's Portfolio: Bockhanger Library into Sure Steps Children Centre and Good Day programme.
 5. Property Resources Management: Estates redesign & Re-procured Facilities Management contract.
 6. Asset Management: Freehold disposal policy and Academy transfers.
 7. Systems & Data: Online information initiative and Tech Forge
 8. Respond to Covid: Introduction of Hybrid working across the whole of KCC, support of staff, customers and businesses

5. AIMS OF THE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

- ❑ This strategy will ensure that the KCC's assets are utilised efficiently and, where possible, collaboration will be undertaken with partners regarding the potential for 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.
- ❑ The key drivers for the new strategy relate to ensuring compliance, active lifecycle management, consolidation, income maximisation from commercial assets and embedding sustainability principles.
- ❑ The focus will be to take a holistic approach to assets, enhance data and performance management to support evidence-based decision making.
- ❑ KCC's focus will be to take a comprehensive approach to assets (owned, leased, and tenanted), which are for the purpose of KCC services (which may be commissioned) to ensure buildings maintain optimum use and benefits for the wider community and those that use them including residents, service users, partners and staff.
- ❑ To ensure the successful delivery of the new AMS, there will be a required culture shift towards asset sharing, flexibility, and cross-service collaboration to make the most of resources available aligned to the principles in KCC's service, technology and people strategies. Stakeholder meetings have been instigated to ensure this can be achieved successfully and will continue as part of the review of the AMS.
- ❑ Over the next 6 years there will be a transformation in how assets are managed, unpinned by accurate data, shared resources, environmental performance, and transparent evidenced decision-making regarding optimisation.
- ❑ Effective asset management will be integral to long-term financial sustainability.

KCC's mission statement for the AMS is:

“To ensure that there is commitment to provide an efficient estate of the right size and type to meet its operational business needs. The estate must be adaptable to change and be affordable and sustainable to cater for its services and users.”

This will be achieved through: -

- ❑ Asset data accuracy ensuring baseline data is regularly updated to ensure assets are adhering to current standards / regulations and performance ratings.
- ❑ The estate will be evaluated in respect of its use; landlord responsibility; maintenance liabilities; income and expenditure; and potential for partnership, to enable KCC's assets KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) to be measured through performance and outcomes.
- ❑ 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.

6. KEY PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN THE AMS

These principles are designed to optimise asset management within KCC, emphasising efficiency, strategic utilisation, sustainability, and inclusivity.

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Priority: warm, safe, and dry. In the new AMS, the previous theme of 'Warm, Safe & Dry' has been repositioned to a key principle. This shift signifies the recognition of these elements as fundamental requirements for all operational assets. The principle ensures that all assets are safe for everyone interacting with them, including KCC staff, customers, visitors, and the public. This commitment to safety extends to both the interior and exterior of the buildings, reinforcing KCC's dedication to providing a warm, safe, and dry environment across its estate.



Corporately Managed: Assets continued to be managed as a corporate landlord.



Utilisation: Asset utilisation must demonstrate the best value for money of its use.



Maximisation: Use of assets will be maximised through co-location of services.



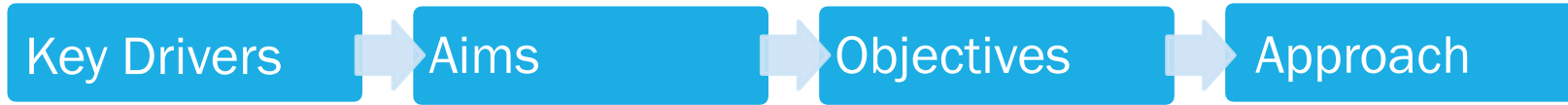
Robust Business Cases: Us: All asset-related decisions, including changes in property requirements, will require robust business cases. These cases must align with the principles and consider not only the initial investment but also ongoing and future costs.

Proposals that increase the building footprint or hinder carbon reduction must include carbon offsetting costs to prevent negative impacts on the 2030 carbon neutral target, which requires a 35% reduction in building footprint. Furthermore, any changes must be thoroughly understood, taking into account the budgets needed to meet the asset's future requirements.



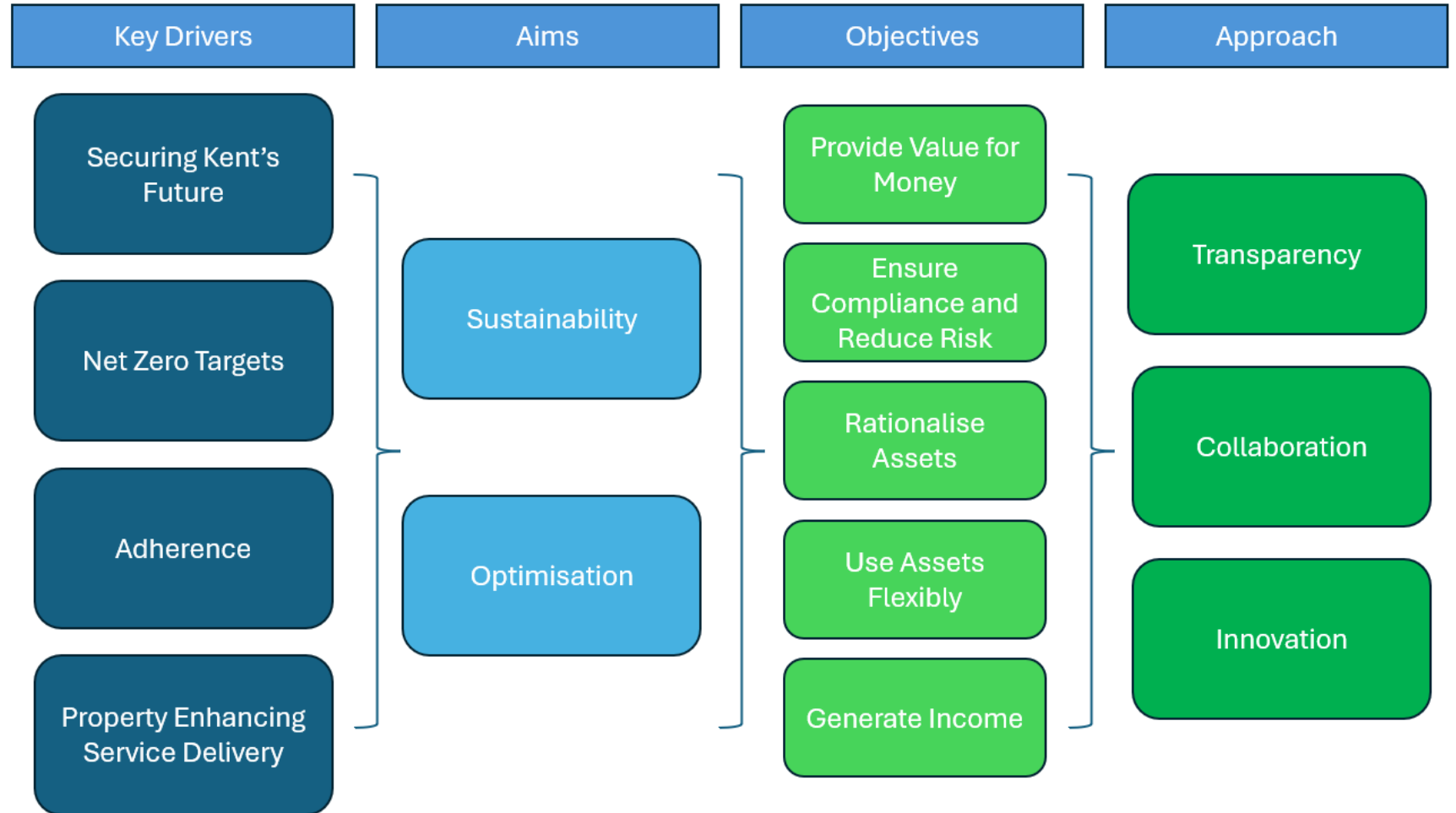
Inclusivity: Inclusivity will be critical on all levels, from design concept and layout through to decision making, staff engagement and ongoing operational management.

7. ALIGNMENT OF DRIVERS, AIMS, OBJECTIVES, AND APPROACH:

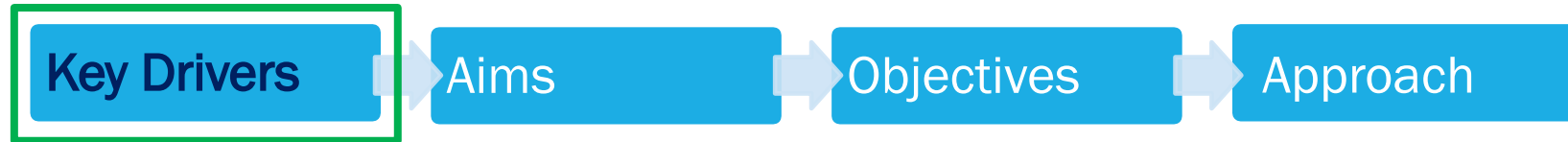


Alignment of Drivers, Aims, Objectives, and Approach:

- ❑ Ensuring alignment between our drivers, aims, objectives, and approach is crucial to the successful implementation of our AMS.
- ❑ Our drivers inform our key aims, which in turn guide the development of our objectives.
- ❑ Our approach is designed to effectively achieve these objectives, thereby fulfilling our key aims in response to our drivers.
- ❑ This will require a culture shift towards asset sharing; flexibility; and cross-service and external collaboration.
- ❑ This will 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.



8. KEY DRIVERS OF THE AMS



Key drivers for the new strategy are:

Securing



Securing Kent's Future

Financial sustainability: achieving sustainability requires focused approach that balances supply and demand for services.

Net Zero



Net Zero Targets

Reducing our environmental footprint and imposing efficiency are essential to achieving our Net Zero emission targets.

Adherence



Adherence to Legislative Framework and Health & Safety Compliance, and Delivery of Statutory Provision

Is essential to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our users

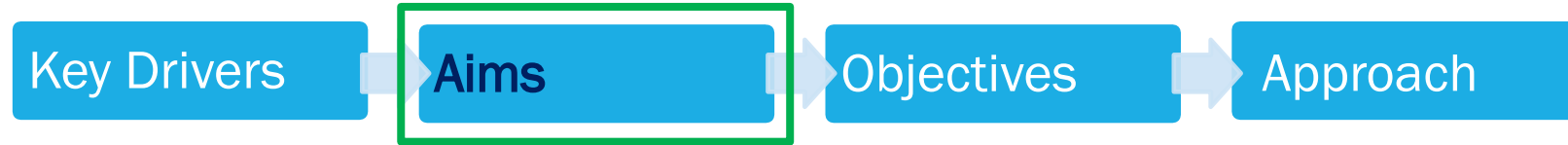
Property



Property Enhancing Service Delivery

Optimising property portfolio to enable service delivery which meets the needs of the service and ensures the building is fit for purpose for those that use of buildings including residents, service users, partners and staff.

9. THE AIMS OF THE AMS



- Within the approach, and in-line with the People Strategy, 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.

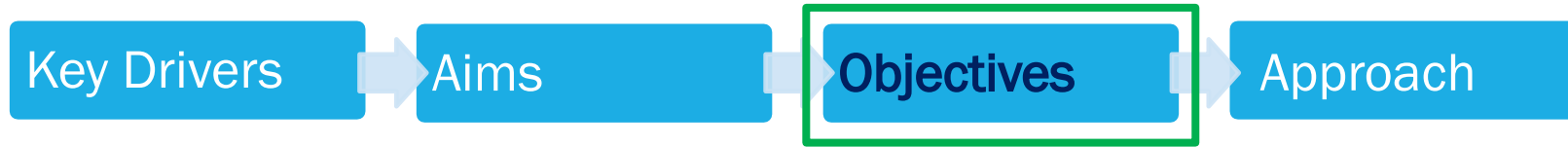
Sustainability

- Properties are valuable assets that can contribute to economic and environmental sustainability.
- The goal is to manage these properties to meet current service needs and ensure future services align with service needs.
- This management strategy considers environmental impact, cost efficiently and benefits to the community.

Optimisation

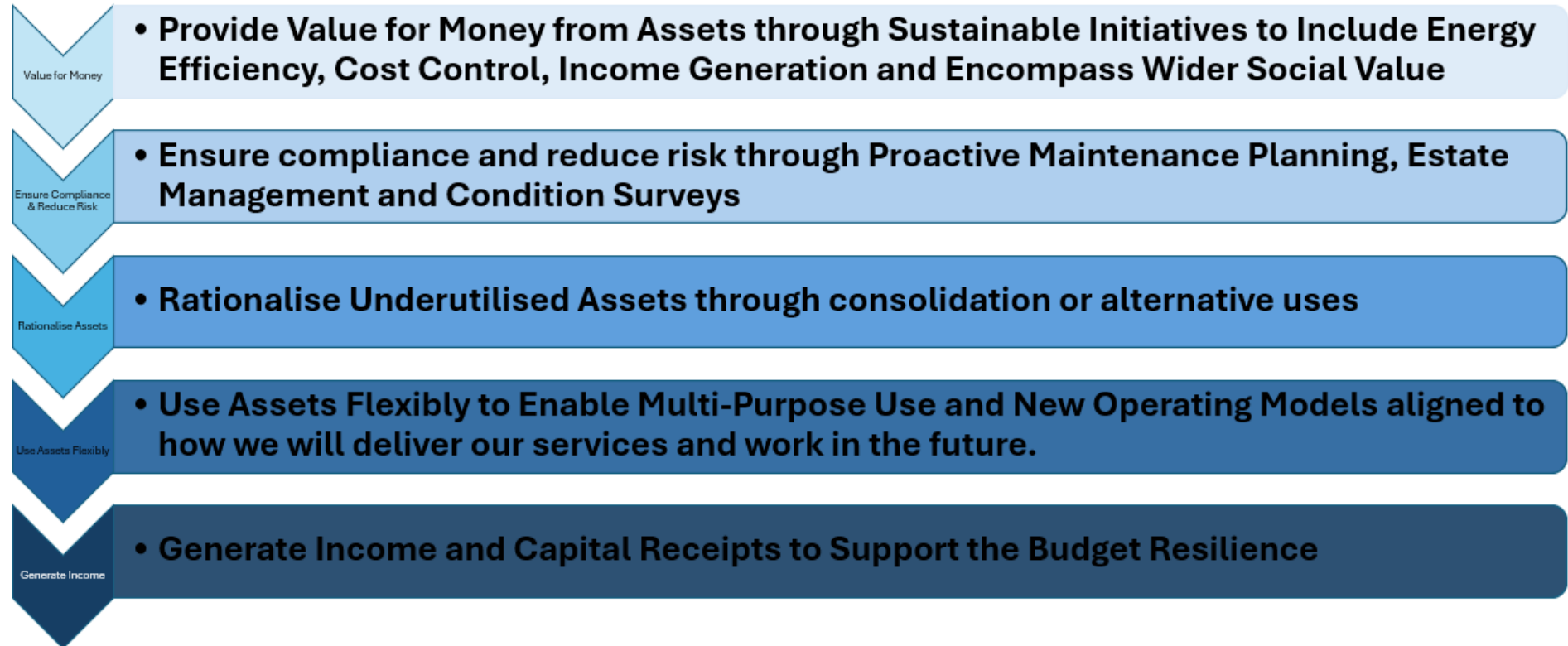
- Long-term value is crucial to our best value considerations.
- The aim is to utilise our buildings for services provided by KCC as much as possible.
- The strategy involves aligning KCC's asset portfolio with service delivery goals for optimal efficiency and effectiveness.
- There is a commitment to remain responsive to the changing needs of our communities, services and our staff.

10. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



- Developed through engagement sessions KCC developed five Strategic Objectives:

- KCC’s strategic objectives will provide a holistic view by looking at both the aims and approach to ensure a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to asset management that aligns with its service delivery objectives and the broader goals of sustainability and innovation.



FIVE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: ONE

What?

- 1. Provide Best Value from Assets through Sustainable Initiatives, Energy Efficiency, Cost Control, and Income Generation:**
 - Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Accurate asset data will inform decisions regarding compliance, sustainability, and cost control.
 - Energy Efficiency Measures:** Implement energy audits and sustainable practices to reduce emissions and operating costs.
 - Whole-Life Cost Analysis:** Evaluate total cost of ownership to inform decision-making and information budget requirements.

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How?

- Ensure robust data on all assets.
- Establish protocols for regular review of asset performance against KPI's
- Trial new technology to improve environmental efficiency and identify which solutions are worth investing in across the estate
- Conduct Energy Audits: Carry out comprehensive energy audits across all facilities to identify areas of high energy consumption.
- Develop a framework for assessing the total cost of ownership that includes initial acquisition costs, operation costs, maintenance expenses, and disposal costs.
- Include non-financial factors such as environmental impact or social value in the whole-life cost analysis model.
- Ensure that findings from the whole-life cost analysis are aligned with AMS principles to inform budget allocations.
- Embed sustainability principles into asset management and meet sustainability goals and reduce environmental impact.
- Exploring reserve models to ensure available funding for proactive maintenance and going beyond DDA compliance.

Key Performance Indicators

Examples:

- Size and running cost of each portfolio
- Number of assets with whole life-cycle plan
- Number of technologies trailed and proposed to seek investment.
- Asset Utilisation
- Total cost of maintaining assets
- Asset Down-time
- Disposal - receipt vs cost of disposal
- Percentage of energy audits passed
- A score based on non-financial impacts such as environmental or social value.
- Space used vs. total space available.
- Cost of running asset to KCC against budget.
- Measure energy consumption.

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: TWO

What?

2. Ensure Compliance and Reduce Risk Through Proactive Maintenance Planning, Estate Management and Condition Surveys:

- ❑ **Robust Compliance Regime:** KCC will ensure assets comply with health and safety regulations. Regular inspections and maintenance schedules will maintain asset suitability.
- ❑ **Lifecycle Strategies:** Develop comprehensive lifecycle management strategies based on accurate data. Prioritise maintenance and renewals.
- ❑ **Estates Management:** Ensure properties support KCC's statutory services.

How?

- ❑ Continuation to existing compliance reporting,
- ❑ Percentage of estate with current lifecycle condition survey.
- ❑ Establish a routine of regular inspections to ensure that all assets comply with health and safety regulations.
- ❑ Ensure assets are legally compliant and fit for operational purposes to support service delivery.
- ❑ Create a comprehensive maintenance schedule for each asset. This schedule should include regular checks and necessary maintenance work to keep the asset in good condition and ensure its suitability.
- ❑ Develop a prioritised list of maintenance and renewal tasks. Assets that are critical to operations or have a higher risk of failure should be prioritised.
- ❑ Ensure that each property is being used in a way that supports KCC's statutory services.
- ❑ Conduct regular reviews to ensure that each property is being used effectively. If a property is not supporting KCC's services, consider alternative uses for the property.
- ❑ Warm, Safe and Dry Policy.

Key Performance Indicators

Examples:

- ❑ Percentage of assets that meet health and safety regulations.
- ❑ Percentage of maintenance activities completed on schedule.
- ❑ Measure of how effectively maintenance and renewals have been prioritised, which could be calculated based on the number of unexpected asset failures.
- ❑ The ratio of the total cost of asset maintenance to the value derived from the asset over its lifecycle.
- ❑ Percentage of properties that support KCC's statutory services.
- ❑ Total cost of estate management relative to the value of the properties managed.
- ❑ Number of property usage reviews conducted per year.
- ❑ Number of safety incidents reported.

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: THREE

What?

3. Rationalise Underutilised Assets through consolidation or alternative uses:

- ❑ **Utilisation Studies:** Identify underutilised assets through utilisation studies.
- ❑ **Co-Location Opportunities:** Explore co-location opportunities to consolidate assets while minimising liabilities.
- ❑ **Effective investment:** Ensure when funding is available to invest in assets, either through developer contributions or grant funding, that the investment is supporting asset use efficiency and forward thinking.

How?

- ❑ Definition of utilisation of each asset type.
- ❑ Regularly perform utilisation studies to identify underutilised assets. This could involve assessing the usage rates of different assets and identifying those that are not being fully utilised.
- ❑ Rationalise underutilised asset and consolidate estate by collaboration internally and with external stakeholders to identify co-location opportunities.
- ❑ A whole portfolio view of assets, recognising the capital employed and the potential value to KCC priorities from repurposing or disposal.
- ❑ Work closely with KCC regeneration team to identify investment opportunities including developer contributions, to maximise the long-term benefit of the funding.
- ❑ When funding is available, ensure it is invested in a way that supports asset use efficiency and forward thinking. This could involve investing in new technologies that increase asset efficiency or in training programs that help employees make better use of assets

Key Performance Indicators

Examples:

- ❑ Percentage of assets identified as underutilised in the utilisation studies.
- ❑ The number of assets successfully consolidated through co-location.
- ❑ Percentage of investments that lead to improved asset use efficiency.
- ❑ Percentage of time that assets are in use compared to their total available time.
- ❑ Percentage of available space that is being effectively used after co-location.
- ❑ Reduction in liabilities, such as maintenance costs achieved through co-location.
- ❑ Return on investment for each asset investment. This could be measured in terms of increased efficiency, reduced costs, or other relevant metrics.
- ❑ The improvement in asset use efficiency achieved through investment.

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: FOUR

What?

4. Use Assets Flexibly to Enable New Operating Models aligned to how we will deliver our services and work in the future.

- ❑ **Multi-Purpose Design:** Design and manage assets for multi-purpose use, flexibility, and agility, ensuring this aligns with the People Strategy and ICT Strategy.
- ❑ **Adapt Portfolio to Support the Changing needs in Service Delivery and staff wellbeing:** Support shifting service needs to outreach or digital models instead of permanent physical presence.
- ❑ **Non-Public Facing Functions:** Develop models for shared spaces that accommodate non-public facing functions.

How?

- ❑ Use assets flexibly to go further than co-location (where services have separately defined spaces in the same building) to include sharing of space by compatible services.
- ❑ Incorporate flexibility and agility into design and management of assets. This could involve designing spaces that can be easily reconfigured for different uses or investing in equipment that can perform multiple functions. Management of assets adapts as service needs change.
- ❑ Implement modular designs that allow for easy reconfiguration of spaces or equipment to serve different purposes as needed, either so spaces can have multiple uses or to enable service delivery to change.
- ❑ Engage in regular reviews of service delivery models and adapt the asset portfolio to support shifting service needs. This could involve moving towards outreach or digital models instead of maintaining a permanent physical presence.
- ❑ Develop models for shared spaces that can accommodate non-public facing functions. This could involve creating communal areas that can be used by multiple teams or departments.

Key Performance Indicators

- ❑ Number of assets designed for multi-purpose use and the percentage of time these assets are utilised.
- ❑ Number of shared spaces created, and the percentage of back-of-house functions accommodated in these spaces.
- ❑ Reduction in dedicated non-public facing spaces, while maintaining employee satisfaction.
- ❑ Customer satisfaction for all, with additional questions for those that are shared service space.
- ❑ Number building user group meetings.
- ❑ Employee satisfaction feedback on adaption of building management approaches to meet customer needs

FIVE KEY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: FIVE

What?

5. **Generate Income and Capital Receipts to support the Budget sustainability:**
- ❑ **Strategic Disposal:** Identify surplus assets and determine the best value disposal method.
 - ❑ **Effective Marketing:** Market properties effectively to achieve best consideration.
 - ❑ **Maximise Income from assets:** Actively manage commercial tenancies and explore sub-division opportunities.

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How?

- ❑ Manage property as a corporate resource.
- ❑ Explore asset development opportunities supporting growth, regeneration and encompass wider social value.
- ❑ Conduct regular audits to identify surplus assets that are no longer needed.
- ❑ Analyse different disposal methods (e.g., auction, direct sale, trade-in) to determine which will yield the best value.
- ❑ Develop and implement marketing strategies tailored to the unique features and potential uses of each property.
- ❑ Regularly review commercial lease agreements and adjust rental rates as needed to reflect current market conditions.
- ❑ Consider dividing larger properties into smaller units that can be leased separately, potentially generating higher total rental income.

Key Performance Indicators

Examples:

- ❑ Number of surplus assets identified and disposed of; total income generated from asset disposal.
- ❑ Number of inquiries or bids received per property; total income generated from property sales or leases.
- ❑ Total rental income; occupancy rate; number of properties successfully subdivided.
- ❑ Ratio of the actual proceeds from the disposal of assets to the estimated market value of those assets.
- ❑ Ratio of inquiries or bids that result in a sale or lease. A higher rate indicates more effective marketing.
- ❑ Annual rental income from an asset as a percentage of its market value. A higher yield indicates more effective income maximisation.
- ❑ Ratio of performance of investment assets verses targeted return.

11. HOW WE WILL MEASURE PERFORMANCE

- These approaches align with KCC’s strategic objectives and contribute to long-term financial sustainability. The AMS will be a dynamic document, reviewed periodically to adapt to emerging priorities and objectives, and underpinned by asset management plans to determine service delivery and individual asset plans.

How we will measure Performance:



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- Performance metrics will be established for each portfolio to measure performance and guide estate management decisions, against delivery of the five strategic objectives. These metrics and other relevant financial indicators, will provide a clear and measurable understanding of each portfolio’s performance. Regular reviews of these metrics will ensure they remain relevant and reflective of our strategic objectives.



- We will define the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as part of the Asset Management Plans for each sub-portfolio, so the KPI’s are appropriate for each asset type. These KPIs will be **SMART** - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. They will include measures such as **Net Running Cost Benchmarking, Rate of Utilisation of Spaces, Maintenance Costs, and Asset Down time**. The KPIs will align with our overall business objectives and provide a clear picture of each asset’s performance.



- By establishing this baseline and defining our KPIs, we will be able to measure asset performance effectively and make informed decisions about asset management. This approach will ensure that our assets are managed strategically, with a focus on maximising value and minimising risk.

12. THE APPROACH:

Key Drivers

Aims

Objectives

Approach

Transparency

- Ensuring both internally and externally, we make a commitment to open communication about asset management decisions, including the rationale behind asset acquisitions, disposals and maintenance plans.
- When you deal with us you will find we are transparent, open and deal with you fairly.

Collaboration

- Ensuring inclusive collaboration with stakeholders, employees and other organisations to enhance asset management practices and drive innovation.
- We will aim to foster a more integrated and inclusive approach to asset management by encouraging resource sharing across different KCC services. This will ensure that KCC meets the diverse needs of the community and KCC services.

Innovation

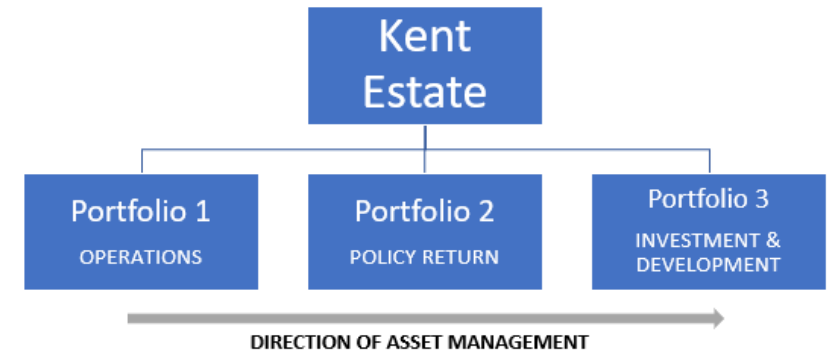
- Investment in a culture of continuous improvement and constant innovation of asset management by embracing and utilising innovative technology, practices and processes.

13. REALIGNMENT OF THE ESTATE TO FACILITATE THE APPROACH OF THE AMS:

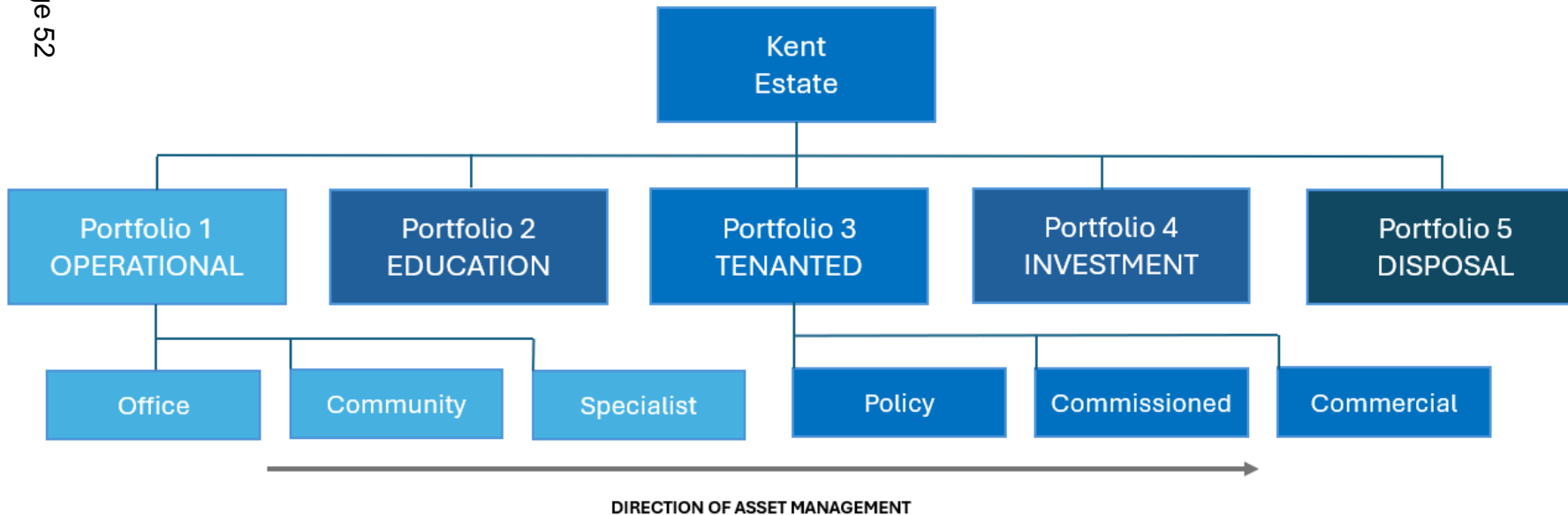
Establishing a base line to measure asset performance

- To effectively manage our assets and measure their performance, we will first re-define the baseline. This involves the updating of the portfolio classifications used in the previous AMS. Our assets will be classified based on their **type (operational, education, tenanted, investment or disposal) and then sub-categorised by the use**. This classification system will allow us to better understand our asset portfolio and identify areas for improvement or investment:

The Estate from Previous AMS



The Realigned Estate for the New AMS



- Portfolio 1 – Operational:** Assets which are used to deliver services and administration, divided into 3 subcategories.
- Portfolio 2 – Education:** All Educational related assets.
- Portfolio 3 – Tenanted:** Assets occupied by non-KCC services and tenants, divided into 3 subcategories.
- Portfolio 4 – Investment:** Assets held by solely for the purposes of income generation.
- Portfolio 5 – Disposal:** Assets declared surplus and used to raise a capital receipt.

14. EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMS:

Kent County Council is committed to implementing long-term, lifecycle management strategies for its assets, shifting from a reactive to a proactive approach. The future estate will be flexible, multi-purpose, and directly support service provision needs. Stakeholder engagement will be key in demonstrating how assets can enable new operating models and service transformation.

The Asset Management Strategy will be central to decision-making, fostering a culture of continuous dialogue and understanding. Environmental principles will be embedded into asset strategies to drive towards KCC's net zero targets by 2030. Robust asset data will enhance strategic planning and promote spending efficiencies.

Smart building technologies and intelligent management systems will be adopted for a comprehensive approach to estate management. Sites will be prioritised based on service users' requirements, focusing on positive outcomes for Kent's residents. Staff development and investment will be continued to provide a holistic service that embraces these technologies.

A dedicated reserve model for the corporate estate will be explored to cover ongoing maintenance requirements. Going beyond just compliance with the Equality Act, including Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requirements, will be ensured, with a proposal to allocate a dedicated budget for making buildings accessible to meet individual needs. This will involve reprioritisation of the available funding.



Business Continuity and Resilience Planning

- ❑ The new AMS will link and work collaboratively with KCC's Business Continuity and Resilience Planning policies. Business Continuity Planning (BCP) is a process that helps us manage risks, allowing us to continue to deliver services to our customers in the event of a disruption, big or small, right through to recovery.
- ❑ This is an important part of KCC's processes in ensuring business continuity, enabling Services to continue to provide essential services and to recover other functions quickly.

15. IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

2025 – 26 -
Implement:

- This is the first stage where the AMS is put into action. It involves the execution of the strategies and plans that have been developed. This first stage is to work on defining the accurate baseline data, this will enable the implementation of long-term, lifecycle management strategies, which will capture comprehensive lifecycle information for all assets, enabling whole-life cost analysis to inform decision-making. All property related decisions need to comply with the Key Principles of the new AMS.

2027 -
Assess:

- Once the implementation stage is complete, the next step is to assess the performance of the assets. This involves monitoring and **evaluating the assets using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** to determine if they are meeting the expected outcomes. This stage is crucial for understanding the effectiveness of the AMS and identifying areas for improvement. This could include acquiring new assets, disposing of underutilised assets, or repurposing existing assets. The key focus in this stage is to ensure that the actions align with the strategic objectives of the AMS.

2028 -
Realign:

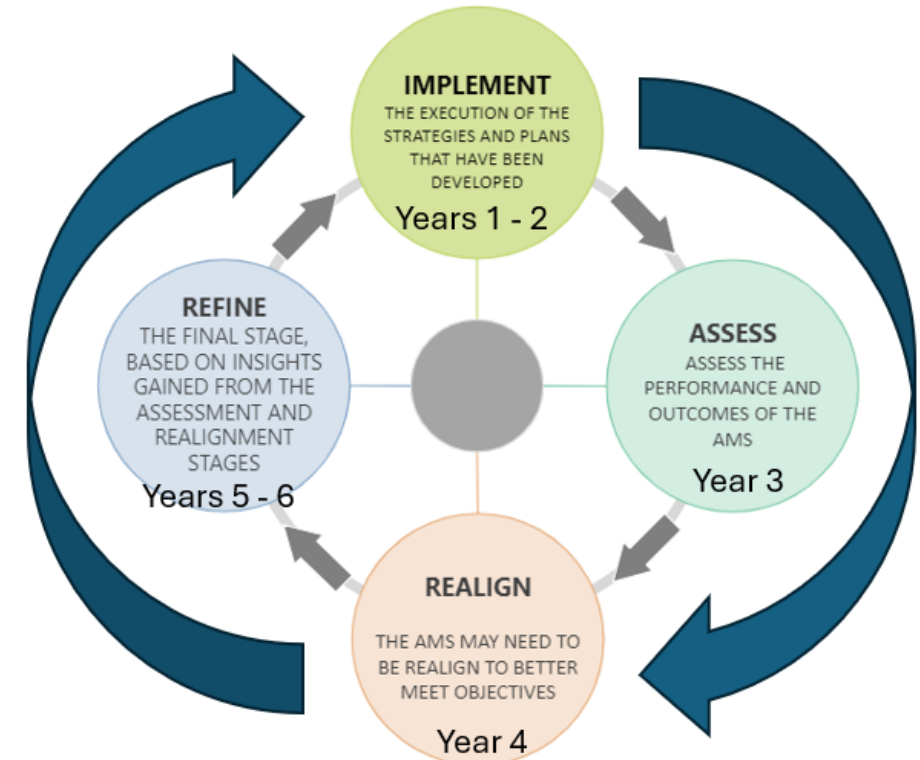
- Based on the assessment, the AMS may need to be realigned to better meet its objectives. This could involve adjusting the strategies or plans, changing the use of certain assets, or revising the KPIs. The goal of this stage is to ensure that the AMS remains relevant and effective in the face of changing circumstances.

2029 – 30 -
Refine:

- The final stage involves refining the AMS based on the insights gained from the assessment and realignment stages. This could involve making small tweaks to improve efficiency, or it could involve more significant changes to address new challenges or opportunities. The aim is to continuously improve the AMS to ensure it delivers the best possible outcomes.

AMS Life Cycle

Implement, assess, realign, refine



16. OUTCOMES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AMS

The optimisation of our asset portfolio will maximise financial, social, and environmental value for Kent residents whilst contributing to organisational sustainability and aligning the portfolio to those that use our buildings Including residents, service users, partners and staff.

This will ensure: -

- Ensure assets are legally compliant, 'warm, safe & dry', and fit for operational purposes to support service delivery.
- Actively manage assets across their lifecycle.
- Rationalise underutilised asset and consolidate the estate by collaboration internally and with external stakeholders to identify co-location opportunities.
- Generate capital receipts from surplus assets.
- Manage property as a corporate resource, as appropriate for each portfolio class.
- Maximise rental income from commercially tenanted assets.
- Advance service transformation through asset repurposing.
- Use assets flexibly to go further than co-location (where services have separately defined spaces in the same building) to include sharing of space by compatible services
- Explore asset development opportunities supporting growth, regeneration and encompass wider social value.
- Embed sustainability principles into asset management and meet sustainability goals and reduce environmental impact.
- As service needs evolve, asset management strategies adapt accordingly, ensuring a dynamic and responsive infrastructure.



17. GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS ASSURANCE

- The new AMS will aim to ensure that Members, Directorates and all officers/staff adhere to the strategy through ensuring regular engagement between Infrastructure (through the Business Partner, Infrastructure Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement teams) to ensure all services are working in line with AMS and that all considerations are taken for any initiatives/projects that change their Property requirements.
- This will be reinforced through relevant business cases being evaluated against the AMS and by all decisions across Infrastructure being underpinned by the aims and approaches set out in the AMS.
- Although ultimately the AMS is governed by the Property Management Protocol (which forms part of the KCC constitution, as a framework for how KCC assets are governed) which must be adhered to by all.
- The AMS will be a live document, and progress against strategic objectives / KPI's and risks will be continually monitored and overseen by the KCC Infrastructure Business Assurance Team and monitored through the Council's risk management framework.
- The Asset Management Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed as part of a four-part lifecycle approach that will assess and evaluate the success of the AMS that includes a mid-term review in 2027 to ensure any new emerging priorities / objectives are considered and this will be factored into any revision of the strategy.
- It is important to note if the impact of the implementation of the Asset Management Strategy means a change in asset or service use, a further EqIA and DPIA would be required to be undertaken by the relevant Directorate service, in order to comply with governance.
- The Asset Strategy Management Strategy will cover the period from July 2024 – July 2030, after which a new strategy will be implemented to follow concurrently.



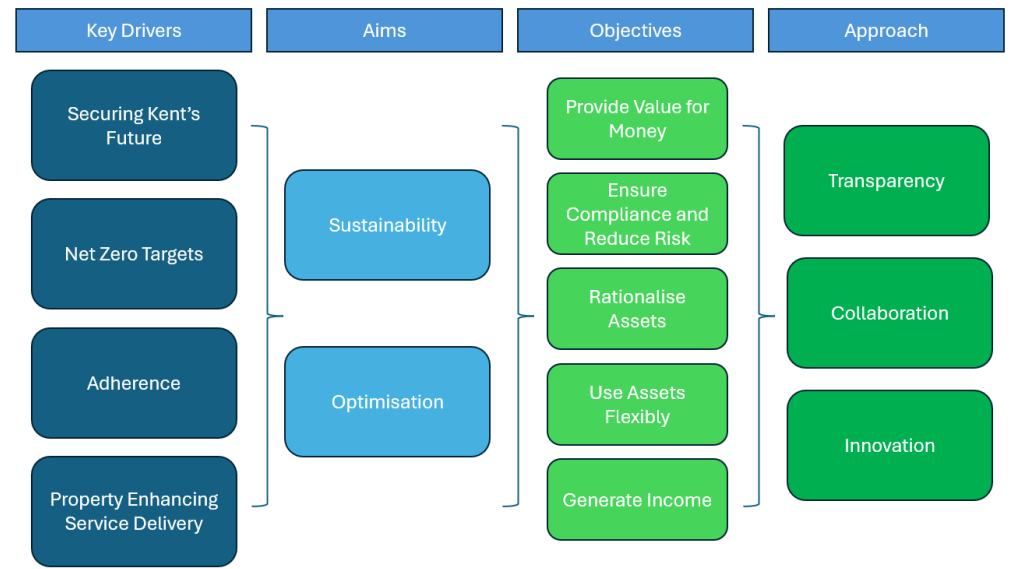
18. AMS SUMMARY



- ❑ The KCC’s (AMS) 2024-2030 is a comprehensive plan for managing KCC’s diverse property portfolio over the next six years.
- ❑ The strategy aligns with KCC’s key strategies to ensure that our property estate is effective and efficient.
- ❑ The AMS is designed to ensure that KCC’s assets are fit for purpose, optimally used, correctly located, appropriately maintained, and sustainable.

- ❑ The AMS is a dynamic document, regularly updated to stay relevant and effective amidst changing circumstances and service needs. It involves routine asset performance reviews, portfolio updates, and KPI adjustments. Emphasising staff development and inclusivity, it includes plans for training, mentorship, performance management, and career opportunities, ensuring KCC staff are equipped to manage assets effectively.

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KCC’s mission statement for the AMS is:

“To ensure that there is commitment to provide an efficient estate of the right size and type to meet its operational business needs. The estate must be adaptable to change and be affordable and sustainable to cater for its services and users.”

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EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Proposal for the new Asset Management Strategy

Responsible Officer

Gordon Edwards - DCED INF

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

Rebecca Anderson - DCED INF

Type of Activity

Service Change

Service Change

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

Business Information, Strategy and Assurance

Responsible Head of Service

Rebecca Anderson - DCED INF

Responsible Director

Rebecca Spore - DCED INF

Aims and Objectives

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 the outcomes achieved and lessons learnt from the existing AMS (2018-2023).

The 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.

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

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.

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

The Strategy Objectives are:

1. Provide best value: Provide better value from assets through sustainable initiatives, energy efficiency, cost control and income generation.
2. Ensure compliance and reduce risk: Reduce liabilities through proactive maintenance planning and condition surveys.
3. Rationalise assets: Rationalise underutilised assets through disposal or alternative uses.
4. Use assets flexibly: Using assets flexibly to support new operating models and digital transformation.
5. Generate income: Generate capital receipts from disposal to support the budget sustainability.

KCC's strategic objectives will provide a holistic view by looking at both the aims and approach to ensure a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to asset management that aligns with its service delivery objectives and the broader goals of sustainability and innovation.

Equality Recommendations:

The strategy will adjust and continue to remove barriers or better promote equality, through a holistic approach to the use of KCC's provisions and assets.

- 1 It will allow KCC to critically evaluate our portfolio, retaining only the essential assets that align with service needs.

The accurate baseline date 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..

2. It will provide a holistic view, regarding KCC's service users needs and its use of its assets.

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. The strategy will look at new and innovative solutions to ensure an agile environment is provided to enable transformation.

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. 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.

4. Environmental Principles

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.

5. Equality

The new Asset Management Strategy will not only enhance KCC's assets to ensure full compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), but also demonstrate KCC's commitment to going above and beyond in terms of DDA accessibility. This strategy underscores our dedication to creating an inclusive environment across all sites, surpassing standard requirements and setting a new benchmark in accessibility standards.

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?

No

Is there national evidence/data that you can use?

Yes

Have you consulted with stakeholders?

Yes

Who have you involved, consulted and engaged with?

yes - ongoing with

KCC Policy and Resources Cabinet.

Internal Stakeholder Group within Infrastructure.

Business Partners.

Directorate stakeholder and partner engagement

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Service users/clients

Staff

Staff/Volunteers

Residents/Communities/Citizens

No

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

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

- Assets will be fit for purpose and will align with service needs.
- Accurate baseline data will provide an informed approach regarding long-term, lifecycle management strategies which will enable budget forecasting in the future.

- Stakeholders will be involved in decisions relating to the requirements of sites use or need of an asset and will require a robust and sound business case.
- New and innovative solutions will be used to ensure there is a proactive and agile environment, which will include slicker digital options to shape transformation and meet compliance requirements.
- Sites will offer flexible arrangements, meaning sites are future proof and limited expenditure would need to be used to adapt and area for another service.
- Environmental principles will be embedded, ensuring continuous improvements to energy efficiency, which will aid KCC's net zero targets / budgeting and enhance the working environment.
- The enhancement of KCC's assets to aid further compliance in respect of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) for all its users.

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

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Scrutiny Committee, 26 February 2025

Subject: 24/00109 - Decision to transfer the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) from the Children Young People and Education directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health directorate from April 2025

Summary: As requested by Mr Streatfeild and agreed by the Chairman and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee the Committee is invited to discuss the decision to transfer the 18-25 section of the SIS from CYPE to ASCH from April 2025.

1. Introduction

- a) The proposed decision to transfer the 18-25 section of the SIS was discussed and endorsed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 15 January 2025 and the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16 January 2025 prior to Cabinet on 30 January 2025.
- b) A decision was taken by Cabinet on 30 January 2025 to:
 - a. Agree to TRANSFER the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service, including the transfer of workforce in services, from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate from 1 April 2025; and
 - b. DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to take the relevant actions, including but not limited to, awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision.
- c) Following a request from Mr Streatfeild, supported by the Chairman and Spokespeople of the Scrutiny Committee this decision has been placed on the Scrutiny Committee agenda for further exploration and discussion. This is in line with paragraph 17.54 of the Constitution which states that any Member of the Council who is not a member of the Scrutiny Committee is entitled to give notice that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting.

2. Attached documents

- a) [24/00109 - Record of Decision](#)

- b) [24/00109 - Decision Report](#)
 - c) [24/00109 - EQIA](#)
 - d) [24-00109 - Appendix C - DPIA Screening Tool outcome - Transitions](#)
-

3. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to discuss and comment on or note the decision.

4. Background documents

- a) [Agenda for Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on Wednesday, 15th January, 2025, 2.00 pm](#)
- b) [Agenda for Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on Thursday, 16th January, 2025, 10.00 am](#)
- c) [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 30th January, 2025, 10.00 am](#)

Contact Details

Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer
anna.taylor@kent.gov.uk 03000 416478

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Cabinet

DECISION NO:

24/00109

For publication

Key decision: YES .

Title of Decision: Decision to transfer the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) from the Children Young People and Education directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health directorate from April 2025

Decision: Cabinet agree to:

- A. Agree to **TRANSFER** the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service, including the transfer of workforce in services, from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate from 1 April 2025; and
- B. **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to take the relevant actions, including but not limited to, awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Transitions involve facilitating young people's move from children's services to adult services and typically occur between ages 18 and 25. The Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) sits within the Children, Young People and Education Directorate and oversees transitions between 0-25 for those with learning and physical disabilities.

The Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) at Kent County Council is accountable for assessing local needs and delivering a full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and the law defines an adult as someone aged 18 or over.

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) at KCC has statutory duties outlined in Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. These duties involve ensuring the delivery of local authority social care functions for children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, providing services that meet the needs of all children, youth, including the most vulnerable, and their families.

Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.

To address this, the proposal is to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate, to the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Directorate meaning young adults will receive support from adult social care to better support them for independence.

Financial Implications

The budget for the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening

Independence Service will transfer from the CYPE Directorate to the ASCH Directorate. The budget to be transferred will include the 25-26 budget for 18-25 services, agreed as part of the Budget at County Council in February 2025, including budgets for both placement/support costs and related staffing budgets. The indicative total budget to be transferred, at the time of writing this report, will be approximately £59m, comprising £56m for package costs and £3m for staffing (based on indicative budgets for 25-26).

Legal Implications

The Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) at Kent County Council (KCC) is accountable for assessing local needs and delivering a full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and the law defines an adult as someone aged 18 or over.

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) at KCC has statutory duties outlined in Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. These duties involve ensuring the delivery of local authority social care functions for children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, providing services that meet the needs of all children, youth, including the most vulnerable, and their families.

Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.

If these changes are not implemented, the Corporate Director for Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) will continue to oversee a group falling outside their statutory role, and the DASS will continue to face a gap in oversight regarding the assessed needs and well-being of young adults aged 18-25 falling under their remit.

Equality Implications

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and given this is an internal change, the EqIA demonstrates that there should not be any impacts on the cohort of people who will draw on KCC's care and support. The EqIA will continue to be reviewed as the project continues.

Data Protection Implications

An initial DPIA screening has been carried out and submitted which determine, in line with KCC's DPIA policy and requirements of the UK GDPR, that a DPIA is required. A full DPIA will be taken forward as part of the ongoing programme of work as the transfer progresses

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation: The proposed decision was discussed at the Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee on 15 January 2025 and the Children, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16 January 2025, prior to cabinet on 30th January 2025.

An important clarification, as a result of Member comments is that the 18-25 part of Strengthening Independence Service is solely focused on young adults supported by Care Act assessments who experience severe or profound disability. They are not especially open in relation to children's legislation. Any individuals aged 18-25 who experience Care Leaver status and/or experience an Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) will continue to receive services from CYPE in collaboration with ASCH. These services will not cease to be involved following the service's move to ASCH.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

There is the option to maintain the 18-25 service within CYPE; however, this will continue to mean the DCS oversees a group falling outside their statutory role and the DASS will not have streamlined oversight of a cohort of people who will draw on KCC's care and support.

Alternatively, the possibility of a matrix management approach was considered which would enable

CYPE to retain the 18-25 SIS service and introduce additional reporting lines into ASCH. This option was not taken forward as it would require additional roles to be created to make a matrix-management approach feasible, which would not add financial value or create efficiencies to the same or greater extent than the proposal to transfer the 18-25 SIS service from CYPE to ASCH.

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

None

Cabinet

30-01-25

.....
signed

.....
date

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From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Dan Watkins, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education
Richard Smith, Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health

To: Cabinet - 30 January 2025

Subject: Transfer the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate

Decision no: 24/00109

Key Decision: Yes - It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee – 15 January 2025
Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 16 January 2025

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet decision

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: Transitions involve facilitating young people's move from children's services to adult services and typically occur between ages 18 and 25. The Strengthening Independence Service sits within the Children, Young People and Education Directorate and oversees transitions between 0-25 for those with learning and physical disabilities.

The Director of Adult Social Services at Kent County Council is accountable for assessing local needs and delivering a full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and the law defines an adult as someone aged 18 or over.

The Director of Children's Services at Kent County Council has statutory duties outlined in Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. These duties involve ensuring the

delivery of local authority social care functions for children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, providing services that meet the needs of all children, youth, including the most vulnerable, and their families.

Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.

To address this, the proposal is to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children, Young People and Education Directorate, to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate meaning young adults will receive support from adult social care to better support them for independence.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

- A. Agree to **TRANSFER** the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service, including the transfer of workforce in services, from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate from 1 April 2025; and
- B. **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to take the relevant actions, including but not limited to, awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision.

1. Introduction

1.1 Transitions is the process of a minor or young person moving into legal adulthood. For individuals with additional needs this can often include multiple services such as social care, health and education. There are at present four pathways for young people with additional needs or vulnerabilities to transition into adulthood whilst still receiving services from KCC:

- The Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) oversees transitions between 18-25 for those with learning and physical disabilities which have been identified as children.
 - Multi-Agency Collaboration
 - Include a Sensory and Young People's Team
- Young adults requiring an adult service are assessed by ASCH Adults Operations who manage 18-65 services.
- Young adults previously looked after within the Care Leaving Service (CLS) (18+ services).
- Young adults (aged 18-25) within the Special Educational Needs (SEND) who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan and who require more time in education or training to achieve their outcomes.

1.2 The Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) currently oversees Transitions between 18-25 for those with learning and physical disabilities which have been identified when they are children. However, this means the DCS has responsibility for a cohort of people beyond their legal scope. As of January

2025, the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service were working with 925 young adults.

- 1.3 It is proposed to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the SIS from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate from 1 April 2025. This means the young adult's social care needs will be assessed and supported by ASCH and overseen by the DASS. However, it is important to note there are some statutory duties for this cohort, beyond their social care needs, which will remain within the remit of the DCS and be retained within CYPE which will require close collaborative working with ASCH.
- 1.4 The Care Leavers Service will continue to support young adults, who are also known to the 18-25 SIS, up to age 25, particularly those aged 18 – 21, to transition from being previously looked after to independence. The service will continue to provide a Personal Assistant, from age 18 up until the young adult's 22nd birthday, and who will work with the young adult to provide advice, support and information to make sure the care leaver is ready to leave care and live independently if their disability doesn't preclude this.
- 1.5 The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service will continue to maintain Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) for young adults, aged 18 – 25, who require longer to consolidate their education and training, are making measurable progress and to achieve their outcomes and transition into adulthood. The SEND service will maintain the EHCP's for this cohort, as appropriate, and will review the plan and needs of the young person via the Annual Review process. In most cases this will also require close collaboration with ASCH.
- 1.6 The changes will align with the Making A Difference Everyday Adult Social Care vision in Kent which sets KCC's direction of travel to support people to live as full and safe a life as possible and make informed choices. This reflects the core purpose of supporting people to lead the lives they want to live, and in a place they call home, by putting people at the heart of everything we do.
- 1.7 In addition, this change ensures alignment with the DASS' statutory obligations, providing greater oversight and promotes a more holistic approach to young adult well-being as they transition from children's to adult social care better preparing them for adulthood.
- 1.8 The proposals will result in greater consistency in adult experiences across KCC against all aspects of intervention. The transfer of service will ensure the DASS has greater oversight of all adult experiences supporting enhanced equality, inclusion, equity and application of social value. Furthermore, the transfer of service will align our practices with the updated Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations which place a significant emphasis on the quality statement concerning safe systems, pathways and transitions. The function of safety and continuity of care is now a priority throughout people's care journey and it is essential practices are aligned with the updated regulations to ensure the highest quality of care is provided to those we serve.

1.9 Staff moving between directorates are engaged and, although this won't materially change the service, external partners will be engaged to make them aware. People who draw on care and support will be engaged and/or consulted with, should there be any proposals to make changes to the service in the future.

2. Key Considerations

2.1 There are a number of issues these proposals will address including:

2.2 **Shifting the balance of responsibility for decision making from parents to the young adult:** When a child in Kent becomes an adult, the relationship with the council changes significantly. Parents previously made decisions, but at 16, young people gain legal rights and can make their own choices about social care and their future. At 18 individuals became legal adults which materially changes the balance of responsibility.

2.3 **Transition Gap:** Young adults in Kent with a learning disability or physical disability identified in childhood currently transition into adult social care at the age of 26, because between the ages of 18-25 years these young adults are currently supported by the Strengthening Independence Team.

2.4 However, this is not the case for all other young adults requiring assessment and/or support from adult services. Examples of this include Children in Care, without an identified learning or physical disability who experience mental ill-health or children with autism who, upon turning 18 may be eligible for a Care Act assessment and support to meet any eligible social care needs. For some care leavers their needs may develop as a result of childhood trauma, young adult life experiences or progressive conditions materialising within early adult life. There are currently 2000+ care leavers in Kent.

2.5 There are approximately 21,000 children and young people with an EHCP, but with only around 600 of those being open to children's services. The remaining 20,000 plus EHCPs are monitored and reviewed by universal services and community resources and who may also make referrals to either CYPE or ASCH for a child and young adult aged 0-25 (strengthening independence service and leaving care), where 18-25 year old individuals would be picked up by ASCH.

2.6 There are also those young adults who may not have been in receipt of an EHCP and present at the age of 18 having previously been supported by other health services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Teams.

2.7 The differing routes and ages of transition can create a disparity of experience for young people, particularly in the identification of those young adults, the timely planning for that transition and the development of the appropriate community resources to meet their needs in alignment with the co-produced strategy 'Making a Difference Every Day'. The move of the Strengthening Independence 18-25 team to ASCH allows for further work on the streamlining our transition offer to address these disparities for this particular cohort.

- 2.8 **Improved Oversight:** The DASS will have oversight and assurance on the impact of social care on people’s lives through the lens of equity of access, experience and outcomes for adults who draw on care and support and unpaid carers, and alignment to key legal and policy drivers.
- 2.9 Implementation plans have been developed to transfer the personnel and systems across the directorates and will ensure the transfer seamlessly integrates with the strategic objectives of the council and both CYPE and ASCH. Young adults who draw on care and support will not see or feel a difference and service continuity will be maintained with plans developed to minimise disruption to service delivery.

3. Background

- 3.1 The proposed decision supports priority 4 within [Framing Kent's Future - Our Council Strategy 2022-2026](#), with the commitment to ‘*support the most vulnerable children and families in our county, ensuring social work practice supports manageable caseloads, reflective learning, joined up safeguarding and effective corporate parenting arrangements*’, and explicitly to: “*Act as a good Corporate Parent for those children in the care of KCC and improve support for young people as they transition into adulthood, whilst also improving support for those who transition into the adult social care system.*”
- 3.2 Transitions is part of [Securing Kents Future - Budget Recovery Strategy](#) and this proposal supports the objectives for:

Preparing for adulthood/transition: Working across both ASCH and CYPE to optimise support for people between the ages of 14-25 as they transition from children to adult services, promoting independence in adult life. Working age people with learning disabilities are now living longer through better long-term management of medical needs, but this increases the need to promote independence earlier so long-term needs can continue to be met at reasonable cost to the council. Joint working with NHS partners will be critical given costs of support are incurred by both the NHS and social care.

- 3.3 Concurrently with this proposed change, the council is developing a wider vision for the Kent wide transition system including:
- We are committed to delivering a seamless transition for all young people with an identified need, regardless of their location or need.
 - Our shared transitions framework will support us to work together with parents, carers and young people across teams and directorates. It will also foster collaborative work with external partners including Health, Education, Voluntary Sector Community Organisations, Housing providers, District and Borough councils.
 - We will create a culture of accountability, integrity, and purpose in KCC, and encourage professionals to strive for continuous improvement.
 - We will work with young people to understand their ambitions for the future and shape their transition to support their aspirations. Planning conversations will begin at 14 years old for all young people where a potential need in adulthood may be identified.

- We will give parents and carers information, advice and support to understand what transition may mean for the future, in time to adapt to these changes.
- We will support young people, parents and carers to connect with their communities, to ensure they are linked with the support and services it delivers.
- We will support staff to work in a cohesive approach, enabling them through technology and systems to work efficiently and with compassion.

4. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 4.1 There is the option to maintain the 18-25 SIS service within CYPE; however, this will continue to mean the DCS oversees a group falling outside their statutory role and the DASS will not have streamlined oversight of a cohort of people who will draw on KCC's care and support.
- 4.2 Alternatively, the possibility of a matrix management approach was considered which would enable CYPE to retain the 18-25 SIS service and introduce additional reporting lines into ASCH. This option was not taken forward as it would require additional roles to be created to make a matrix-management approach feasible, which would not add financial value or create efficiencies to the same or greater extent than the proposal to transfer the 18-25 SIS service from CYPE to ASCH.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The budget for the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service will transfer from the CYPE Directorate to the ASCH Directorate. The budget to be transferred will include the 25-26 budget for 18-25 services, agreed as part of the Budget at County Council in February 2025, including budgets for both placement/support costs and related staffing budgets. The indicative total budget to be transferred, at the time of writing this report, will be approximately £59m, comprising £56m for package costs and £3m for staffing (based on indicative budgets for 25-26).

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) at Kent County Council (KCC) is accountable for assessing local needs and delivering a full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and the law defines an adult as someone aged 18 or over.
- 6.2 The Director of Children's Services (DCS) at KCC has statutory duties outlined in Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. These duties involve ensuring the delivery of local authority social care functions for children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, providing services that meet the needs of all children, youth, including the most vulnerable, and their families.
- 6.3 Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.

6.4 If these changes are not implemented, the Corporate Director for Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) will continue to oversee a group falling outside their statutory role, and the DASS will continue to face a gap in oversight regarding the assessed needs and well-being of young adults aged 18-25 falling under their remit.

7. Equalities implications

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and is appended to this report.

7.2 The EqIA has been updated in January 2025, further to feedback from Adult Social Care Cabinet Committee and Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee. This focuses on the available data, potential impacts and importantly mitigating actions, which mean any impact on the cohort of young people who draw on KCC's care and support will be managed and minimised.

7.3 The EqIA will continue to be reviewed as the project continues.

8. Data Protection Implications

8.1 An initial Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) screening has been carried out and submitted which determined, in line with KCC's DPIA policy and the requirements of the UK GDPR, a DPIA is required. A full DPIA will be taken forward as part of the ongoing programme of work as the transfer progresses.

9. Governance

9.1 If the proposals are agreed, the Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health and the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education will have delegated authority to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service between the CYPE and the ASCH Directorates.

9.2 The Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health will inherit delegated authority for oversight of these statutory functions from 1 April 2025.

10. Conclusions

10.1 The Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) at Kent County Council (KCC) is accountable for assessing local needs and delivering a full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 and the law defines an adult as someone aged 18 or over.

10.2 The Director of Children's Services (DCS) at KCC has statutory duties outlined in Section 18 of the Children Act 2004. These duties involve ensuring the delivery of local authority social care functions for children and young people. This includes, but is not limited to, providing services that meet the needs of all children, youth, including the most vulnerable, and their families.

10.3 Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role. To address this and provide the DASS with better oversight of the needs of people who draw on our care and support, along with preparing people for adulthood, it is proposed to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet is asked to:

- A. Agree to **TRANSFER** the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service, including the transfer of workforce in services, from the Children Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate from 1 April 2025; and
 - B. **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health in consultation with the Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education to take the relevant actions, including but not limited to, awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision;
-

11. Background Documents

[The Care Act 2014](#) and related adult social care legislation
[ADASS Roadmap](#)
[Mental Capacity Act 2005: DoLS Safeguards](#)
[Think Local Act Personal strategic priorities](#)
[House of Lords report "A Gloriously Ordinary Life"](#)
 Kent County Council's strategic priorities "[Securing Kent's Future](#)" and "[Framing Kent's Future](#)"
 Adult Social Care's co-produced strategy "[Making a Difference Every Day](#)"

12. Appendices

- Appendix A – Proposed Record Of Decision
- Appendix B – EqIA
- Appendix C – DPIA Screening Tool Outcome

13. Contact details

<p>Report Authors: Sharon Howard Assistant Director Strengthening Independence Service – For Disabled Children and Young People 0-25 +443000412070 sharon.howard@kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>Lead Directors Kevin Kasaven, Director of Children's Countywide Services +443000416334 kevin.kasaven@kent.gov.uk Mark Albiston, Director of Adult Social Care</p>
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<p>Alyson Wagget Assistant Director Thanet South Kent Coastal +443000412483 alyson.wagget@kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>and Health +443000417578 mark.albiston@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Corporate Directors Richard Smith Corporate Director Adult Social Care and Health 03000 416838 Richard.smith3@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Sarah Hammond Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education 03000 411488 Sarah.hammong@kent.gov.uk</p>
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EQIA Submission – ID Number

Section A

EQIA Title

Proposed transfer of the Strengthening Independence Service for 18-25 year old disabled adults to ASCH from CYPE

Responsible Officer

Brett Appleton - DCED SRP & Yasmin Thornton – DCED SRP

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

Alyson Wagget - AH EK & Sharon Howard - CY LDCYP

Type of Activity

Service Change

No

Service Redesign

No

Project/Programme

No

Commissioning/Procurement

No

Strategy/Policy

YES

Details of other Service Activity

No

Accountability and Responsibility

Directorate

Children Young People and Education

Responsible Service

CYPE

Responsible Head of Service

Sharon Howard - CY LDCYP

Responsible Director

Kevin Kasaven - CY SCS

Aims and Objectives

The aim of this proposal is movement of the statutory social care functions currently delivered by the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) from the Children, Young People and Education Directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health Directorate. This affects the 925 individual service users currently receiving a social care package of support from CYPE who are aged between 18-25 years of age. This includes a wholesale transfer of the relevant workforce which is made up of circa. 70 FTE between the two Directorates.

The statutory duties of the Director of Adult Social Services (DASS) at KCC include the accountability for assessing local needs and delivering the full range of adult social services. These services support individuals under the provisions of local authority social services act 1970.

Care Quality Commission (CQC) 2023 framework assesses local authority assurance against statutory duties. Director of Adult Social Care (DASS) is accountable for all adults receiving Care Act 2014 support and provision under the Inspection Framework. The latest CQC Inspection of KCC took place in October 2024. We are currently awaiting the outcome.

The objective of this transfer of workforce and service delivery is to ensure that the Corporate Director with statutory responsibility for all adults in Kent who are eligible for social care support are within their direct management oversight. This includes both the quality and parity of service and for the costs.

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?

Affected staff have been engaged.

Has there been a previous Equality Analysis (EQIA) in the last 3 years?

Yes

Do you have evidence that can help you understand the potential impact of your activity?

Yes

Section C – Impact

Who may be impacted by the activity?

Service Users/clients

Yes

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?

Yes

Details of Positive Impacts

The Service will receive oversight from the Director of Adult Social Care (DASS) who will be able to exercise their statutory duties in a way which they cannot do at this time. This will ensure that over time, the services will be more closely aligned to the adult provision and governance within ASCH. This will ensure that all 18-25 disabled adults receive equity of opportunity and access to the right services at the right time.

The increased oversight from the Director of Adult Social Care will provide opportunities to robustly plan and commission services, including co-production, to meet the needs of all young adults in need of support in Kent, including those services that prevent, reduce and delay need.

ASCH will be in a strong position to implement strategies and the practice framework for all disabled adults which supports ASCH strategy – Making A Difference Every Day. This will include a consistent approach to adult safeguarding throughout the authority and a consistent audit and quality assurance process.

The current 18-25 SIS team will be able to access more services commissioned by ASCH e.g. Kent Enablement Service (KES) providing a greater range of support that will become available to all adults aged 18-25.

As of 21/01/2025 there are currently 925 Young People accessing support from the 18-25 SIS.

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

The proposal under consideration is one to change line management responsibility only.

Of the 925 individual service users currently receiving their Care Act services from CYPE, the spread of their age between 18-25 is evenly distributed. No one age group would be more negatively impacted than any other. It is recognised that the service has 0.5% more 24-year-olds than the next highest % age group, but this is not significant under this proposal.

11.9% are 18 years old

11.1% are 19 years old

13.4% are 20 years old

12.9% are 21 years old

11.6% are 22 years old

13.2% are 23 years old

13.9% are 24 years old

12.0% are 25 years old

It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all age groups whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.

There is no expectation that age as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.

Mitigating Actions for Age

- 1) It is proposed that a bespoke decision-making panel is established to ensure timely decision making during and immediately after the transfer of the service from CYPE to ASCH. This will be reviewed at 6 months post transfer.
- 2) Staff training on processes and pathways will be provided prior to transfer in preparation for the move to the ASCH Directorate. This will ensure that staff feel confident and understand the ASCH key priorities and performance framework.
- 3) An outline working group has been formed in anticipation of the decision; to proactively coordinate and prepare for the transfer of staff, these groups include representation from CYPE and ASCH. A mobilisation plan is in place to support the transfer.
- 4) To ensure that the transfer of service and decisions made will align with ASCH practices and are in line Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations. These place a significant emphasis on the quality elements of an adult pathway including safeguarding systems, the Care Act 2014 and all other protocols, laws and legislation.
- 5) To ensure a smooth transition, communication with Young People aged 18-25 will take place before the service changes. This will inform them about the proposed changes and confirm that the service and those that deliver it will not change at the point of transfer.

Responsible Officer for Mitigating Actions – Age

Alyson Waggett ASCH & Sharon Howard CYPE

20. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Disability

Are there negative impacts for Disability?

Yes

Details of Negative Impacts for Disability

All the 925 adult service users concerned with this proposal have complex needs and disabilities. Their pathway to being eligible for services from the current 18-25 SIS service is one where their disability has been identified or has manifested itself during childhood, and post 18 they continue to be eligible for a service under the Care Act 2014.

It is recognised that the majority of Care Act 2014 support is provided for individuals in this group who have a learning disability, with significantly fewer individuals receiving support for other types of disability. See details below:

- 85.7% receive Learning Disability Support
- 3.0% receive Physical Support - Personal Care Support
- 2.9% receive Physical Support - Access and Mobility Only
- 1.9% receive Sensory Support - Support for Hearing Impairment
- 1.8% type of support received has not been recorded on LAS
- 1.6% receive Sensory Support - Support for Visual Impairment
- 1.6% receive Mental Health Support

However, it is the services for those receiving sensory support, and which are currently delivered from the sensory teams who will join the ASCH sensory service and potentially experience a difference. Young adults with learning and/or physical disabilities (91.2%) will remain as they currently receive a service from a combined disability team which will remain the same.

Of the 925 young adults concerned, 35.7 % have an ongoing EHCP which reflects the nature of their disabilities, and their full transition to adulthood once they are over the age of 19. The majority of young people with EHC plans complete further education with their peers by age 19, and the Governments' expectation is that this will continue. In line with preparing young people for adulthood, a local authority must not cease an EHC plan simply because a young person is aged 19 or over. Young people with EHC plans may need longer in education or training to achieve their outcomes and make an effective transition into adulthood. However, this position does not mean that there is an automatic entitlement to continued support at age 19 or an expectation that those with an EHC plan should all remain in education until age 25. A local authority may cease a plan for a 19- to 25-year-old if it decides that it is no longer necessary for the EHC plan to be maintained. The distribution of EHCPs across the 18-25 SIS group is one of an even set of numbers, with a moderate percentage decrease at age 25.

Age	Count	%
18	40	12.12%
19	47	14.24%
20	49	14.85%
21	40	12.12%
22	40	12.12%
23	42	12.73%
24	40	12.12%
25	32	9.70%
Total	330	

There are 330 young adults in this service who have a current EHCP, and the service they receive from the

SEND service in CYPE will remain the same and will be in line with the 2854 young adults with an ECHP who are not the SIS 18-25 service.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-19-to-25-year-olds-entitlement-to-ehc-plans/send-19-to-25-year-olds-entitlement-to-ehc-plans>

The majority of Care Act support provided by the current 18-25 Strengthening Independence Service is for young adults with learning disabilities, with significantly fewer individuals with non-learning disability needs receiving other types of support. Therefore, young adults with learning disabilities may have been more negatively affected by the proposed transfer if the service was being changed at the same time. However, this is not the substance of this proposal and therefore it is anticipated that there will be minimal impact as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive.

Young adults with a visual impairment affected by this proposal are currently supported by the SIS Countywide Sensory team. ASCH does not have a separate service who support people with a visual impairment in relation to their eligible social care needs and people are supported in community teams which could lead to a disparity of support for those young adults who would have received SIS sensory team support until the age of 26. There are currently 13 young people supported by the SIS sensory team.

Occupational therapy support will transfer from a countywide service in CYPE to a countywide service in ASCH which is linked to the Locality Teams. Support for young people requiring occupational therapy assessment and intervention will move from a service which only supports young people into a wider service which supports all adults.

It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all disability groups whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.

There is no expectation that disability as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.

Mitigating actions for Disability

- 1) Ensure that all communication is available in a range of formats that are accessible and plain English and jargon free e.g. BSL video, easy-read and contact details of their social care worker so they can discuss any concerns or raise questions.
- 2) The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service will continue to maintain and complete Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP) for young adults aged 18-25 who need more time to complete their education and training. These plans will be reviewed annually, and close collaboration with Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) will be necessary as per the SEND Code of Practice.
- 3) Any young adults from the 18-25 SIS who also have Care Leaver status will continue to receive the services of a personal adviser and associated support for their care leaver needs from CYPE in collaboration with ASCH. These services will not cease to be involved following the SIS 18-25 service's move to ASCH.
- 4) For support for young adults with visual impairment currently in the 18-25 SIS sensory service to be provided support from the ASCH sensory services team until their 26th birthday alongside other young people with sensory loss but not currently open to the 18-25 SIS.
- 5) The Occupational Therapy service in ASCH is led by the Principal Occupational Therapist and will continue to provide strong and professional appropriate supervision and support to all Occupational Therapists working with young adults within ASCH mitigating the impact of the transfer of service.

Responsible Officer for Disability

Alyson Waggett & Sharon Howard

21. Negative Impacts and Mitigating actions for Sex
Are there negative impacts for Sex
No
Details of negative impacts for Sex
<p>There are currently 606 males (65.5%) and 319 females (34.5%) accessing support from the 18-25 Strengthening Independence Service. It is recognised that a greater number of males will now receive a Care Act 2014 service from ASCH than from CYPE, compared to females. However, as the service does not deliver packages of care or arrange itself in male/female teams there is no negative impact anticipated based on sex. Under this proposal there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive, or which staff group or team provide it.</p> <p>It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for both male and females whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.</p> <p>There is no expectation that sex as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.</p>
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
<p>Most service users in the SIS 18-25 group (80.5%) identify as White British, with the remaining categories having significantly smaller percentages. Therefore, minimal negative impact based on 'Race/Ethnicity,' is expected even though White British young adults aged 18-25 make up the largest group.</p> <p>80.5% identify as White British 4.1% identify as Any other White Background 2.9% identify as Black African 1.9% identify as Any other mixed background 1.4% identify as Any other Asian background 1.2% identify as Any other ethnic group 1.2% identify as White and Black Caribbean</p>

Please note that there are other groups that have not been listed above as they account for less than 1%, for example Indian, White European, Any other black background, White and Black African, Gipsy/Roma, White and Asian, Bangladeshi, Not Known, Pakistani, Black Caribbean, Chinese, Traveller of Irish Heritage

Please note that there are other groups that have not been listed above as they individually account for less than 0.5%, for example Bangladeshi, Cypriot, Nepalese, Other Nationality, Afghan, Brazilian, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Indian, Irish, Ivorian, New Zealander, Pakistani, Pole, Romanian, Slovene, South African, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Thai and Turkish, Ukrainian.

It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all race groups whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.

There is no expectation that race as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.

Mitigating actions for Race

1) Any written or other mediums used to communicate will be translated into an appropriate language format.

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Race

Alyson Waggett & Sharon Howard

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

The data below shows that the largest proportion of the 18-25 SIS group (40.6%) do not have a recorded religion or belief in their case records. The second largest group 25.3%, identify as Christian. The other categories have smaller percentages. Therefore, while we do not anticipate a negative impact from this proposal based on 'Religion and Belief,' It is recognised that those who do not have a recorded religion or belief are the largest group and might be affected if they were to receive a different level of service.

40.6% have no recorded religion or belief.

25.3% identify as Christian

24.8% identify as 'Not having a Religion'

2.5% identify as Church of England

1.7% identify as Muslim

1.3% identify as Catholic

1.1% identify as Roman Catholic

Please note that there are other groups that have not been listed above as they account for less than 1%, for example Hindu, Other, Anglican, Agnostic, Sikh and Atheist.

It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all religious or belief groups whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.

There is no expectation that religion or belief as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young

adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.

Mitigating actions for Religion and belief

Not applicable

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Religion and Belief

Alyson Waggett & Sharon Howard

25. Negative impacts and Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Are there negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

No

Negative impacts for Sexual Orientation

Of the 925 current individuals between the ages of 18–25-year-old receiving Care Act support within the SIS, the case records hold the following information.

- 67.1% Not Known
- 20.2% Heterosexual
- 7.8% Not Disclosed
- 2.2% Not Certain
- 1.1% Bisexual
- 0.4% Gay Man
- 0.4% Other
- 0.3% Lesbian
- 0.1% Not recorded

The SIS teams deliver a person-centred approach to their services taking into account the sexual orientation of their clients if appropriate. This approach will not change under this proposal. It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all sexual orientation groups whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.

There is no expectation that sexual orientation as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.

Mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Not applicable

Responsible Officer for mitigating actions for Sexual Orientation

Alyson Waggett & Sharon Howard

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
<p>It is recognised that there is potential for minor service disruption for all groups in the SIS and therefore their carer where they have one, whilst ex-CYPE staff settle into ASCH and familiarise themselves with new processes. This may include a change from the CYPE audit and assurance framework to the ASCH assurance pathway. However, this is anticipated to be minimal as there will be no changes to the support that the young adults receive because of this proposal.</p> <p>There is no expectation that carer's responsibilities as a protected characteristic amongst this group of young adults would be adversely affected by this proposed change.</p>
Mitigating actions for Carer's responsibilities
<p>1) It is proposed that a bespoke decision-making panel is established to ensure timely decision making during and immediately after the transfer of the service from CYPE to ASCH. This will be reviewed at 6 months post transfer.</p> <p>2) Staff training on processes and pathways will be provided prior to transfer in preparation for the move to the ASCH Directorate. This will ensure that staff feel confident and understand the ASCH key priorities and performance framework.</p> <p>3) Outline working group has been formed in anticipation of the decision; to proactively coordinate and prepare for the transfer of staff, these groups include representation from CYPE and ASCH. A mobilisation plan is in place to support the transfer.</p> <p>4) To ensure that the transfer of service and decisions made will align with ASCH practices, are in line Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulations. These place a significant emphasis on the quality elements of an adult pathway including safeguarding systems, the Care Act 2014 and all other protocols, laws and legislation.</p> <p>5) To ensure a smooth transition, communication with Young People aged 18-25 will take place before the service changes. This will inform them about the proposed changes and confirm that the service and those that deliver it will not change at the point of transfer.</p>
Responsible Officer for Carer's responsibilities
Alyson Waggett & Sharon Howard

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DPIA Project Information

Title:

Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) Transfer from CYPE to ASCH

Project ID:


441

Project Timeframe for Data Collection:

In less than 3 months

DPIA Screening Questions

Question Number	Question	Answer
1	I understand that, by selecting Yes, I am confirming I am the project manager for the project or activity for which this DPIA screening tool is being carried out.	Yes
2	I understand that by ticking this box I am confirming that I have undertaken the Data Protection Essentials training module on delta.	Yes
3	Is this project a change to an existing process, or is it a new processing activity?	New processing activity
4	Has a DPIA for this been previously submitted?	No
5	If a DPIA was submitted - Was legal advice recommended?	No
6	When did the planning stage of this project begin?	10/21/2024
7	Is this screening tool for the use of a surveillance camera, including CCTV, dash cam and body worn cameras?	No
8	If Yes - Is this DPIA a proposal for a new deployment, or the expansion of an existing surveillance system?	
9	Which data protection regime will you be processing under?	UK GDPR Data Protection Act 2018 Part 3
10	Please outline the project including the types of data, software, processors, and how the data will be used	There was a decision made to transfer the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) from the Children Young People and Education directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health directorate from April 2025 including a transfer of workforce in services. Transitions involve facilitating young people's



move from children's services to adult services and typically occur between ages 18 and 25 for those with learning and physical disabilities.

Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.

To address this, the proposal is to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate, to the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Directorate meaning young adults will receive support from adult social care to better support them for independence

Staff moving between directorates are engaged and, although this won't materially change the service, external partners will be engaged to make them aware. People who draw on care and support will be engaged and/or consulted with, should there be any proposals to make changes to the service in the future.

Implementation plans are developed to transfer the personnel and systems across the directorates and will ensure the transfer seamlessly integrates with the strategic objectives of the council and both CYPE and ASCH. Young adults who draw on care and support will not see or feel a difference and service continuity will be maintained with plans developed to minimize disruption to service delivery.

To facilitate the changes, HR Oracle will need to be amended for staff and the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) who currently uses the systems LAS and Liberi will have to transfer over to Mosaic.

It has been agreed that although the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) new structure of reporting to ASCH will be implemented from April. The transfer of data on LAS and Liberi will not have happened by then so staff will continue to use both Liberi and LAS until Mosaic is ready to go and the data has been



11

Within your project are you planning to:

transferred across.

The type of data being transferred
Liberi would stay as children under 18
all client data from 18-25, need assessment,
plans, reviews, case work, child, name, dob,
address and all demographic of client data

This data will be used for case notes of those
Young People being supported within the
Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) and
payments of care packages.

Use systematic and extensive profiling or
automated decision making to make significant
decisions about people?

Process special category data or criminal offence
data on a large scale?

Systematically monitor a publicly accessible area
on a large scale?

Make decisions on someone's access to a service
product opportunity or benefit which is based on
automated decision making (including profiling),
or involves the processing of special category
data?

Carry out profiling on a large scale?

Combine, compare, or match data from multiple
sources?

Process personal data which could result in a risk
of physical harm in the event of a personal data
breach?

12

Or are you planning to:

Process biometric data?

Process genetic data (other than by a GP or
health professional to provide healthcare)?

Use innovative technology?

Process personal data without providing a
privacy notice directly to the individual?

Process personal data in a way which involves

tracking individual's online or offline location or behaviour?

Carry out evaluation or scoring?

Carry out systematic monitoring?

Process sensitive data or data of a highly personal nature?

Process personal data on a large scale?

Match or combine datasets?

Process data concerning vulnerable data subjects?

Carry out any innovative use of personal data or apply new technological or organisational solutions?

Carry out any processing which involves preventing data subjects from exercising a right or using a service or contract?

Carry out automated decision making with legal or significant effects?

DPIA Core Questions

Question Number	Question	Answer
1	What is your project aim?	<p>The aim of this project is to</p> <p>There was a decision made to transfer the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) from the Children Young People and Education directorate to the Adult Social Care and Health directorate from April 2025 including a transfer of workforce in services.</p> <p>Transitions involve facilitating young people’s move from children’s services to adult services and typically occur between ages 18 and 25 for those with learning and physical disabilities.</p> <p>Under the current arrangements the Corporate Director Children, Young People, and Education (DCS) is overseeing a group falling outside their statutory role.</p> <p>To address this, the proposal is to transfer the statutory functions delivered by the 18-25 section of the Strengthening Independence Service from the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate, to the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Directorate meaning young adults will receive support from adult social care to better support them for independence</p> <p>Staff moving between directorates are engaged and, although this won’t materially change the service, external partners will be engaged to make them aware. People who draw on care and support will be engaged and/or consulted with, should there be any proposals to make changes to the service in the future.</p> <p>Implementation plans are developed to transfer the personnel and systems across the directorates and will ensure the transfer seamlessly integrates with the strategic objectives of the council and both CYPE and ASCH. Young adults who draw on care and support will not see or feel a difference and service continuity will be maintained with plans developed to minimize disruption to service delivery.</p>

To facilitate the changes, HR Oracle will need to be amended for staff and the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) who currently uses the systems LAS and Liberi will have to transfer over to Mosaic.

It has been agreed that although the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) new structure of reporting to ASCH will be implemented from April. The transfer of data on LAS and Liberi will not have happened by then so staff will continue to use both Liberi and LAS until Mosaic is ready to go and the data has been transferred across.

The type of data being transferred Liberi would stay as children under 18 all client data from 18-25, need assessment, plans, reviews, case work, child, name, dob, address and all demographic of client data

This data will be used for case notes of those Young People being supported within the Strengthening Independence Service (SIS) and payments of care packages.

2 Are all of the categories of personal data identified in the data question necessary for you to achieve this aim?

3 What are the categories of data subjects whose data will be processed?

4 What is the nature of the relationship with the individual?

5 Are there any other organisations other than KCC who will be involved in this project?

6 Please name the organisations and their roles.

7 Tick to confirm which of the following you have in place with the organisations

8 How will the personal data be collected?

9 How will the personal data be collected from the individual?

10 Will the data be shared with:

11	Do you have a copy of the privacy notice that data subjects will be provided with at the point their data is collected?
12	Does the privacy notice state that data will be shared with your team for the purpose you will be using it for?
13	How will the data be shared with your team securely?
14	What steps will you take to ensure the data you collect and/or use is accurate?
15	In what system(s) will the data be stored?
16	Where are the servers for the system(s) located?
17	What is the current state of technology in this area?
18	How will the security of the data be ensured when it is transferred outside of the UK?
19	How will the security of the data be ensured in transit and at rest?
20	Are there any prior concerns over this type of processing or any security flaws
21	Please tick to confirm the following statement is true:
22	Describe how the personal data will be used to achieve your project aim
23	How long will the data be retained for?
24	Is the same retention period cited in all documentation?
25	At the end of the retention period will the data be:
26	What processes do you have in place to ensure that the retention period is adhered to?
27	Please tick to confirm the following statement is true
28	Is there a KCC privacy notice for this use of personal data?
29	Please link to the draft/ published privacy notice

30	Is there an easy read privacy notice for this use of personal data?
31	How will you ensure data subjects read the privacy notice and understand how their data will be used at the point of data collection?
32	How will you support data subject rights
33	What measures will you put in place to prevent data being used beyond the purposes outlined in your privacy notice?
34	Are there any current issues of public concern that you should factor in?
35	Consultation: Please summarise the responses of data subjects you have consulted with on the topic of this project.
36	Consultation: ICT Compliance and Risk
37	Consultation: Please summarise the Caldicott Guardian's response and any recommendations
38	Consultation : please summarise the responses and recommendations of any other individuals or organisations you have consulted with.
39	Are you signed up to any approved code of conduct or certification scheme?
40	When is the processing of personal data for this project due to begin?

Data Collection

Data Category	Data being Collected
Basic Data	Name Date of birth Email address Telephone/mobile number Address Postcode NHS number Identification number
Basic Data	Name Date of birth Email address Telephone/mobile number Address Postcode NHS number Identification number
Basic Data	Name Date of birth Email address Telephone/mobile number Address Postcode NHS number



Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

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Basic Data

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Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number



Identification number

Basic Data



Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number

Basic Data



Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number

Basic Data



Name

Date of birth

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Identification number



Basic Data

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Identification number



Basic Data

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Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

Identification number



Basic Data

Name

Date of birth

Email address

Telephone/mobile number

Address

Postcode

NHS number

	Identification number
Basic Data	Name
	Date of birth
	Email address
	Telephone/mobile number
	Address
	Postcode
	NHS number
	Identification number
Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
	Religious or philosophical beliefs
	Physical or mental health
	Sexual orientation or sex life
	Genetic or biometric data
Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
	Religious or philosophical beliefs
	Physical or mental health
	Sexual orientation or sex life
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Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
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	Genetic or biometric data
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Special Category Data

- Racial or ethnic origin
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Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
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	Genetic or biometric data
Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
	Religious or philosophical beliefs
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	Sexual orientation or sex life
	Genetic or biometric data

Special Category Data	<p>Racial or ethnic origin</p> <p>Religious or philosophical beliefs</p> <p>Physical or mental health</p> <p>Sexual orientation or sex life</p> <p>Genetic or biometric data</p>
Special Category Data	<p>Racial or ethnic origin</p> <p>Religious or philosophical beliefs</p> <p>Physical or mental health</p> <p>Sexual orientation or sex life</p> <p>Genetic or biometric data</p>
Special Category Data	<p>Racial or ethnic origin</p> <p>Religious or philosophical beliefs</p> <p>Physical or mental health</p> <p>Sexual orientation or sex life</p> <p>Genetic or biometric data</p>
Special Category Data	<p>Racial or ethnic origin</p> <p>Religious or philosophical beliefs</p> <p>Physical or mental health</p> <p>Sexual orientation or sex life</p> <p>Genetic or biometric data</p>
Special Category Data	<p>Racial or ethnic origin</p> <p>Religious or philosophical beliefs</p> <p>Physical or mental health</p>

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	Genetic or biometric data
Special Category Data	Racial or ethnic origin
	Religious or philosophical beliefs
	Physical or mental health
	Sexual orientation or sex life
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Special Category Data

- Racial or ethnic origin
- Religious or philosophical beliefs
- Physical or mental health
- Sexual orientation or sex life

	Genetic or biometric data
Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	Criminal Data will be collected
Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	Criminal Data will be collected
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Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	Criminal Data will be collected
Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	Criminal Data will be collected
Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	Criminal Data will be collected
Criminal Offence Data (DPA Part 3)	No data is being collected under this category
Surveillance Camera	No data is being collected under this category

Data Collection Questions

Data Group	Question Number	Question	Answer
Basic Data	1	The Article 6 lawful basis for this processing activity is:	
Basic Data	2	Please outline which element of the project relies on the identified lawful basis	
Special Category Data	1	Please identify the Article 9 basis being relied upon for the processing of special category data	
Special Category Data	2	If you are relying on condition (a) please state which element of the project relies on explicit consent, and outline the process you have for collecting, recording, and withdrawing consent	
Special Category Data	3	If you are relying on condition (b), (h), (i), and/or (j) you must also identify at least one of the additional conditions from Schedule 1, Part 1 of the DPA 2018	
Special Category Data	4	If you are relying on condition (b), (h), (i) and/or (j) you must outline which element of the project relies on this condition	
Special Category Data	5	If you are relying on condition (g) you must identify at least one of the additional conditions from Schedule 1 Part 2 of the DPA 2018	
Special Category Data	6	If you are relying on condition (g) (substantial public interest) you must outline which element of the project relies on this condition	
Special Category Data	7	If you are relying on condition (c), (d), (e), and/or (f) you must outline which element of the project relies on this condition	
Criminal Offence Data (UK GDPR)	1	Where you are processing criminal offence data under the UK GDPR, you must identify at least one of the additional conditions from Schedule 1, Part 3 of the Data Protection Act 2018	

By: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Scrutiny Committee

Subject: Work Programme

Summary: This report gives details of the proposed work programme for the Scrutiny Committee.

1. Introduction

- a) Any Member of the Council is entitled to give notice that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee (which is not an excluded matter) to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting.
- b) The definition of an excluded matter referenced above is:
 - a. Any matter relating to a planning or licensing decision,
 - b. Any matter relating to a person in respect of which that person has a right of recourse to a review of right of appeal conferred by or under any enactment,
 - c. Any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included in the agenda or discussion at a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.
- c) The Scrutiny Committee has the ability to 'call-in' decisions made by the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members. Any two Members from more than one Political Group may give notice within five clear working days from the publication of a decision taken of their wish to call-in the decision.

2. Recommendation

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider and note the report.

Background Documents

None

Contact Details

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Work Programme - Scrutiny Committee February 2025

Items identified for upcoming meetings

Date requested	Item
06.06.23	Report back on social and financial impacts of the decision to end funding to Homeless Connect
November 2023	Framing Kent's Future (deferred from November 2023)
06.12.23	Decision 23/00083 – Supported Accommodation Service 16-19 and transitional arrangements
January 2024	23/00107 Kent SEND Sufficiency Plan 2023 - Chairman request to place this decision on the Scrutiny Committee/SEND Sub-Committee agenda for discussion at an appropriate time. (This went to Cabinet Committee in November 2023 and Cabinet in January 2024)
24.01.24	Request at Scrutiny Committee for: a. a deep dive into the mainstream home to school transport budget; and b. cross examination of the Council's school admissions, home to school transport and public transport policies.
28.02.24	Discussion with ASCH Chairman, Scrutiny Ch & Spokespeople in relation to further scrutiny of ASCH contracts – potentially 6 month on review. Ensure minimal duplication in Committee.
April 2024	European Union Entry Exit System – further monitoring

Work Programme

18 March 2025	
Item	Item background
<u>Decision - 23/00100 - Commissioned Youth Service Contracts</u>	Requested for discussion. Following the decision in 2023 to cease commissioned youth service contracts.

16 July 2025	
Item	Item background

Provisional Future Items

June 2025 – Budget monitoring year end

June 2025 – Scrutiny Committee meeting as Crime and Disorder Committee

November 2025 – Kent Flood Risk Management Committee Annual Report

November – Draft Budget